TEMC 2013

TRENDS TRADITION TECHNOLOGY

Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart
15–18 September, 2013

temc.org.au

Tertiary
Education
Management
Conference

Refereed Papers

Edited by Ian R. Dobson, Raj Sharma and Maree Conway

atem — Association for Tertiary Education Management

tefma

Association for Tertiary Education Management and Tertiary Education Facilities Managers' Association

Tertiary Education and Management Conference 2013 Refereed Papers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION
Ian R Dobson, Raj Sharma and Maree Conway

This document is the formal e-book of refereed stream papers of the Tertiary Education Management (TEM) Conference, 2013. TEM first provided a refereed stream in 2010, so this is the fourth edition of the collection. The TEM Conference history has been well-documented, not the least in Editors' introductions of earlier editions of the TEM Conference refereed stream. Let it suffice to say the TEM Conference is one of the better higher education conferences that one can attend (and between them, the editors have been to a lot of conferences!).

The Conference has always attracted many excellent papers, and it is a good thing that a refereed stream was eventually introduced. However the TEM Conference has a rather strong practitioner focus to support the sharing of knowledge and 'know how'. That is only to be expected, because it is a conference sponsored by organisations of administrators and managers. The main reason for mentioning this is that we managers and administrators don't necessarily approach writing in the same way as academics do. However, for a paper to be published in refereed proceedings, it must meet the Higher Education Research Data Collection's definition of 'research'. Some practitioner papers could not be defined as 'research', but this does not mean that they are not excellent papers. This goes some way towards explaining why it took over 30 years before the TEM Conference offered a refereed stream.

People that work in 'admin' *can* write up their research and practice in a scholarly manner. Look no further than the co-editors of this volume; all three of us have had our work published in scholarly refereed journals. Furthermore, two of the three have PhDs, and the third is currently enrolled in one. We are not the only publishing administrators, though. Perhaps getting started is not all that easy, but eventually you'll be on a roll. There *is* a first time for everything, and the editors are more than happy to discuss these matters with authors thinking of submitting a paper to the refereed stream.

For the TEM Conference 2013, of the 13 papers submitted for assessment under provisions for the refereed stream, 11 appear in this volume. Of those not published, one could not be deemed to be 'research' and another was subsequently withdrawn.

Getting down to brass tacks, three of the papers in this collection come from the TEFMA stream of the Conference. This is pleasing because the editors had been hoping for more TEFMA papers. However, the fine line between 'research' and 'not research' has to be remembered. One paper had to be rejected as it could never have been described as 'research'.

In the paper by Rob Ellis and John Holm, they discuss the effective integration of physical learning spaces and virtual learning resources on campus. They note that the structure of university learning space has changed, and that the modern learning space routinely involves combinations of physical and virtual learning space. The student experience needs to be taken into account in a different way in modern campus planning.

Less funding; ageing facilities? How to get a much-needed new building? Andrew Hutson and Mary-Louise Huppatz explain how it was done to get a new architecture building at the University of Melbourne. When in doubt, diversify (the funding)!

Andrew Hutson proves to be prolific in his authorship of papers published in these proceedings, as do two other authors. His second outing is with Andrew McAlinden, and concerns shared academic workspace in the aforementioned new architecture building. How did they manage to prise academics out of their offices? Read to find out.

Sara Booth of the University of Tasmania also features in two papers. In the first of these, we read about the critical role of the student experience in student success. It outlines the development of a plan that involved the student union in developing a strategic plan to improve students' lot. In her other paper, co-authored with Cassandra Saunders, the thrust is quality assurance and demonstrating student achievements. Rather than build yet another 'freestanding' university system, the designers sought to align it with other university systems and promote quality, consistency and transparency.

Judy Szekeres, another much-published, PhD-holding university manager is also interested in the student experience. She notes the importance of professional staff in getting newish students comfortable in their new environment. A happy student is (more likely to be) a successful student.

Mark Medosh looks at enhanced quality via *business process improvement.* He says that 'opportunities abound for process improvement on both the academic and administrative fronts'. No one could deny that!

Say 'Christchurch' to most people, and they will immediately think of earthquakes. Philippa Seaton, Lesley Seaton and Judy Yarwood know rather more about this than most of us. They take readers through response, recovery and rehabilitation, the three phases of disaster response. It is sobering to realise that there can be something more important than increased prices at the campus staff club.

Heather Davis and Jenny Moon 'argue that a critical reflective practice is a necessary skill for tertiary education managers working in the knowledge-intensive enterprises of the tertiary education sector today'. They discuss the change, uncertainty, ambiguity and contested spaces as being among the things that managers need to be able to deal with.

Finally, double-papered Brigid Freeman presents papers on 'policy', one co-authored with colleagues Jo-Anne Kelder and Natalie Brown from the University of Tasmania. The first of these papers presents discussion on the University of Melbourne's meta-policy and continuous quality improvement via an elongated policy cycle, contrasted with the use of a truncated policy cycle in the case of a delegations policy. The second paper picks the bones out of Tasmania's new Casual Teaching Staff Policy, providing readers with a view of the concepts used in developing the policy.

The editors hope that readers find this set of papers to be of interest. They also hope that ATEM members that attend the TEM Conference regularly might start to consider submitting their work for consideration for the refereed stream.

In last year's compilation the editors hoped that more authors from the TEFMA side of the Conference would submit their papers for scrutiny for the refereed stream. That happened this year, but the fine line between 'research' and 'not research' has to be remembered. One paper had to be rejected as it could never have been described as 'research'.

Readers' comments on this volume and the processes behind it will be gratefully received.

Biographical notes

Ian R Dobson's career in higher education started over years ago in the Planning Branch at RMIT. Since then he enjoyed (for much of the time) long spells at the University of Melbourne and Monash University, and was a research director at the University of Helsinki, Finland, for nearly three years. Currently he is an honorary senior research fellow in the School of Education and Arts at the University of Ballarat, and an adjunct professional staff member at Monash University. He edits the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management and the NTEU's Australian Universities' Review. He completed a PhD at Monash University on higher education equity policy in 2004.

Raj Sharma worked in higher education for nearly four decades at institutions in three Australian states, both in higher education management and as an academic. He completed the Master of Educational Administration and PhD from the University of New England during the 1980s. Raj is a consultant in higher education in areas such as planning, institutional research, resource allocation and related fields.

Maree Conway spent almost 30 years working as a tertiary education manager before starting Thinking Futures, a strategic foresight practice, in 2008. She now works with people in educational, non-profit and government organisations to strengthen strategy development and implementation through the use of environmental scanning, strategic thinking and enhanced strategic planning. Maree sits on the editorial boards of the Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management and On The Horizon, and recently guest edited a special issue of On The Horizon on New Media and Learning.

<div align="center">

Ian R Dobson, Raj Sharma & Maree Conway

Email: <editor@atem.org.au>

</div>

Students as Active Partners in Planning Student Experience

Sara Booth
Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit,
University of Tasmania
Sara.Booth@utas.edu.au

Abstract

It is widely accepted that the overall higher education student experience plays a critical role in student success. Student experience has been defined as 'all experiences of facets of the university experienced by an individual student'. The University of Tasmania has developed the Student Experience Plan (2013-2015), a new strategic plan, which is built on a shared partnership between the University and its students. The students' Tasmania University Union (TUU) has an important role in creating opportunities for students to engage in a range of activities at the university. This paper outlines the methodological approach used to develop the Plan which includes a review of research literature, university strategic policies, consultation and feedback from staff, stakeholders and students.

Key words

Student experience; strategic planning; measurement

Background

The overall higher education student experience plays a critical role in student success. Student experience can be defined as 'all experiences of facets of the university experienced by an individual student' (Baird & Gordon, 2009). The key drivers which have repositioned student experience as a key factor in student success includes: increased participation and access; increased competition for national funding; increased scrutiny on student experience measures and increased attention on quality of the student experience by higher education quality agencies. For instance, in the UK some of the key drivers have been the implementation of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2005 and the release of Lord Browne's Report (2010) which has put the focus on students being provided with informed choices on the quality of education. Similarly, in Australia the release of the Bradley Review in 2009; the work of the Advancing Quality in Higher Education (AQHE) Reference Group; the MyUniversity website and the implementation of the University Experience Survey (UES) all point to a focus on informed student choice and to measuring the quality of the student experience. The increasing attention to the quality agenda in higher education has also impacted on student experience. Student experience is considered fundamental to the quality agenda within any higher education setting (Nair, Shah, & Bennett, 2012).

Student experience in universities has four interconnecting spheres: umpiring; coaching; enabling and developing (Baird & Gordon, 2009). Umpiring is concerned about rules for

participating in higher education, including admission, progression, assessment and requirements for awards (Baird & Gordon, 2009). Coaching relates to actions of academics and other staff in enabling and facilitating learning such as language and learning advisors and academic developers (Baird & Gordon, 2009). Enabling is a sphere which is concerned with the physical facilities and resources that enable learning and networking to occur and includes car parking, accommodation and childcare (Baird & Gordon, 2009). Developing is a sphere that is concerned with opportunities that are available for informal learning, social interactions, personal growth and empowerment (Baird & Gordon, 2009). These four spheres are also important for assuring the quality of the student experience as well as a means of taking account the diversity in the student body (Baird & Gordon, 2009).

The University of Tasmania (2012) (UTAS) has developed a new strategic plan, the Student Experience Plan (2013-2015). A key feature of the Plan is the shared partnership between the University and students, particularly the TUU which has an important role in creating opportunities for students to engage in a range of activities at the university. The Plan was developed in alignment with a new Equity and Diversity Principles and the University's Social Inclusion Plan over a period of 8 months. This paper will outline the methodological approach used to develop the strategic plan which includes a current review of research literature, strategic plans, consultation and feedback from staff and students. The University's Open to Talent: Strategic Plan 2012-Onwards, describes student experience in its vision:

'The student experience, beyond curriculum, is a critical component of university life and a determinant of student demand. We aspire to provide an equitable and inclusive environment for our students, valuing diversity and encouraging respect, fairness and justice.'

Methodology

The methodological approach used for developing the Student Experience Plan (2013-2015) is outlined in Figure 1 and has been adapted from the work of Gill and Saunders (1992) and Duck and Hamilton (2008). Phase 1 of the policy development includes a review of the literature; a review of strategic plans; a review of student measures and stakeholder input.

Phase 1 of developing the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 included a brief review of the literature. This review identified some key themes in student experience:
- measuring the quality of the student experience (Bennett & Nair, 2010).
- student experience is fundamental to the quality agenda (Nair et al, 2012).
- student experience should be seen in a holistic way (Ertl & Wright, 2008).
- students as active partners (Ramsden, 2009).
- student experience is about personal identity (Baird & Gordon, 2009).
- student experience is aligned with approaches to learning (AL) (Ramsden, 2003; Prosser & Trigwell, 1998).
- feedback on online learning (Roby et al., 2013).
- quality of learning and teaching is important but also administrative factors (Krause, et al, 2005; Scott, 2006; Shar & Nair, 2010).
- adequacy of resourcing and support systems for students. (Coates, 2008; Buultjens & Robinson, 2011; Nair et al., 2012).

The next stage of the policy development included a review of student experience in strategic plans at universities in the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia. Universities in the UK have taken the lead with student experience strategically positioned within their strategic plans.

Some examples include Leeds Metropolitan University; Northumbria University; the Open University; Sheffield Hallam University; University of Manchester and the University of Nottingham. The University of Exeter was also identified as a lead university in student engagement and was recently named University of the Year in the Sunday Times University Guide 2013.

Policy Analysis Tools		
Iterative Processes	*Intuition and Judgement*	*Advice and Opinion*
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Policy Review	Identify and Evaluate Policy Development	Policy Framework Development Review, Evaluate, Refine
• Literature Review • Review of Student Experience Plans • Surveys • Stakeholder input	• Implementation Activities • Proposed Recommendations	• Process Template • Strategies and Advice • Evaluation Techniques
Identify • Issues • Assumptions • Anticipated Objectives • Time and Resources • Evaluation Criteria		Output Policy Development Guidelines
Internal Environment • Organisational Culture • Organisational Structure • Strategy		
External Environment • Current public policy and practice		

Figure 1. Policy Analysis Tools (Adapted from Duck & Hamilton, 2008; Gill & Saunders, 1992)

A desktop review of 40 Australian universities strategic plans identified the following key themes in student experience:
- a high quality learning experience;
- unique student experience including life outside the classroom such as orientation programs and support services;
- physical facilities, information and communication technologies that optimise student engagement; nurture personal development and wellbeing of students;
- a distinctive and rewarding student experience;
- transforming the student experience;
- enhancing the student experience;
- enrich the student of University life for all our students; and
- an outstanding student experience. (Appendix 1)

Only two of these Australian universities, Charles Sturt University and Victoria University, have made any significant contribution to planning student experience. Charles Sturt University has a section in their University Strategy 2011-2015 called the Student Experience

Plan and Victoria University had a Student Experience Strategy 2009-2011. Victoria University undertook a review of this strategy to identify key student experience priorities to inform the development of a future student experience plan. The review identified 53 actions; nine per cent of these actions were complete; 49 per cent of these were ongoing initiatives; nine per cent were in progress; 17 per cent were superseded by other University initiatives and 15 per cent had not progressed (Caldwell, 2011). The review found that the Student Experience Strategy had provided a successful way to maintain focus on the student experience and activities as well as provide a framework for implementing various strategies to improve the student experience (Caldwell, 2011).

Measuring student experience has become a key discussion point in national and international higher education. Measures play a significant role in defining the indicator in terms of current and potential planning and practice (Coates, 2010). Many national measurement instruments are currently being revisited and tested to ensure that they measure and meet the original purpose for which they were designed. These performance measurement instruments are being strengthened and broadened to increase transparency of standards across the universities through reporting on the MyUniversity website. The desktop review of 40 Australian universities' strategic plans also uncovered a range of measures used to evaluate student experience. Some of these measures include:

- student enrolment growth
- the Good Universities Guide 2013
- student participation, retention and success
- overall student satisfaction
- physical facilities and information and communication technologies that optimise student engagement
- support and services for students
- alumni engagement
- student surveys: Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), Graduate Destination Survey (GDS), University Experience Survey (UES)
- employer satisfaction.

As can be seen from these measures, student experience has been reflected in the national and international architecture for collecting feedback on understanding and improving the student experience (Radloff et al, 2012).The University Experience Survey (UES) has been developed as a new national platform for measuring the quality of the student experience. It assesses five broad facets of students' university experience- Skills Development, Learner Engagement, Teaching Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources. Radloff et al (2012) reported a positive relationship between specific forms of support for students such as English language support, induction/orientation activities and skills development. Of note, Radloff et al (2012) found resources and support to be the threshold conditions for academic success.

The development of the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 has included consultation across the university including academic and professional staff; students and community stakeholders. The University Learning and Teaching Committee (ULTC) provided the following advice: consider a holistic student experience; define student experience; the concept of agency is critical; partnership is an underpinning principle; and we would like active, engaged students at the University. Regular meetings with the TUU included discussion on: the importance of partnership in the Student Experience Plan; training for student representatives for committee work; the inclusion of equity groups such as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning or Asexual-identifying students (GLBTIQA) and having Senior Executive sponsorship at an annual student forum. Lastly, a

review of strategic faculty planning documents found that each faculty focused on curriculum initiatives rather than student experience initiatives. This exercise confirmed the importance of having a student experience plan to drive student experience initiatives.

Results

Phase 2 of the policy analysis tools, adapted from the work of Gill and Saunders (1992) and Duck and Hamilton (2008), involved the development of the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015. The Plan outlines five broad goals including:
1. Provide students with opportunities to have a strong voice through representation and active engagement in university life.
2. Provide an inclusive and welcoming experience for all students in their transition into, through and out of university.
3. Provide timely administrative, academic, cultural and learning support for current and prospective students.
4. Respond to student and stakeholder feedback to improve the quality of student experience.
5. Facilitate inclusive and accessible learning in a community environment (social, physical and online).

What stands out in the review of the literature, university strategic plans and stakeholder input is the importance of: 1) student experience as a *shared* partnership between the university and students; and 2) student experience is about the *active* engagement of students in making their time at university even better through student representation and student engagement activities. A crucial part of the Plan included the TUU President as a key partner in areas of responsibility covering 19 out of 51 initiatives in the Plan. Also, the Student Experience Committee was given overall responsibility and carriage for the Student Experience Plan 2013, 2015. It was also critical to ensure the Plan was tied to a steering group which could be used as an intervention strategy and was responsible for steering the key initiatives in the Plan (Brown, 2011).

Goal 1 of the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 is about providing students with opportunities to have a strong voice through student representation and active engagement in University life. Initiatives under Goal 1 include an annual Students Matter Conference; Students as Change Agents initiative (Dunne & Zandstra, 2011); TUU Education Forums; student representation; and peer learning programs. These initiatives fall under the 'developing' sphere of student experience (Baird & Gordon, 2009). They are measured through student participation numbers; number of project completed and presented at the Students Matter Conference; evidence of impact on recommendations from Students as Change Agents initiative; number of TUU Education Forums; number of student representatives; student training workshops and number of peer learning participants.

Goal 2 of the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 is about providing an inclusive and welcoming experience for all students in their transition into, through and out of University. The initiatives in Goal 2 are also represented in the 'developing' sphere (Baird & Gordon, 2009). This Goal places the emphasis on student support services and processes such as orientation; Uni Start; Uni Start International; transition support; student-led and student focused events; advice to students on workplace transition and pathways. These initiatives are measured using the number of students who participated in UniStart/Uni Start International;

academic success of students; Uni Start survey; Student Survey on experience of orientation and transition; social events calendar and student feedback; and feedback from employers.

Goal 3 is about providing timely administrative, academic, cultural and learning support for current and prospective students. This Goal includes 'umpiring' and 'coaching' activities (Baird & Gordon, 2009) such as enrolment and admissions processes; English language support; academic support for students with disabilities; programs for student physical health and wellbeing; counselling; and information literacy. Measures include review of admissions and enrolment processes; participation rates of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students; a review of English language support activities; participation rates for wellbeing programs; counselling services; residential support officers feedback; and Library Client Survey.

Goal 4 is about responding to student and stakeholder feedback to improve the quality of the student experience. This Goal relates more to the evaluation of the quality of the student experience and includes initiatives such as reporting and acting on student feedback data; improve institutional response rate strategy; process of consultation with students on priorities for Student Services Amenities Fees (SSAF) funding and online student portal for informal feedback. The measures for this Goal include eVALUate surveys, Library Client Survey; Accommodation Services Exit Survey; online response rates; and SSAF Student Survey. This goal also highlights another sphere of student experience, that is, 'evaluating' which now forms a significant part of the student experience. Evaluation of the student experience has become a key measure used by universities to understand the key issues in student experience.

The last Goal is about facilitating inclusive and accessible learning in a community environment. This Goal relates to the 'enabling' sphere of student experience (Baird & Gordon, 2009) This Goal includes initiatives such as campus-based and regional forums to show case ideas; provide a community support network; an *Engage UTAS* strategy to promote targeted opportunities for students to participate in student exchange, volunteering; ensure student facilities an spaces are well maintained and upgraded; accommodation facilities and catering are upgraded and affordable; campus facilities and transport options; infrastructure for libraries and ITS; timetabling and video conferencing; and online support. These initiatives are measured through examples such as number of campus-based, regional forums; number of students who participate in student exchange/volunteering; usage/availability figures for student facilities; Student Spaces and Facilities Survey; review of catering facilities; and accommodation figures.

Four significant differences have arisen from the analysis of other university strategic plans. First, when comparing the Plan's student experience measures to other universities, it highlights the different measurement instruments used. The University's Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 has more measurement instruments which have been contextualised to the University rather than solely relying on feedback from external surveys. Second, the University of Tasmania is the only Australian university with an operating Student Experience Plan with 51 initiatives. Third, the TUU President has 19 key areas of responsibility within the Plan which is a radical reorientation of how the University approaches student experience. This positions students as key partners in coordinating student experience at the University of Tasmania. The last difference is that the Plan puts the focus on the systematic quality assurance of the student experience. The next stage of the policy development will include a review and refinement of the Plan and associated measures.

Conclusion

The development of the Student Experience Plan 2013-2015 at the University of Tasmania has been a major university-wide initiative which has included feedback from students, stakeholders and staff. Students played a significant role in planning the strategic policy document as well as holding key areas of responsibility within the Plan. The new Plan is an example of repositioning student experience as a major driver in changing the nature and quality of the student experience at the University. Repositioning student experience in HE is a 'powerful discursive move because it evokes radical reorientation, challenge to vested academic interests, consumer power and the quest for value for money' (Sabri, 2011, p.661).

The desktop review of Australian universities also highlighted the lack of strategic student experience plans which have significantly focused on student experience and the coordination of student experience initiatives. This paper has also highlighted a new sphere 'evaluating' in the facets of students experience (umpiring, coaching, enabling and developing) (Baird & Gordon, 2009). Students now play an active role in evaluating their experience and seeing outcomes of their feedback. Students' role in evaluation is a critical component in improving the quality of the student experience. Lastly, the assignment of 19 initiatives to the TUU President is acknowledgement that students are active partners in planning student experience at the University.

Acknowledgements

Biographical Note

Dr Sara Booth is Head, Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit, at the University of Tasmania. Her role includes policy writing at the institutional level.

References

Baird, J., & Gordon, G. (2009). Systematic quality assurance for diverse student experiences. Paper presented at 2009 HEDSA Conference, Darwin (July 2009). Retrieved from http://www.auqa.edu.au/files/presentations/systematic_quality_assurance_for_diverse_student _experiences.pdf

Bennett, L., & Nair, C.S. (2010). A recipe for effective participation rates for web-based surveys. *Assessment and Evaluation Journal*, *35*(4), 357-366.

Brown, S. (2011). Bringing about positive change in the higher education student experience: a case study. *Quality Assurance in Education, 19*(3), 195-207.

Browne, J. (2010). Securing a sustainable future for higher education: An independent review of higher education funding and student finance in England (Browne Review). Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/31999/10-1208-securing-sustainable-higher-education-browne-report.pdf

Buultjens, M., & Robinson, P. (2011). Enhancing aspects of the higher education student experience. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 33(4)*, 337-346.

Caldwell, H. (2011). Strategies for student success: Student experience strategy 2009-2011-Final Review. Melbourne: Victoria University.

Coates, H. (2008). Attracting, engaging and retaining: New conversations about learning. Melbourne: ACER.

Coates, H. (2010). Defining and monitoring academic standards in Australian higher education. *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 22 (1), 1-17.

Duck, J., & Hamilton, S. (2008). Assessment policy and impact on practice: Sharpening the policy review process in Australian universities. *Teaching and Learning at UQ*. Queensland, Australia: The University of Queensland.

Dunne, E., & Zandstra, R. (2011). Students as change agents: new ways of engaging with learning and teaching in Higher Education. Retrieved from http://as.exeter.ac.uk/support/educationenhancementprojects/current_projects/change/publications/

Ertl, H., & Wright, S. (2008). Reviewing the literature on the student learning experience in higher education, *London Review of Education*, *6* (3), 195-210.

Gill, J., & Saunders, L. (1992). Towards a definition of policy analysis. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, 1992 (76), 5-13.

Krause, K., Hartley, R., James, R., & McInnis, C. (2005). The first year experience in Australian universities: Findings from a decade of national studies. Retrieved from http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/37491/FYEReport05.pdf

Nair, C.S., Shah, M., & Bennett, L. (2012). The student experience in private higher education. *The ACPET Journal for Private Higher Education*, *1* (2), 23-29.

Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K. (1998). Understanding teaching and learning: The experience in higher education. Buckingham, UK: Open University and Society for Research into Higher Education.

Radloff, A., Coates, H., Taylor, R., James, R., & Krause, K-L, (2012). 2012 University experience survey national report. Canberra: Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education.

Ramsden, P. (2003). Learning to teach in higher education. London: Routledge/Falmer.

Ramsden, P. (2009). A better student experience. Speech at the Group Student Experience Conference, 19 November 2009, UK. Retrieved from

http://www.heaacademy.ac.uk/news/detail/2009/a_better_student_experience_speech_by_paul_ramsden

Roby, T., Ashe, S., Singh, N., & Clark, C. (2013). Shaping the online experience: How administrators can influence student and instructor perceptions through policy and practice. *Internet and Higher Education*, *17*, 29-37.

Sabri, D. (2011). What's wrong with 'the student experience'? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *32(5),* 657-667.

Scott, G. (2006). Accessing the student voice: Using CEQuery to identify what retains students and promotes engagement in productive learning in Australian higher education. Retrieved from
http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/63955/HEIPCEQueryFinal_v2_1st_Feb_06.pdf

University of Tasmania. (2012). Open to Talent: Strategic Plan 2012-Onwards.

University of Tasmania. (2013). Student Experience Plan (2013-2015)

Appendix 1: Review of Australian Strategic Plans for Student Experience

University	Strategy which includes Student Experience	Key strategic areas	University performance indicators
Australian National University	ANU by 2020		ANU will perform above the Go8 average in national course and university surveys (CEQ); ANU will maintain employment rates of graduates, as measured by the GDS, above the Go8 average
Australian Catholic University	Strategic Goal 1: Student Experience ACU provides its students with a high quality learning experience	Student enrolments, portfolio of course offerings, access and equity, learning and teaching; student life and support; internationalisation; indigenisation; graduate employability	Student enrolment growth; portfolio profile and review;
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	Not stated		
Bond University	No strategy Office of Student Experience which offers a unique Bond student experience	Life outside the classroom; orientation program; support services	Good Universities Guide 2013 Ratings
Central Queensland University	Intranet locked		
Charles Darwin University	Goal 1: A Unique Learning Environment	Factors which affect student success; target support; access to tertiary education pathways; high-quality student support; both on and off campuses	Student participation, retention and success; overall student satisfaction
Charles Sturt University	University Strategy 2011-2015 Student Experience Plan	Excellent teaching facilitating a high quality student learning experience; support and services for students; physical facilities and information and communication technologies (ICTs) that optimise student engagement	Teaching and learning (14); Support and services for students (2); Physical facilities and information and communication technologies (ICTs) that optimise student engagement (5); Evidence of success in providing an enriching and supportive student experience (2)
Curtin University of Technology	Intranet locked		
Deakin University	Live the Future Agenda 2020 - Experience	Nurture personal development and well-being for students and staff; offer a rewarding global experience for learners; foster a vibrant and inclusive culture for students and staff; connect with our alumni, friends and staff throughout their lives	Student satisfaction; staff fulfilment; alumni engagement

University	Strategy which includes Student Experience	Key strategic areas	University performance indicators
Flinders University of South Australia	Flinders University Strategic Plan 2012-2016 –Flinders Future Focus	Strategic Priorities 3: Enhancing the Student Experience	Student successful completion to increase from 4,800 in 2011 to 5,500 in 2015 and graduate employment to increase from 77% to 80% in 2015 › Student and employer satisfaction improved against all key national quality of teaching measures
La Trobe University	Future Ready: Strategic Plan 2013-2017	A high quality student experience	Expand the number of La Trobe students who undertake an overseas student mobility programme as part of their degree (target 20%); increase the number of subjects offered by the University in blended delivery mode (at least 60%); increase student retention and student success in all Fields of Education (Top 12 nationally in student retention and success in each Field of Education in which we offer degrees); Improve student satisfaction as measured by the CEQ (Top 12 nationally in overall student satisfaction in each Field of Education in which we offer degrees); Improve student employment outcomes as measured by the Graduate Destination Survey (Achieve student employment rates equivalent to levels at least twelfth nationally for each Field of Education in which we offer degrees)
Macquarie University	Macquarie Academic Plan		
Monash University	Intranet locked		
Murdoch University	Murdoch Strategic Plan 2012-2017	To deliver a distinctive and rewarding student experience	Improve overall quality of teaching and student satisfaction across all fields of education at Murdoch; Murdoch's national ranking on scales for Good Teaching and Overall Satisfaction, across all fields of education
QUT	Blueprint 2011-2016	Comprehensive student engagement	
RMIT	Transform the Student Experience: Academic Plan 2011-2015	Transform the Student Experience: Priority 1	
Southern Cross University	Strategic Plan	Goal 1: We will provide inspirational learning experiences for our students through high quality teaching engaged with scholarship	
Swinburne University of Technology	Swinburne University of Technology 2020 Plan	We will engage our students through quality, personalised education	Ratings student satisfaction, retention and student engagement

University	Strategy which includes Student Experience	Key strategic areas	University performance indicators
University of Adelaide	Beacon of Enlightment- Strategic Plan 2013-2023	Assert a distinctive Adelaide educational proposition	
University of Melbourne	Growing Esteem 2010	High quality Melbourne experience	
University of Notre Dame Australia	No		
University of Queensland	Strategic Plan 2012-2016	Theme 1: Deliver on the UQ Advantage by ensuring that opportunity and choice genuinely characterise the UQ student experience	
University of Sydney	Strategic Plan 2011-2015	Strategy 4:Enrich the experience of University life for all our students	
University of Western Australia	Education Strategy 2009-2013	UWA Student Learning Experience Strategy and Management	
University of Ballarat	No		
University of Canberra	Breakthrough: The University of Canberra's Strategic Plan 2013-2017	Plan is under construction	
University of New England	Strategic Plan 2011-2015 Learning without Limits	To distinguish ourselves by the quality of our on-campus experience	
University of New South Wales	B2B Blueprint to Beyond UNSW Strategic Intent	Student Experience Enhancement Plan	
University of Newcastle	New Strategic Directions Strategic Plan 2013-2015	Strategic Objective 3: An outstanding student experience on and off campus that includes student engagement in research, work or community focused activities	
University of South Australia	Horizon 2020	An outstanding student experience and exceptional graduates	
University of Southern Queensland	Not stated		

University	Strategy which includes Student Experience	Key strategic areas	University performance indicators
University of Tasmania			
University of Sunshine Coast		Key Strategy 1.2: Provide a high quality student experience	
University of Western Sydney	UWS Strategy and Plan 2010-2015: Making a Difference	We will create a superior and engaged learning experience	
University of Wollongong	Strategic Plan 2011-2013	Definition and impact of the UOW Student Experience	UOW Student Experience Statement Satisfaction levels in Student Experience Questionnaire sustained above 90%
Victoria University	The Victoria University Curriculum and Student Experience Strategy Moving towards the development of a Student Experience Plan for new VU Strategic Plan	Review of Strategy- 53 actions; 9% complete; 49% ongoing initiatives; 15% were not progressed	This is currently measured by the Course Experience Questionnaire which is completed by graduates and has a one year lag. DEEWR has signalled the implementation of the University Experience Survey (UES) from 2013 and this will measure course experience and student experience. We may have to then change our indicators for HE to accommodate the introduction of the UES.

Making room for new traditions: Encouraging critical reflective professional practice for tertiary education management

Heather Davis
LH Martin Institute for Tertiary Education Leadership and Management, University of Melbourne, Australia
heather.davis@unimelb.edu.au

Jenny Moon
Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth Media School, Bournemouth University, UK
jenny@cemp.ac.uk

Abstract

We argue that a critical reflective professional practice is a necessary skill for tertiary education managers working in the knowledge-intensive enterprises of the tertiary education sector today. This is because a critical reflective professional practice is a useful sensemaking frame with which to address complexities and contestations of our everyday work. Indeed, Baker and Kolb (1993) regard such 'inside-out' perspectives as being highly 'effective in valuing diversity and plurality in organisations' (p 26). A critical reflective practice offers a way to surface pressures and a way to examine our assumptions, as well as those of others and our organisation, about the way we do our work. In examining our professional practice and the conditions of our work it is possible to uncover limitations and possibilities, become less prone to complacency or rigidity in our thoughts and actions, and develop a greater awareness of different perspectives and possibilities through engagement with this practice. This is all the more necessary when we add accelerating rates of change, uncertainty, ambiguity and as well as highly politicised and contested spaces to the mix.

Keywords

critical reflective practice; tertiary education management; professional practice; critical thinking

Introduction

We argue that a critical reflective professional practice is a valuable skill for tertiary education managers to develop so that our thinking becomes more visible. Such capabilities are sought after in knowledge-intensive enterprises because they are also useful as sense-making frames with which to deal with complexities, contestations and uncertainties of everyday work of tertiary education management. Many of the challenges facing the sector at this time have their roots in likely disruptive changes as we negotiate new challenges whilst still trying to hold on to old ways of thinking. Parker (2012) sums this up very well:
The organisational forms, cultures and practices which developed over the centuries to provide university education for society's elite have been stretched and panel-beaten as far as they will go for an era of mass participation in higher education (p. 2).

23

Such turbulent conditions provide challenges and opportunities for tertiary education management. They call for significant investment for the development of professional and academic staff so to improve the learning metabolism (Davis, 2012 p. 101) of our institutions in response to these challenges at the very time when funding models appear to be as 'stretched and panel-beaten' as the organisational forms Parker names. So what, we may ask, can we do as tertiary education management professionals? We might wait until someone 'on high' fixes problems that we see arising from such mismatched conditions; we could despair and retreat into forms of threat rigidity that we see in politics and leadership in times of turbulence and uncertainty; or we could find ways to make a difference for ourselves and our institutions by 'taking leadership personally' (Davis & Macauley, 2011).

Taking leadership personally is not easy and yet, as professionals we likely already take on this mantle, what we perhaps need to work on is making this practice more intentional and public. One way to strengthen our professional practice is to consider what Baker and Kolb (1993) regard as 'inside-out' perspectives which are crucial for the valuing of diversity and plurality, themselves hallmarks of contemporary work within tertiary education management. We name this as developing a critical reflective professional practice for tertiary education managers. In examining our professional practice and the conditions of our work it is possible to uncover limitations and possibilities, become less prone to complacency or rigidity in our thoughts and actions, and develop a greater awareness of different perspectives and possibilities. This is all the more necessary when we add accelerating rates of change, uncertainty, ambiguity as well as highly politicised and contested spaces to the mix. Integrating critical reflection into professional practice implies ongoing examination of our assumptions as well as the assumptions underpinning organisational mindsets. It does this by making conspicuous the way in which we approach our work and the conditions of that work. It keeps our thinking flexible and allows our comprehension and intrapersonal and interpersonal management to deepen as we work with contested perspectives.

Indeed this critical reflective professional practice lies at the heart of the Emerging Leaders and Managers Programme (eLAMP) launched by the LH Martin Institute the Association for Tertiary Education Management and ATEM) in September 2012. This is a strong foundation for the program and for professional development more generally in these times given Cunliffe's (2004) argument that leadership and management is not just about helping managers to become more effective organizational citizens but it is also about helping them to become critical thinkers and moral practitioners (p. 408).

Our definitions of reflection: 'reflective learning', 'reflection', 'critical reflection' and 'reflexivity'
The two authors came together through similar interests in critical reflection, educational and professional practice (see for example, Moon, 2004, 2006; Davis, 2009, 2010; Davis & Macauley, 2011). However we found that our ways of describing critical reflective practice differed, and given that such ambiguity is reflected in the wider literature too, it is worth exploring more fully. Moon, for example, refers to 'reflective learning' as synonymous with 'reflection'. An important element of Moon's work is her discussion and ongoing development of a model describing depths of reflection (2004, 2006). This model uses four levels of reflection to describe a continuum that represents the deepening criticality of reflection. Davis's notion of 'critical reflection' relates to these deeper levels of criticality within Moon's framework, whilst understanding the likely journey towards these levels of critical reflective practice often begin with more descriptive levels of reflection. In using the term 'critical reflection' therefore, we are talking of quite deep reflection as opposed to

superficial or descriptive writing and thinking. Scholars interested in this notion of a deeper and critical engagement for reflection may just as well describe this notion as 'reflexivity' (Brown & Dowling, 1998; Cotter & Cullen, 2012; Cunliffe, 2004; Maclean et al., 2012; Mockler & Sachs, 2011; Shacklock & Smyth, 1998). We should say too that we understand that reflection may be represented in writing, speech, dance, action, drawings and diagrams etc, and will focus on representations of reflective practice in writing in this paper.

Moon's depths of reflection framework emerged from considerable experience in teaching reflection in higher education to students of all ages where she observed that when students were asked to write reflectively, some immediately 'took to it' like the proverbial duck to water whilst others struggled. The students more likely to engage with this practice were female with diary keeping habits already established, but even then first attempts were often still quite descriptive in nature. Those less likely to engage immediately with the practice may have reflected mentally but had made no attempt to write down their thoughts. Some even feel that reflection is self indulgent. Guidance was honed over many years to help students move from writing in vaguely reflective ways which did not support good learning towards the deepening of their reflections and their capacities for deeper more profound learning. Moon's graduated scenario exercises use example and discussion to support the deepening of reflection on the basis of this model (2004) and one of these scenario exercises features in the Emerging Leaders and Managers Program (eLAMP), section encouraging a critical reflective professional practice for tertiary education managers. This program was conceived through a joint project between the LH Martin Institute of Tertiary Education Leadership and Management and the Association for Tertiary Education Management, and began in September 2012 (see, http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/executive-education-programs/leadership-programs/85-emerging-leaders-and-managers-program for more details about eLAMP).

The task of this paper is to discuss how critical reflective professional practice aids identity construction when 'becoming' a tertiary education manager and to embed what may currently be seen by some as 'trend' into a tradition for the tertiary education management profession. We tackle this by: exploring linkages between critical reflection and professional thought and practice and looking at how to ensure depth of reflection within the realm of critical reflective professional practice.

Exploring the link between critical reflection and 'becoming' a professional tertiary education manager

This section addresses what we mean by the role critical reflection plays in the 'becoming' of professional tertiary education managers. We approach this by first stepping back to consider epistemological (ways of knowing) and related ontological (ways of being) framing that impact the ways we learn and may see our places in the world of work in tertiary education management. In this way we can build up a picture of the manner in which sophisticated thinking develops in the experiences and learning afforded in the workplace and how these mature and develop as we become more confident in our professional identities. In this way we can demonstrate the kind of cognitive progression that lifelong learning affords professional practice as well as the ability to intentionally recognise these changes in ourselves and others.

Epistemological development has been the subject of a number of studies over the last half century. The studies explored by Moon (2004, 2008) broadly indicate that there is a

developmental sequence for understanding the nature of knowledge (epistemological beliefs) and that this influences:

- the manner in which we function intellectually
- our capacity for critical thinking and critical reflection,
- our ability to understand the nature of knowledge,
- our ability to manage situations of uncertainty or ambiguity,
- our understanding of scientific endeavour,
- our developing ideas of theory and its relationship evidence.

Epistemological development affects the manner in which we understand our relationships between our role as learners and the role of those who guide or teach us. As we mature these views as tertiary education management professionals, we are likely to cycle backwards and forwards through stages of understandings about knowledge. These usually begin with the notion that learning is a process of absorbing the knowledge passed on by experts (usually designated as teachers or leaders). In turn, as managers progress their thinking, they move towards understandings that it is not likely that everyone to see the world in the same what as they do.

In order to provide a picture of epistemological development we refer to four substantial studies that broadly coincide with this picture of a continuum for epistemological development in post compulsory and adult education. We do not suggest for a minute that this development always follows a linear pattern, but rather we suggest that as we master new concepts and ideas there are pathways to deepening understandings that look familiar. Indeed we suggest that this might play out as 'zigging and zagging' between levels of understanding as much as following the a set linear script.

The studies we discuss may differ in the terminology they use, the populations that they researched, the research methods used, and in the number of stages they regard as fitting within this continuum, yet they all show theoretical congruence for the epistemological development we describe. These studies by Perry (1970), Belenky et al (1986), King and Kitchener (1994) and Baxter Magolda (1992, 1994, 1996) were conducted with American students, however others have confirmed resonance. Broadly all studies suggest that there are qualitative changes that occur in learners' conceptions of knowledge. This is an important consideration for the processes of learning in the workplace as much as it is in class or professional development settings. To describe this, we chose Baxter Magolda's (1992), terminology for description mainly because it is simpler to understand whilst at the same time acknowledging that any description of stages are at best only a linguistically convenient means of describing the processes captured in the continuum. Baxter Magolda describes the following stages as: absolute knowing; transitional knowing; independent knowing; and, contextual knowing.

In such continuum of development, learners and practitioners generally progress from 'absolute knowing' in which they tend to see knowledge as 'right or wrong', 'black or white' or as a series of facts that they will absorb from an expert who is the keeper of these 'facts'. Knowledge in these terms tends to be viewed as a commodity and teaching and mentoring the process of 'passing on this knowledge'. The 'teacher' in this regard is both expert and gatekeeper. As learners shift through towards the most sophisticated 'contextual knowing' domain they eventually come to recognise that there may be a range of perspectives on any matter, and that these might be called theories. At this stage they will also understand and assess, in a sophisticated manner, the relationships between different perspectives and relate

these to evidence, whilst at the same time recognising that the quality of this evidence also needs to be assessed. In this way managers can work with situations of uncertainty, taking appropriate measures to manage the situation in relation to their current purposes. They see their 'experts' much more as partners in the development of this knowledge. Below, we give you an outline of the four stages of epistemological development described by Baxter Magolda (1992) as well as examples of how managers may express how they come to know their world.

The Stage of Absolute Knowing

In this stage knowledge is seen as absolute, for example 'right or wrong'. This is the least developed stage in the continuum. Learners believe that absolute answers exist in all areas of knowledge. When there is uncertainty it is only because there is no access to the 'right' answers. Such learners may recognise that opinions can differ between experts but this is differences of detail, opinion or misinformation. Formal learning is seen as a matter of absorption of the knowledge of the experts. Learning methods are based on absorbing and remembering.

__Julia__: I like clear directions where my manager does not mess around giving us lots of different theories for everything, rather just tells us what we need to know and we can get on and learn it and do it.

The Transitional Stage

There is partial certainty and partial uncertainty. Learners start to have some doubts about certainty and consider that authorities may differ in view only because the research has not yet been done. Learners see themselves as needing to understand rather than just acquire knowledge so that they may make judgements as to how best to apply it. Experts are seen as facilitating their understanding and the application of knowledge.

__Ivan__: I thought I came to eLAMP to stuff my head with what is known. Now I feel confused because there are lots of things that are not certain. I have to think about what I do with those ideas. This kind of professional development is different from what I thought.

The Independent knowing Stage

Learners understand that there is uncertainty but they consider that to manage this, everyone should develop her/his own beliefs or opinions. This seems to be an embryonic form of the more sophisticated stage of contextual knowing. Learners now expect to have an opinion and can begin to think through issues and to express themselves. They also regard their peers as having useful contributions to make to the development of their opinions. They will look to experts to support the development of independent views, providing a context for exploration. However 'In the excitement over independent thinking, the idea of judging some perspectives as better or worse is overlooked' (Baxter Magolda 1992, p.55).

__Ella__: I used to think that everything was so certain–like there was a right answer for everything and what was not right was wrong. Now I have become more aware contested spaces of work where people argue and debate over issues. I suppose it is a matter of coming to your own conclusions and sticking to those.

The Stage of Contextual knowing

This stage is one in which knowledge is understood to be constructed, and the way in which knowledge is constructed is understood in relation to the consideration of the quality of knowledge claims and the context in which they are made are taken into account. Opinions are now be supported by evidence. The view of the expert is of a partner in the development of appropriate knowledge or ways of thinking.

__Krishna__: The Manager I have now would have driven me mad last year. In meetings he just sits there and says 'OK, what do you think about this dilemma or that?' Then he goes quiet and we discuss it. Then he will make the odd remark, throw in a question and this usually sets us off again. I jot down some notes so that I take everything into consideration when I have to write it all up and when I write it up, I consider what everyone else has said.

In later work, Baxter Magolda (1996) suggested that learners progress their understanding of knowledge when they are challenged and in situations where they need to exercise independent judgements. Whilst this admittedly hard work, given only four of the undergraduates in Baxter Magolda's original study actually reached the stage identified as contextual knowing, this is the aspiration we have for tertiary education management professional practice. This level of knowing the world, we suggest, is the goal and critical reflective practice the means for managers wanting to mature their professional practice to match the conditions of our work today. This is because much of the thinking that underpinned 20th century epistemologies functioned with absolutist conceptions of knowledge. Whilst this might provide a degree of comfort, absolutist conceptions are ill-equipped for the complexities, ambiguities and turbulence that frame our contexts of work in tertiary education management today. To reiterate our earlier statement, we acknowledge that moving through any of the stages of epistemological development may be uncomfortable, especially at the threshold periods. Indeed as we move forwards, and sometimes back, we will likely encounter challenges that not only affect our learning progress but also impacts on our identities and our ontological perspectives, in other words our way of 'being' in the world.

An ontology of becoming...

Whilst epistemology considers our 'ways of knowing the world', the realm of ontology considers our 'ways of being in the world' and these perspectives are closely connected. Indeed, our ways of knowing the world are deeply entwined with our concepts of identity and how we 'are' in the world. We are encouraging managers to consider these understandings of self for their professional practice. This work is necessary for use to be able to embed a tradition of a critical reflective professional practice for tertiary education management. Within the field of tertiary education management, an emphasis on 'becoming' and the relentless effort it takes to 'become' is emphasised by Whitchurch's notion of the 'blended professional' (Whitchurch, 2008, 2009). Indeed Whitchurch (2013) makes the following connections between 'becoming a professional in higher education' (p. 6) and the expectations of continuing professional development, including developing a critical reflective practice (named in her paper as reflexivity):

Upon qualification, and subject to ongoing checks by their peers, the professional has significant autonomy and judgement in the use of this knowledge in their professional practice, and would expect to update it via reflexivity and accredited development activity (p. 7).

Concerns about identity and critical reflective practice have wider support in literature in the disciplines of education and management (see for example, Gardner et al., 2001; Graham, 2009; Klein, 1998; Raelin & Coghlan, 2006; Scanlon, 2011; Schön, 1983; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002; Vu & Dall'Alba, 2011). Notably, Petriglieri (2011) considers such 'identity workspaces' as relevant for leadership development practices which aim to benefit individuals, organisations, and society in changed and changing times:

Alongside the acquisition of knowledge and skills, identity workspaces facilitate the revision and consolidation of individual and collective identities. They personalize and contextualize participants' learning, inviting them to wrestle with the questions 'What does leading mean to us?' and 'Who am I as a leader?' Attention to both activity and identity deepens and

accelerates the development of individual leaders and strengthens leadership communities within and across organizations (p.2).

A good example of a conflation of ways of knowing and ways of being happens in times of deep learning. This is often experienced at the forward edge of our capabilities as we transcend by way of 'learning leaps' and cross 'transformative, integrative, bounded and troublesome conceptual thresholds' (Wisker et al., 2010, p. 5). These are the 'aha' moments where it becomes quite clear that we cannot now 'unknow' what we have just learnt about ourselves and/or our subject matter; thus we can never 'be' the same as before this event. Vu and Dall'Alba (2011) regard this often uncomfortable step as authentic learning on the way to becoming an authentic professional:

We do not become authentic only by chance, we can become authentic by choice; such as when we take responsibility for shaping our lives by challenging assumptions and renewing routinised ways of understanding or doing things (p. 100).

Next we link these theories of epistemological development and the ontology of becoming with critical reflective practice. Moon argues in her books on reflective learning (2004) and more strongly in a later book on critical thinking (2008), that the capacity for learners to progress to more sophisticated stages of thinking, requires the ability to reflect and to think critically at depth. Equally we suggest that it is unlikely that a learner could become adept at deep reflection and critical reflection unless she works from a contextual knowing view of the world. We explore in greater detail our concept of depth in reflection in the next section.

Ensuring depth of reflection within the realm of critical reflective practice

There is a reciprocal relationship between critical thinking and epistemological development and work on one supports the development of the other. From the previous section, therefore, we can start by saying that situations that demand independent judgements enhance both. The capacity to make responsible independent judgements may likewise epitomise good professional practice. But there are earlier stages in professional education than this. How can we help managers to engage in helpful critical reflection so they may move towards effective judgement-making? We observed earlier that there is a difficult shift for many learners from superficial descriptive reflection to deep reflection. Many teachers resort to one or other of the multitude of models of reflection in order to try to teach students how to reflect effectively. This sort of method often seems to us like recipe book following. Learners are asked to answer one question then another then another and they end up with a somewhat dependent question and answer task rather than learning how to use reflection as a general habit of the workplace. We return now to look in greater detail at Moon's 'graduated scenario' exercises that were briefly mentioned earlier in the paper.

The design of the exercises is based on three principles. The first is that trying to 'tell' a learner how to write reflectively is unlikely to work. In what language do we describe this essentially constructed term 'critical reflection'? Indeed definitions given in the literature will not show a learner how to reflect. The second principle is that an important source for learning is learning from examples. And the third principle is that we learn from discussion, from hearing what others say and how we respond to their ideas. Therefore these 'graduated scenario' exercises consist of three or four accounts of an incident to be explored by the learners. Some of the examples of changes from superficial to deep reflection used in these exercise include:

- The text moves from description to reflective writing;

- There is a shift from no questions asked, to questions asked but with no attempt at response, to a responding to questions within the text (the questions are not necessarily overt);
- The emotional influences are recognised, and then handled increasingly effectively
- there is a 'standing back from the event' whilst at the same time a deepening realisation of the part we have played in the event
- there is a shift from acceptance of the narrative to a self questioning and challenge to personal ideas and assumptions
- There is a shift towards recognition of the relevance of prior experience
- Others' views are taken into account for further reflection
- There is increasing metacognition (ie a review of own reflective thinking processes)

As our own reflective practices deepen they move into the realms of critical reflection, otherwise called reflexivity. Once these practices become intentional they become part of our professional practice, as much as our own personal development. We expect the critical reflective practice for the tertiary education management profession itself will naturally flow from the joining up of these maturing insights by tertiary education management professionals who individually commit to this practice. We will then see the benefits of this in the quality of our interactions with the self and with others and this will naturally mature our aspirations for what is possible for our profession.

Conclusion

Our discussion in this paper has been based on an understanding of professionalism as a particular quality of thinking that arises through education and experience which can be then called upoin to make independent judgements within professional contexts. We argued that developing a critical reflective professional practice is an intentional means of mitigating some of the complexities, uncertainties, turbulence and contestations that we encounter as part of our everyday work as tertiary education managers today. Within the Emerging Leaders and Managers Program (eLAMP), as in this paper, we have not only outlined a proposition as to why a critical reflective practice is important to individuals in the sector but as an aspiration for us all as the tertiary education management profession itself matures. More importantly, within eLAMP, contextual professional development opportunities, within a safe environment, have been provided to consider questions of identity and practice by integrating reflective questions throughout the program. This patterning is an important step for embedding an intentional critical reflection into practice—because all good practices take practice. In this way developing a critical reflective professional practice signals a commitment to 'becoming' and identifying as a professional which in turn connotes an understanding of 'how we are' in the world as much as how or what we know. It's all connected and we are ever at the centre of it, as Scanlon (2011) suggests:
There is then no one response to the question of how one becomes a professional; so there is no conclusion to the discussion. It is important, however, to keep asking the question because it seems to us that knowing where we are going is partly dependent on where we have been. Knowing the origins of professional claims as expressed in the professional essence gives our professional journey a place to begin and a context for lifelong reflexive practice (p. 246).

Biographical notes

Dr Heather Davis is an ATEM Fellow and is responsible for the delivery of the Emerging Leaders and Managers Program as part of her role at the LH Martin Institute. She has a

background in research management, lecturing, adult education, e-learning and librarianship and her research interests are in leadership development for changed and changing times.

Dr Jenny Moon works in the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice at Bournemouth University in the UK. She is the author of nine books on the topics of reflective learning, critical thinking, the use of learning journals, academic assertiveness and the role of story in higher education. She runs workshops in the UK and elsewhere mainly on the topics she has explored in the books.

References

Baker, A., & Kolb, D. A. (1993). Diversity, learning and good conversation. In R. R. Sims & R. F. Dennehy (Eds.), *Diversity and differences in organizations: an agenda for answers and questions* (pp. pp. 17-32). Westport, Conn.: Quorum Books.

Baxter Magolda, M. (1992). *Knowing and Reasoning in College Students: gender-related patterns in students' intellectual development,* San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Baxter Magolda, M. (1994). Post-college experiences and epistemology, *Review of Higher Education,* 18 (1) pp25–44.

Baxter Magolda, M., (1996) Epistemological development in graduate and professional education, *Review of Higher Education,* 19(3), p283-304.

Belenky, M., Clinchy, D., Goldberger., & Tarule, J. (1986) *Women's Ways of Knowing,* New York, Basic Books.

Brown, A., & Dowling, P. (1998). *Doing research/reading research: a mode of interrogation for education*. London: Falmer.

Cotter, R. J., & Cullen, J. G. (2012). Reflexive Management Learning. *Human Resource Development Review, 11*(2), pp. 227-253.

Cunliffe, A. L. (2004). On becoming a critically reflexive practitioner. *Journal of Management Education, 28*(4), pp. 407-426.

Davis, H. (2009). The concept of 'researcher as research instrument' within the hinterlands of research.   [Blog]   Retrieved   from http://leadershipliteracies.wordpress.com/2009/05/06/researcher-as-research-instrument/

Davis, H. (2010). Many agents acting in parallel: recognising patterns of interconnectness in leadership, learning and life. In M. Carlton (ed) (Ed.), *Exploring our world of interconnectness: in celebration of World Interconnectness Day 2010* (pp. 22-26). Hamilton, NZ: Maruki Books.

Davis, H. (2012). *Leadership Literacies for Professional Staff in Universities.* PhD Thesis, RMIT, Melbourne. Retrieved from http://researchbank.rmit.edu.au/view/rmit:160335.

Davis, H., & Macauley, P. (2011). Taking library leadership personally. *Australian Library Journal: Library leadership: Creating and sustaining a performance development culture Special Issue, 60*(1), pp. 41-53.

Gardner, H., Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Damon, W. (2001). *Good work: when excellence and ethics meet*. New York: Basic Books.

Graham, C. (2009). Investing in early career general staff. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 31*(2), pp. 175-183.

Klein, D. A. (1998). Managing professional intellect: Making the most of the best *The strategic management of intellectual capital* (pp. 87-98). Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann.

King, P.& Kitchener, K., (1994), *Developing Reflective Judgement*, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Maclean, M., Harvey, C., & Chia, R. (2012). Reflexive practice and the making of elite business careers. *Management Learning, 43*(4), pp. 385-404.

Mockler, N., & Sachs, J. (2011). *Rethinking educational practice through reflexive inquiry: essays in Honour of Susan Groundwater-Smith*. Dordrecht: Springer.

Moon, J., (2004). *A Handbook of Reflective and Experiential Learning,* London, Routledge.

Moon, J., (2006). *Learning Journals: a handbook for reflective practice and professional development,* London, Routledge.

Moon, J., (2008). *Critical Thinking: an exploration of theory and practice,* London, Routledge.

Parker, S. 2012, Time to trade in well-worn university model, *Campus Review*, 2, October, p. 13.

Perry, W., (1970). *Forms of Intellectual and Academic Development in the College Years,* New York,Holt, Rhinehart and Winston.

Petriglieri, G. (2011). Identity workpsaces for leadership development *INSEAD Working Papers Collection* (Vol. 27, pp. pp. 2-35). Paris: INSEAD.

Raelin, J. A., & Coghlan, D. (2006). Developing managers as learners and researchers: using action learning and action research. *Journal of Management Education, 30*(5), pp. 670-689.

Scanlon, L. (2011). *Becoming a professional: an interdisciplinary analysis of professional learning* (Vol. 16). New York: Springer.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Shacklock, G., & Smyth, J. (Eds.). (1998). *Being reflexive in critical educational and social research*. London: Falmer Press.

Tsoukas, H., & Chia, R. (2002). On Organizational Becoming: Rethinking Organizational Change. *Organization Science, 13*(5), 567-582.

Vu, T. T., & Dall'Alba, G. (2011). Becoming authentic professionals: learning for authenticity. In L. Scanlon (Ed.), *Becoming a professional: an interdisciplinary analysis of professional learning* (Vol. 16, pp. 95-108). New York: Springer.

Whitchurch, C. (2008). Shifting identities, blurring boundaries: the change roles of professional managers in higher education *The CSHE Research and Occassional Paper Series 10.2008*. Berkeley: University of California.

Whitchurch, C. (2009). The rise of the *blended professional* in higher education. *Higher Education, 58*(3), pp. 407-418.

Whitchurch, C. (2013). *Reconstructing identities in higher education: the rise of 'third space' professionals*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Wisker, G., Morris, C., Cheng, M., Masika, R., Warnes, M., Trafford, V., Lilly, J. (2010). Doctoral learning journeys, UK: The Higher Education Academy, 60 p.

Towards a smart campus:
Integrating virtual and physical learning space

Rob Ellis,
University of Sydney
robert.ellis@sydney.edu.au
and
John Holm, SocioDesign
john.holm@sociodesign.com.au

Abstract

Universities are moving towards creating learning experiences for students that integrate the physical learning spaces on campus with myriad virtual learning resources. Thinking about how to effectively integrate the physical and virtual requires a holistic view that focuses on learning hours not just teaching hours, which recognises the importance of informal learning, the campus and non-campus locations of learning, as well as a nuanced understanding of the role the virtual learning resources can play in bringing a sense of coherence to a student's overall learning experience.

Key words

student experience; physical learning space; virtual learning resources; smart campus.

Introduction

Universities are seeking to continually improve the student experience by designing integrated learning space from the perspective of the students, the teaching staff and learning outcomes (Oblinger, 2006). In this concept of learning space, there is an equitable value placed upon all categories of space in which learning occurs, from lecture theatres to course websites, from libraries to clinics, from learning hubs to performance spaces. The vision involves integrated services and support which align to the outcomes shaped by curriculum requirements, sufficiently technologically-mediated to provide personalised services and learning support for students so that the services are sensitive to the stage of learning and broader learning needs students find themselves in within the cycle of a course and their candidature.

At the heart of the approach is the adoption of a student perspective on learning and an awareness of their experience of moving back and forwards between physical and virtual learning space as they complete their learning tasks. At a high level of description for campus planning, one can conceive of students learning in class (lecture theatres, laboratories, clinics, seminars, tutorials etc.), on campus in informal areas (libraries, learning hubs, learning commons, cafes, outdoor learning spaces etc.) and online either on or off the physical campus. Our view is that for the university campus to holistically meet the learning needs of students it has to provide integrated learning space that combines the online learning experiences with the physical learning experiences in an integrated and seamless way to facilitate the learning outcomes of the tasks in which the students are engaged (Ellis &

Goodyear, 2010). The challenge of providing the campus in this way is that we need to align the design of integrated learning space to the outcomes, expectations and needs of students as they become effective, problem-solving, team-orientated contributors to the problems that society faces in whatever career they pursue. In this sense the intent of our design thinking is to provide facilities to create a smart campus.

Design thinking for the Smart Campus

Design thinking for the Smart campus involves an emerging number of core, inter-related concepts. First is a move away from campus design that focuses on the 'teaching hours', the hours of formal contact a student will have with university staff, to focusing on 'learning hours', the hours they spend meeting the course requirements (Laurillard, 2002). Second, a nuanced of the notion of student learning experience so that we are able to think about the combined affordances of effectively to design spaces (both physical and virtual) that meet the learning needs of students. Third, an erosion of the distinction between physical and virtual, in particular moving away from the idea that they are substitutable to the idea that they are mutually ontological constitutive (which has important implication for both course design as well as campus design).

The move to thinking about 'learning hours' or the non-contact hours is happening in campus planning, to various degrees, in many different locations as witnessed by the rapid emergence of spaces for students to meet and learning outside of the 'formal' contact hours of a course. These spaces, variously referred to as learning hubs, information commons, libraries and the like, support learning that happens outside of formal contact. However, in the design process, be it of a campus or simply a new university building design, it is often a struggle to incorporate the full range of requirements into design (Bennett, 2007). This is partly, in our view, because they have not been quantified or described to the same level of conceptualisation as formal hours typically have been. And when you throw online learning into the mix, the planning considerations for the student learning experience become a mixture of complex connections between the affordances of physical and virtual learning space and how they meet the needs of students and teaching staff across both physical formal and informal space.

In order to develop an effective integration model for physical and virtual space, we need understand better how student engage with physical and virtual resources of the university in their learning experience, and from that understanding, better plan for, and articulate, their requirements in a more dynamic space of learning which melds the physical and virtual.

The Challenge of Learning Hours Thinking

Our argument is simply that informal (Lippincott, 2006) and virtual learning space (Ellis & Goodyear, 2010) is a constituent part of the university campus and should inform space planning for learning and teaching, and that it this planning should be done from the perspective of students pursing learning outcomes, so that the design imperative of the space and support provided is driven by these purposes.

In practice it is quite difficult to effectively understand the nature of activities that students undertake in outside of formal learning hours. In part this is because:

- course proposals do not necessarily provide a description of the hours of learning required to complete the course when they go to their academic board for approval;
- it is difficult to assess which proportion of informal learning a student body will do on campus and which proportion will be off campus; and
- it is difficult to assess how online components of courses either complement or replace learning in class on campus, or in informal space on campus or off campus.

Despite these challenges, we argue that the total learning space, services and support that accompany those spaces should be driven by the curriculum requirements of learning and the learning needs of students and that this is the most fruitful context in which to pursue planning for learning space.

To crystallise the idea about 'learning hours', Figure 1 shows an example of the weekly learning and teaching hours required for one course within a degree. In this example, the teaching hours are a subset of the learning hours. In this course, the students are required to read the course readings, engage in online preparation for classes which is moderated by a teacher, go to the lecture, laboratory, seminar, spend time on campus and off practicing and producing ideas, concepts and tasks and engage in online research. Within this experience, there are five hours of formal teaching contact hours and 10 informal learning hours 10. Typically, a portion of the 10 hours will be conducted on campus and online (either on or off campus) and it is this part of the experience which is difficult to capture for planning processes.

Activity	where	Types of learning activities	Weekly teaching hours only	Weekly total learning hours
Reading course readings	Campus/home/ work/other	Reading, reflecting		2
Formal online preparation for classes	online	Inquiring, discussing, writing	1	1
Attending to ideas in lectures	Lecture theatre on campus	Listening, reflecting, questioning	1	1
Formal activities in laboratories	Wet/dry laboratories	examining, experimenting, modelling, interpreting	2	2
Formal activities in seminars	Seminar rooms on campus	Problem solving, discussing, debating,	1	1
Informal activities	Library/learning commons on campus/home/ work	Practicing, producing		4
Informal online research	Online	searching, analysing, synthesizing, producing		4
Total learning hours			5	15

Figure 1. Example of differences between teaching contact hours and learning hours each week at the level of a single course

For one course, a portion of an extra ten hours as an indication for the provision of informal and online learning to students may not seem much. However, when multiplied over the hundreds of programmes available to students, the thousands of courses that make up those programmes, and tens of thousands of students to pursue them, then this becomes important metric which routinely grows to millions of learning hours which should inform facility

provision of learning space, but which elided in facility planning when teaching contact hours is the only measurement for campus planning.

The Challenge of Diversity in Student Learning Experiences

Capturing the quantum of learning hours at a course level is only one aspect of the puzzle. A more critical and inextricably linked aspect is to understand the diversity of ways students combine physical and virtual experience as part of their learning.

One of the things we know is that students approach learning in different ways. Compounding this is the fact that students also juggle a number of competing demands that shapes the way they interact with the learning experience the university provides. For example, some students have working arrangements that conflict with attending campus, others live on campus and rarely leave. Some prefer working in group, others do not. Some extract as much benefit from online experiences as they can, others would rather restrict the online experience. What we need to be able to do is to create a nuanced and diverse understanding of how students go about learning in integrated space in order to be able to effectively support the student experience of learning at the level of a university across all disciplines and approaches to learning adopted by students.

To develop this type of understanding for this project, interviews were conducted with students who have experienced learning that combines virtual experiences with their experiences in class. The transcripts of the interviews were analysed in order to better understand the student experience of learning in integrated space. The challenge of qualitative evidence such as interviews is that each individual student's story taken separately highlights different facets of their learning experience. What we need from a planning perspective is a tool to 'think with', and so we decided to develop a number of 'personas' that represent the student experience in integrated learning space in categories.

Personas as a tool come from user-centred design, particularly from technology or internet design contexts, and are fictional but detailed characters that represent different segments or users of an artefact (see for example Pruitt & Adlin, 2010). In this instance our personas represent groups of students and provide a way for us to describe new behaviours that we can then consider in relation to planning. Below we present three personas developed from the interviews for this project. They are representative of groupings of students rather than individuals: Jonathan who attends campus daily; Ingrid who regularly attends campus but generally for formal contact hours, which includes arranged self directed group work; and Angela who rarely attends campus. We tell (something) of their stories below.

Persona 1: Jonathan
Jonathan is a young man who lives in shared housing in close proximity to the campus. He comes to campus everyday, but frequently goes home during the day.

He values campus life and enjoys the face-to-face interactions that he has with student, tutors and academic staff and the social learning, or as he termed it, the 'intellectual osmosis' that campus life engenders. He usually meets up with his peers outside of class to work together on tasks, and depending on his obligations, will either meet face-to-face or on-line to discuss the learning activities he is engaged in. When asked why he routinely integrates the online aspects of his course into his studies, he remarks that the online resources provide an

environment where 'student agency [is] enacted' because it enables a 'non-linear approach' to engaging with the material. He observed that his use of the online resources shapes how he engages with the course, enabling him to 'get into the mode, the thinking that sort of underlies his studies'. He also felt that he 'probably spent more time engaging with the subject matter of units' that make good use of virtual learning space than others.

Jonathan's account of his experience provides two interesting insights. First is that for him the virtual and physical engagements are substitutable – if he could not have group discussions face-to-face, the online discussion forum would be an effective substitute. Second, his perception was that virtual space has a capacity to create a space of non-linear engagement that allows students to explore subject matter and pathways of learning in their own way which can lead to spending more time engaged in the course.

Persona 2: Angela

Angela is a young woman for whom university is part of a busy schedule involving many other obligations. She misses a lot of lectures and makes up by listening to them online. Because she does not spend much time on campus, her engagement with the course depends on the online context as much as possible. For her, 'my online resources are just a continuation: it's [an] extension…it's not like one thing happens here, or thing happens here. I listen to [the] lectures and then I check [the] notes'. She spends time in the discussion boards where she finds there 'was a lot more freedom of thought in that…we could attack, approach these ideas, you connections to them'.

Angela makes significant use of the readings online. She routinely uses the course website while commuting, reading them on her phone and 'finds it quite easy to get the readings done when they are online'. Angela enjoys much of the online experience, finding it 'a nice mental challenge', but is not enthralled with all aspects. She finds the use of blogs in courses, 'tedious', seeing them as additional to the interactions and learning that she was interested in, and does not experience them as an integrated part

Interestingly because of Angela's heavy use of the online context, there seems to be a slightly different conceptualisation of the role of the physical campus in her learning experience. In this type of student experience of integrated learning space, the campus was for scheduled and formal activities rather than engagement with others from the course

Persona 3: Ingrid

Ingrid is a young woman who prioritises attendance at university and does not miss many lectures. She uses the online lecture notes because she feels there is usually more information there than necessarily conveyed in the lecture, and then goes to the lecture to develop a good understanding of the key ideas of the course.

She tends to avoid serendipitous discussion groups however because she feels she does not have time. She feels her course workload means she only has time to do the essentials in each course rather 'doing things just for interest'. She values group discussions when they are on-task and relevant to her studies, as they offer an opportunity to express a 'personal response'.

For Ingrid, the online experience brings coherence to her studies. 'It's really good to have everything to do with the course organised through one page, it makes it much easier', as well as providing an opportunity for reflective practice such that 'it wouldn't have been the same course without the (online) component'. In particularly the fluidity of the online resources

meant she can 'put it together in your own way which sort of was very like, encouraging sort of free thinking and all that, which was good'.

Ingrid provides insight into how students manage their learning experience by combining the face to face lectures with the online resources in order to develop a solid understanding of the course material. Interestingly part of the practice of combination here involves a degree of self directed learning when accessing the online material in order to make sense of the lecture material on her own terms.

The purpose of developing 'personas' in the context of learning space planning is to develop a sense of student-centred description of how relations amongst curricula, students, technology, and learning space is emerging. Key outcomes from this type of analysis shows that for students, physical and virtual learning experiences in a course were neither mutually exclusive nor substitutable; rather, they seem to shape each other to provide a more coherent and deeper learning experience.

The Challenge of Blurring the Physical and Virtual Distinction

The personas, or rather the interview texts from which we have built up these personas, suggest that the way students are using the online resources is becoming increasingly complex and nuanced. While in some instances virtual space is being used to substitute on-campus experience, is not the predominant strategy for students. Instead, students use virtual learning space to connect their experiences of learning across formal and informal space in ways that help them to best complete their learning tasks.

Some students use the online resources such as readings or lecture recordings because it enables them to incorporate learning into a time contested lifestyle. For Angela in particular the online discussion forums, the recorded lectures and online readings all enabled her to participate in learning, including the social aspects of discussion and debate, without having to physically be on campus.

However, other aspects of the personas suggest that students use virtual learning space to enrich their on campus experience. Rather than the online simply representing a 'replacement' of the face-to-face interaction because they could not get to the physical location, the personas describe how the online experience provides a different way to explore the material that enables students to shape their understanding of the course in new and unpredictable ways: Jonathan talks about this as Student Agency; Ingrid talks of 'put[ting] it together in your way'; and Angela spoke 'of continuation, an extension'.

What we found interesting is that all students also spoke how the online experience created a greater sense of engagement.

What the interview material tells us is that the online resources are changing the way students are engaging with courses, and certainly for some this means that they are using the spaces on campus in different ways.

Proxy estimations of learning space provision and service requirements

The three personas provide a way of thinking about planning, which helps us articulate the requirements and provide a rich description of how students use and construct their experiences of the physical and virtual space. What these personas are not designed to do is to provide a sense of the size and shape of integrate learning space. Developing an understanding of the size and shape is an on going challenge, particularly of how virtual space is used but also of its nexus with the physical. The following provides a description of emerging learning space metrics which starts to address this gap, but is a long way from reaching the 'learning hours' concept discussed earlier in the paper.

Understanding changing course design

In the absence of aggregated detailed course level descriptions of learning space provision, we turn to relational measures amongst categories of learning space as proxy measures for changes in course design. In the following discussion, we look at data sources describing use of medium/large lecture theatres, course websites, the use of personal devices over wireless networks and the use of lecture recordings online.

Figures 2, 3 and 4 show the use of categories of lecture theatres and seminar rooms at an Australian metropolitan university and use of the online environment provided by that university for learning in courses. The purpose of using these figures as an example is to consider relativities amongst the categories of shared learning space, rather than the absolute figures.

Figures 2 and 3 show average frequency of use of medium/large lecture theatres and medium/large seminar rooms, respectively.
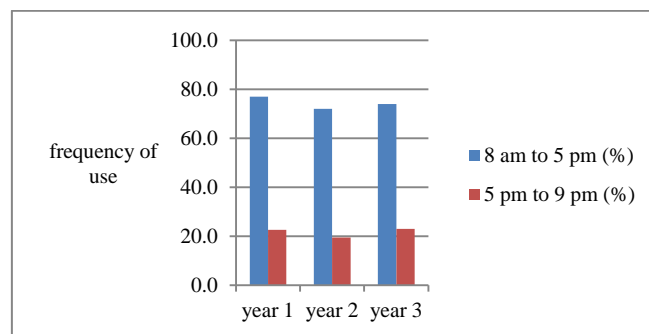

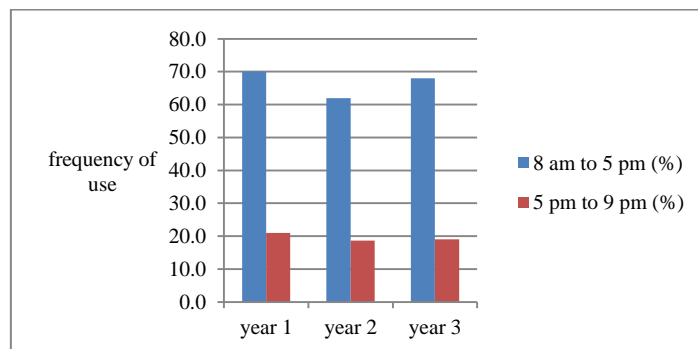Figure 2. Frequency of use medium/large lecture theatres

Figure 3. Frequency of use medium/large seminar rooms

Figure 4 shows use on course websites provided for the purposes of learning. This graph requires some further explanation.

At the beginning of each teaching period, teaching staff rate the purpose of the course website;

- A1 websites provide curriculum information. Each of the following categories provide curriculum information and fulfil an additional purpose.
- A2 websites require the students to actively participate in learning (either in class or online) but the activities are not assessed.
- B1 websites are related to assessment.
- B2 websites replace a portion of the face-to-face teaching contact.
- B3 websites are related to assessment and replace face-to-face teaching contact.
- C1 websites enable the course to be studied off campus.

An analysis of Figure 4 shows that there is a general trend away for an increased use of the online environment provided for learning in courses from simply providing curriculum information, to something more involved. Between year 1 and year 3, there was an increase in mode B websites from 25 to 40 per cent. In terms of a replacement of physical space by course websites (B2 and B3), this increase went from 7 to 10 per cent. In real numbers, out of approximately 6000 courses, this means that in year 3 approximately 600 courses are replacing a portion of face-to-face contact with moderated online learning. On closer inspection of actual activity, the average amount of time replace was 1.5 teaching contact hours.

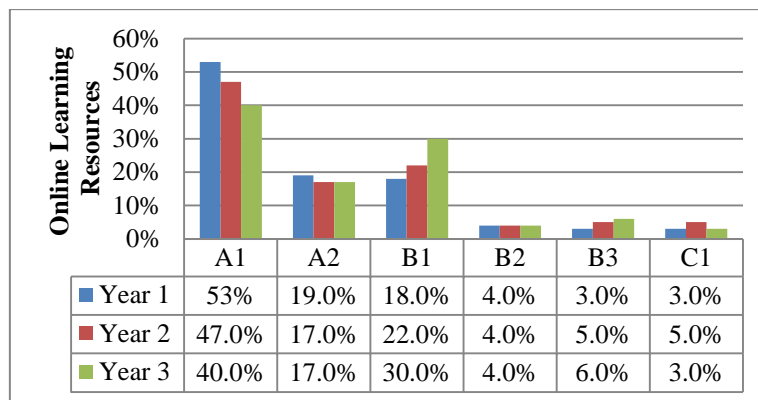| Online Learning Resources	A1	A2	B1	B2	B3	C1
Year 1	53%	19.0%	18.0%	4.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Year 2	47.0%	17.0%	22.0%	4.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Year 3	40.0%	17.0%	30.0%	4.0%	6.0%	3.0%

Figure 4. Categories of course websites used to support student learning

Interpretation of what these metrics might mean needs to be made with within the broader ecology of the university including growth in student numbers (between year 2 and 3) and other pressures on facilities.

- Medium/large lecture theatre use dropped from year 1 to 2 and rose between 2 and 3 (mostly likely because of changes numbers of courses with large cohorts)
- Medium/large seminar rooms use followed a similar trend. (The drop probably partially linked with increase online use and the increase to do with increasing student numbers)
- use of the online environment by teachers for course provision to complement learning on and off campus grew overall across the four years

Analysing these utilisation metrics makes the point that understanding the requirements for learning space provision needs to take account of the changing structure of the courses being offered to students as well as the general demographic patterns for the institution. It also makes the point that relationship between physical and virtual space provision for learning is not a straightforward one that can be captured by an increase in one and a reduction in the other. The associations between the two are more complex and related to other variables best understood within the context of learning hours and student numbers.

Simple metrics such as the ones above show that student learning routinely and increasingly extends beyond the formal classroom. We argue the focus of the design intent should be on an integrated university campus, include physical formal, informal learning spaces and virtual learning space. At the level of a university facility planning, we seek trends and relational rules-of-thumb which give us a sense of the size and shape of changes that are afoot in the student experience of learning. As this change is rapid, it is important to develop an on going nuanced understanding of what student learning involves as a design challenge for learning space. A variety of sources of data are available, including what students report as their patterns of use, and the observable ant-tracks that they leave on the physical and virtual campus. The following canvasses a few.

Discovering evidence about use of virtual space on campus

There are a number of emerging sources of evidence about the students' digital footprint on the campus. As with the previous metrics, they provide some potentially useful insights but often lack sufficient contextual detail to interpret intelligibly. The following graphs illustrate the strength and weakness of three of these data sources.

The first source of data that gives an indication of use of virtual learning space is student use of course websites as measured by number of sessions.
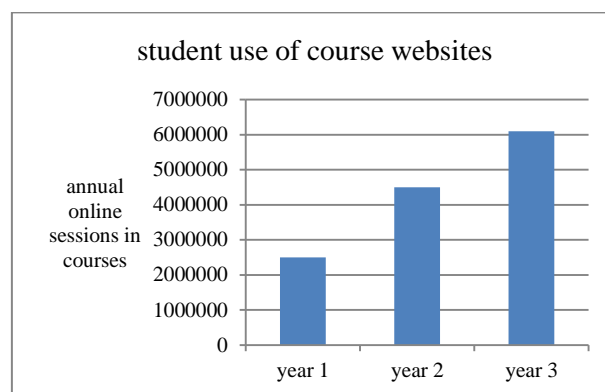

Figure 5. Growth in annual number of student online sessions for courses

What this figure shows an increase in the use of course websites over a three-year period. The underlying intent of the design of virtual learning space for the students positions the course websites as an entry point to all relevant e-resources and activities for their studies. Behind every course website is access to seven enterprise eLearning systems, with more than 60 eLearning tools, in which teaching staff have provided more than 3 million learning objects (text, image, audio, video files) for the purposes of student learning. Over that period of time, students have doubled their use of the resources from just around 2.5 million online sessions each year, to just over 6 million.

While this data gives us some ideas about student use, it has a number of limitations for space and services planning purposes. For example;
- It does not tell us where students tend to engage with the course websites
- It does not tell us why they are engaging with the course websites and the types of services they expect to support them?

Another source of data which provides some insight into the on campus patterns of use of virtual space by students is the time their personal devices connects to wireless points and the amount of data the students request through the connection.

When a student comes onto campus, and into range of a wireless points on campus, their personal device connects to the wireless network. While they are on campus, they have the potential to remain continuously connected to the campus as their device switches between wireless points. We are able to 'track' how long they remain on campus by examining the wireless logs. We are also able to refine our analysis by also comparing the amount of data that students download during their stay on campus. In the following analysis, we assume:
- connections transferring less than 1MB are incidental connections and represent times the student is on campus but not engaged with the online resources
- connections that transfer more than 1MB are requested by students either when the system application is set up initially in the device, or in real time because the student downloads the data

Figure 6 shows connections over 1MB.

monthly student device wireless duration

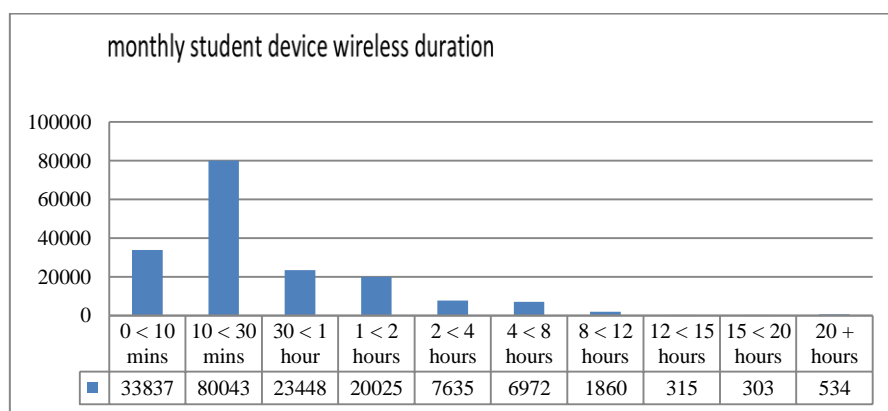|	0 < 10 mins	10 < 30 mins	30 < 1 hour	1 < 2 hours	2 < 4 hours	4 < 8 hours	8 < 12 hours	12 < 15 hours	15 < 20 hours	20 + hours
	33837	80043	23448	20025	7635	6972	1860	315	303	534

Figure 6. An example of monthly student device wireless duration

Figure 6 shows connections of student devices to university wireless points on the city campus. Of the approximately 174,000 connections, about 20 per cent are of more than one hour and we know from an analysis of the wireless point locations that these connections are heavy in use in informal spaces, particularly around formal classes.

While this data gives us some ideas about student use, it has a number of limitations for planning purposes.
- it includes all access to virtual space, not just space required for course outcomes
- it does not reveal the purpose of the use of the virtual learning space
- it is not clear where the students are when their device receives significant amounts of data

44

To improve interpretation of this type of data source, students will be surveyed with the following questions;

Survey - student wireless use for learning
1. Do you use a personal device on campus to access learning resources wirelessly? What type?
2. How many hours per week on average would you use wireless access on campus to support your learning? Which days?
3. For what purposes do you use wireless access on campus to support your learning?
4. What type of services do you expect to support your use of wireless access on campus?

Another source of data to indicate student use of virtual learning space is recorded lectures. Figure 7 shows the number of downloads by students over a three year period.
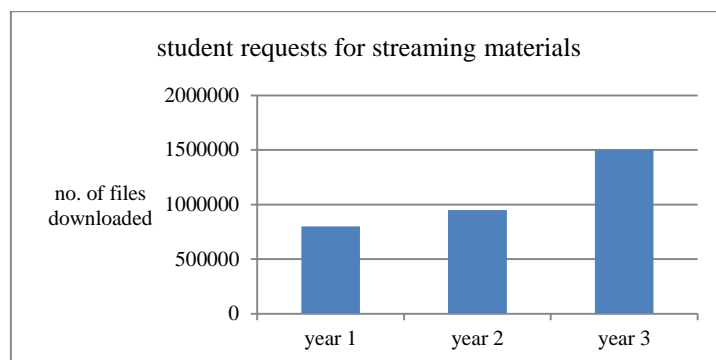

Figure 8 - Student downloads of predominantly video-based learning resources (the majority being recordings of lectures)

This is a growing service to students at the university. The graph shows that in year 3, there were requests from students for approximately 1.5 million recordings during the year. To improve interpretation of this type of data source, students will be surveyed with the following questions;

Survey - student use of lecture recordings

1. If lecture recordings are available for your course, do you still attend lectures? If so, why? If not, why?
2. When lecture recordings are available for your lectures, what percentage of them do you download?
3. When you download a 1 hour lecture as an example, how long does it take you to review it?
4. Where do you normally review your lecture recordings? On campus? At home? On a desktop/laptop/tablet/phone?
5. What type of services do you expect to support your use of wireless access on campus?

Experience and Observation
Our medium term goal is to continue to develop planning metrics like the ones above with an increasingly stronger context in which to interpret them so that their contribution to planning

becomes more valuable. Immediate goals will be to develop more robust analyses of the wireless data logs, linking both physical location via the wireless point address and virtual location by which online resources the student accesses.

In this project we have started to analyse the wireless logs in relation to the personas developed to date. Seeking to confirm whether Jonathan's everyday attendance on campus shows any difference to Ingrid's couple of days or Angela's once a week only. And while this work is still preliminary, the data does provide connections between the 'personas' and the learning space data. For example the graph below shows the relative proportion of data downloaded by pattern of attendance on campus.
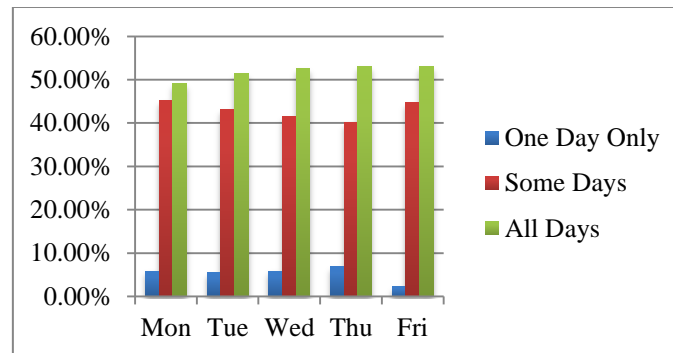

Figure 8. Student patterns of campus attendance by percentage data downloaded

What this figure shows is that in Jonathan (who attends All Days) and Ingrid (who attends Some Days) are using the campus in somewhat the same way to support their learning, combining both on campus attendance and virtual resources in that they both download similar amounts of data. Angela on the other hand (who attends One Day Only) downloads little data, which is explained by the fact she is so active online off campus that when she is on campus she is seeking the face to face contact that the physical collocation provides.

Conclusions

The structure of university learning space has changed. For students learning in modern learning space, it routinely involves combinations of physical and virtual learning space. The relationship of virtual learning space to physical learning space is not straightforward, but rather complex and nuanced and is best understood from a student learning perspective. For campus planning purposes, learning hours is a useful conceptual tool to contextualise design processes, but is hard to capture from real data sources readily available. As a substitute, proxy data derived from observational evidence, combined with experiential evidence from students provides a more meaningful framework in which to plan for campus facilities. New sources of metrics of virtual learning space, combined with metrics from physical learning space, will continue to be valuable, but should be accompanied by student experiential data to get at the underlying meaning of the metrics to strengthen their interpretation.

Biographical Notes

Rob Ellis is Associate Professor and Director of eLearning and Learning Space at the University of Sydney. His work is aimed at improving the student experience of learning by providing integrated learning space that supports sustainable and new ways of learning and teaching.

John Holm is a sociologist who works with the tertiary education sector to deliver built outcomes that support their operational requirements and cultural aspirations. He works specifically to create places that foster and support effective communities of practice.

References

Bennett, S. (2007). First Questions for Designing Higher Education Learning Spaces. *Journal of Academic Librarianship,* 33(1): 14-26.

Ellis, R.A. and Goodyear, P. (2010). *Student experiences of e-learning in higher education: the ecology of sustainable innovation.* London: Routledge Falmer.

Joint Information Systems Committee[JISC] (2006). *Designing spaces for effective learning: a guide to 21st century learning space design* . Bristol: JISC.

Laurillard, D. (2002). *Rethinking university teaching: a conversational framework for the effective use of educational technology* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.

Lippincott, J.K. (2006) Linking the Information Commons to Learning. In D. Oblinger, (2006). (Ed) *Learning spaces*. Washington,D.C.:Boulder, CO, Educause.

Oblinger, D. (2006). (Ed) *Learning spaces*. Washington, D.C. ; Boulder, CO, Educause.

Pruitt, J., & Adlin, T. (2010). *The persona lifecycle: keeping people in mind throughout product design*. Morgan Kaufmann.

Case study: development of the University of Melbourne policy on policy, delegations policy and delegations register

Brigid Freeman
Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne
brigid.freeman@unimelb.edu.au

Abstract

This case study explores the application of the policy cycle to implement two related University of Melbourne governance policy projects. The meta-policy (policy on policy) project represented a continuous quality improvement initiative using an elongated policy cycle, whereas the delegations project, triggered by an institution-wide policy suite review, was implemented as a policy development initiative using a truncated policy cycle. The case study focuses on the development of key elements of institutional meta-policy (range of policy instruments, classification scheme, application of policy instruments, approval authorities, and policy cycle stages) and delegations documentation, including key elements of the delegations policy (framework, guiding legislative provisions, delegations principles), the attendant schedules (finance, building works, research-related, human resources and other contract/document delegations) and delegations register. The case study illustrates that institutional meta-policy and delegations policy are inherently interdependent, and may be concurrently improved through implementation of the policy cycle involving extensive policy stakeholder consultation and policy benchmarking.

Key words

Institutional policy, university policy, meta-policy, delegations, governance

Introduction

This case study traces two related University of Melbourne governance policy projects undertaken in 2012-2013 by the University Secretary's Department. The first project - the meta-policy (Dror, 1971), or 'policy on policy' project - involved the development of a new *Policy on Policy* and attendant *Policy Development and Review Procedure*, and concomitant revocation of the former *Melbourne Policy Framework*. The second project - the delegations project - involved a thorough examination of dispersed delegations documentation to develop a new *Delegations Policy*, schedules, *Financial Delegations Procedure* and delegations register. The meta-policy project represented a continuous quality improvement initiative, whereas the delegations project, triggered by an institution-wide policy suite review, was undertaken as a policy development initiative using a truncated policy cycle.

These projects were undertaken within the context of emerging regulatory requirements. The Commonwealth government established the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) as the tertiary sector regulator to enhance sector quality using a risk-based and proportionate regulatory approach (Commonwealth, 2011a). TEQSA's *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* (Commonwealth, 2011b) applies to all tertiary sector providers, including universities, TAFE institutes and registered providers,

regardless of their actual or perceived risk profile. Obligations under the TEQSA *Threshold Standards* are additional to other Commonwealth government regulatory and reporting requirements, which are increasing (PhillipsKPA, 2006, cited in PhillipsKPA, 2012; Peterson, 2004), and already considered excessive (Universities Australia, 2012). Department of Innovation, Climate Change, Industry, Science and Research and Tertiary Education (DIICCSRTE) reporting requirements, estimated to cost Australian universities 66,000 staff days or $26 million annually are inclusive of reporting 'relating to general accountability for public funding, quality assurance, consumer information and protection, policy development, policy and program evaluation, and the general information needs of the Parliament and the community' (PhillipsKPA, 2012, p. 28)]

The *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* and subsequent TEQSA briefings (Fitzgibbon & Treloar, 2013) are particularly pertinent to institutional meta-policy and institutional delegations documentation. TEQSA will look for evidence from Australian tertiary sector providers of policy development (including benchmarking and benchmarking relationships), policy approval processes, policy implementation, and policy review (including review schedules). TEQSA also requires under the *Threshold Standards* that all Australian tertiary sector providers have financial, academic and managerial delegations that are documented, observed and reviewed. These requirements are onerous, and represent a paradigm shift from policy development-focused activity to policy implementation evaluation, review and compliance focused activity. Few Australian universities could readily evidence compliance across their suite of academic, administrative and governance policy, particularly in terms of policy benchmarking, implementation monitoring and review. With respect to policy review, many Australian universities are demonstrably struggling to comply (Freeman, 2012a). Furthermore, few Australian universities could readily comply with obligations regarding documentation of academic delegations.

These challenges prioritise consideration of institutional meta-policy and delegations documentation in terms of prevalence, characteristics and implementation. Clarke et al. (2012) coined the phrase 'the policy paradox' to describe the discrepancy, within the context of increasing regulation, between the imperative for institutional policy management and systems, and the concurrent lack of dedicated policy resources (p. 11). The recently announced Commonwealth government 'red tape' review of tertiary sector regulation may well impact on these requirements as the Commonwealth attempts to discern 'the optimal balance between maximising quality of higher education and transparency while minimising red tape burden in our new regulatory and data management arrangements' (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013, n.p.). Concurrently, the Commonwealth is considering the potential applicability of a model of earned autonomy: 'a system in which experienced, compliant, high performing higher education providers can earn the right to a minimal level of regulation … consistent with [the Council of Australian Governments'] best practice regulation framework − it is proportional and risk based' (p. 4). This model could well establish a TEQSA regulatory framework that differentiates between university and non-university tertiary sector providers, including obligations relevant to institutional meta-policy and delegations documentation.

Methods

This paper presents a descriptive case study (Cresswell, 2012; Yin, 2008) of two institution-specific policy projects. With respect to the meta-policy project, this paper traces the implementation of a sequenced policy process (Lasswell, 1951), or policy cycle (Althaus et al., 2013) to develop the *Policy on Policy* and attendant procedure. Stages involved in the meta-policy project included identification and confirmation of the policy requirement, preliminary consultations, drafting, benchmarking, consultation, revision, compliance checking, endorsement, approval, communication and publication. As the second project flowed from the University of Melbourne Policy Simplification Project - which used a minimalist approach involving formatting revision, restricted consultation, approval and publication - the delegations project used a truncated policy cycle involving stages of drafting, benchmarking, consultation, revision, compliance checking, endorsement, approval, communication and publication. Both projects were undertaken by the (then) University Policy Officer (myself) through the University Secretary's Department. Both projects involved close collaboration with the (then) General Counsel (appointed as Special Counsel mid-project), and Academic Secretary. The Legal Policy Working Party provided project oversight for the second project. This case study is intentionally rich in description and detailed information; it provides a model for the development of institutional policy transferable to other tertiary sector institutions.

Literature

Australian tertiary sector providers have developed institutional academic, administrative and governance policy to guide operations spanning the teaching and learning, research and research training, governance, corporate and 'third stream' functions. Institutional policy ('policy') may be defined as formally articulated statements of principle. Institutional policy 'provide(s) a general, overall, rational canopy for specific actions, procedures, or operations' (Fincher, 1999, p. 10). Clarke et al. (2012) confirm the central role of institutional policy:

Institutional policies are vital to the well-being of institutions of higher education. They promote legal and regulatory compliance; are the primary means of informing the faculty, staff, and students of rights, responsibilities, and procedures; are a standard by which institutions are judged in litigation; and can be an important facet of shared governance. (p. 12)

Institutional policy may be developed through implementation of the policy cycle. The policy cycle is a guide, or heuristic, for policy development; it 'brings a system and a rhythm to a world that might otherwise appear chaotic and unordered' (Althaus et al., 2013, p. 32). The policy cycle, or sequenced policy process, was initially proposed in the seminal work of Lasswell (1951), and subsequently adopted by others (Brewer, 1974; Jenkins, 1978; Brewer and deLeon, 1983; and deLeon, 1999). In Australia, Bridgman and Davis (2004) developed the Australian Policy Cycle as a heuristic to conceptualise the public policy process:

While there remains no unifying theory regarding policy process (Smith & Larimer, 2009; Weible et al., 2012), and there is limited literature regarding institutional policy (Clark et al., 2012; Blobaum et al, 2005), Australian tertiary sector providers have broadly adopted the policy cycle heuristic to scaffold their institutional policy processes.
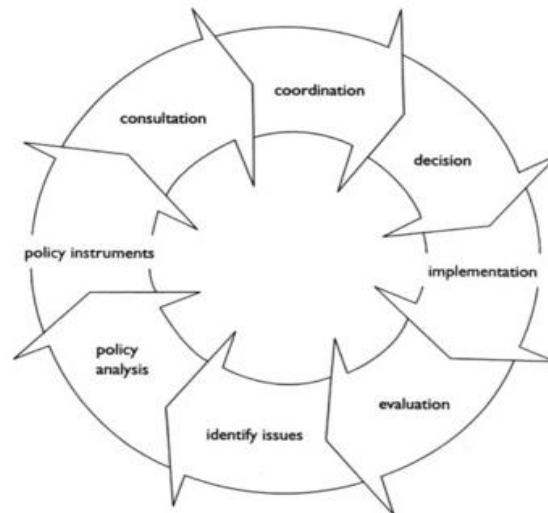
Figure 1. Australian Policy Cycle (Bridgman and Davis, 2004)

The Association of Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) policy cycle (Aitken et al., 2010) outlined in *Policy without (much) pain* (2010), the United States Association of College and University Policy Administrators (ACUPA) Policy Development Process with Best Practices (Ford, Petersen & Spellacy, 2001; Capell, Ford & Spellacy, 2004) and Institutional Policies and Procedures Approval Process (Clark et al., 2012) are three of the very few examples represented in the research literature. *Policy without (much) pain* (Aitken et al., 2010) presents a sequenced policy development process including stages of: planning a project; research; consultation; impact assessment; drafting; approval; implementation, communication and training; and policy review. The ACUPA policy cycle includes the cycle stages of:

- predevelopment (be proactive in issue identification, identify an owner for each policy, determine the best 'policy path', assemble a team to develop policy);
- development (agree on common definitions and terms, use a common format, obtain approval at owner and senior levels, plan communication, publicity and education, put information online and accessible from one location; provide search capability); and
- maintenance (develop a plan for active maintenance and review, encourage users to provide feedback, archive changes and date new releases with an 'effective date', measure outcomes by monitoring or testing)

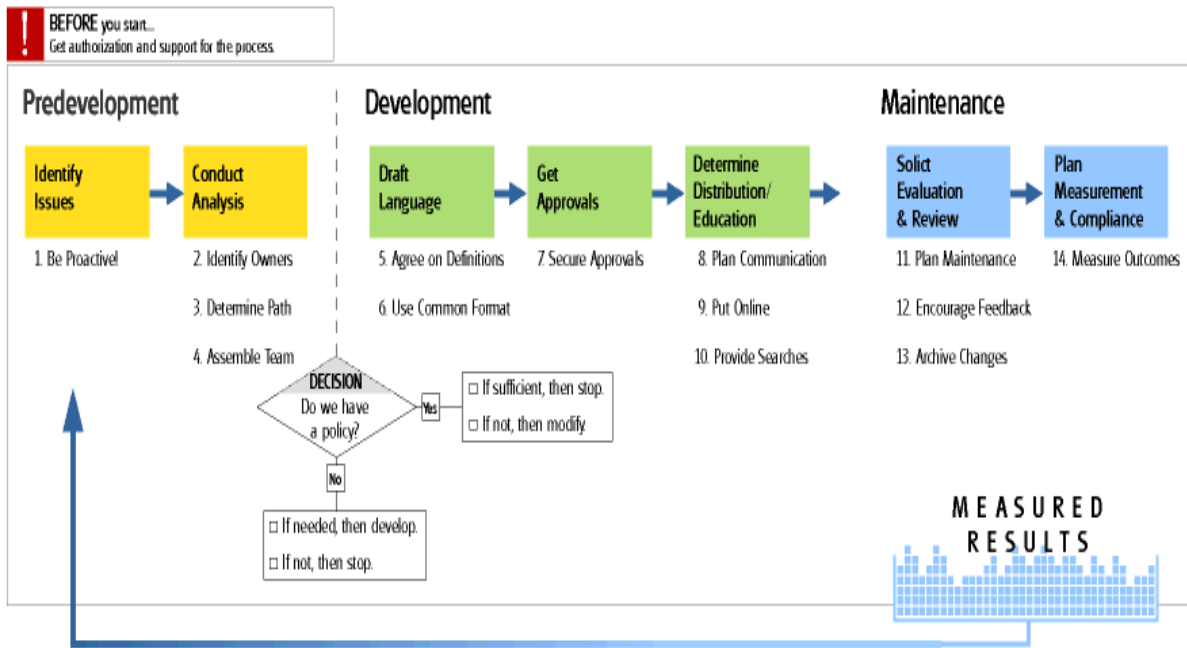(Ford, Petersen & Spellacy, 2001; Capell, Ford & Spellacy, 2004).

Figure 2. ACUPA Policy Development Process with Best Practices

The Institutional Policies and Procedures Approval Process (Clark et al., 2012) includes stages of: initiation and development, institutional entity review (where 'entity' refers to representative bodies), campus community review, Board of Trustees approval and posting of policy.

Freeman (2011) asserts that 'within the context of Australian universities, delegations documentation articulates 'who does what' in relation to administrative and/or academic powers generally across the institution'. Delegations are a governance mechanism, employed to support clarity and transparency in decision-making (Shattock, 2006). Kaplan (2004) suggests that 'while the patterns of delegation and practices of shared governance are neither absolute nor uniform … understanding how governance is defined and implemented … constitutes an essential project for understanding the behaviour of higher education organisations' (p. 166).

Case study – meta-policy project

The first stage of the meta-policy project involved an examination of the *Melbourne Policy Framework* to identify whether any policy gap or requirement existed. The *Melbourne Policy Framework* was developed in 2010 to provide the 'operational structure for describing, ordering, developing and maintaining the University's policies and procedures and ensuring consistency in the framing and presentation of these documents' (Martin & Hill September 2010, p. 3). Whilst essentially equivalent to institutional meta-policy, the *Melbourne Policy Framework* was never approved or promulgated as policy. It was approved by the Senior Vice-Principal rather than by Council as would have been appropriate for a governance policy; published on the University Secretary Departments' webpage rather than in the Melbourne Policy Library; and presented in report rather than policy template format.

Following initial approval the *Melbourne Policy Framework* was substantively amended in April, October and December 2011; firstly to introduce new statements of principle, and

secondly to provide policy-related information. The first amendments introduced the governance category of policies and provided for schedules as appendices. Subsequent amendments established the classification scheme for the Melbourne Policy Library, introduced additional consultation-related policy cycle stages, and deleted the section regarding policy 'review and deletion'. In addition, amendments inserted supporting documentation directly into the body of the *Melbourne Policy Framework*, including detailed contacts, a list of policy resources, guidelines for clear writing and information regarding roles and responsibilities of two additional officers involved in policy (that is, the University Compliance Officer and Academic Secretary). These amendments extended the document from the original nine pages (inclusive of two pages of appendices), to 18 pages (exclusive of appendices).

In terms of key elements, the 2011 version of the *Melbourne Policy Framework* included a diagram of the 'Policy Framework Hierarchy', established the range of policy instruments (policy, procedure, guideline), and articulated definitions and key principles for each policy instrument. In terms of the application of instruments, the *Melbourne Policy Framework* stated that policy was 'applicable across the University' (p. 5); procedures were 'applicable University-wide' (p. 6) and guidelines 'normally include(d) content … applicable across the University' (p. 6). As such, the *Melbourne Policy Framework* did not recognise procedures or guidelines specific to an organisational unit, nor 'faculty policy' provided for under University of Melbourne *Statute 5.1 – Academic Structures* (2009). The *Melbourne Policy Framework* identified the Melbourne Policy Library as the authoritative source for policy and university-wide procedures, and established the Melbourne Policy Library classification scheme for governance, administrative and academic policy.

The *Melbourne Policy Framework* established the 'Policy and Procedure Development Process' and provided detailed information regarding the 'process steps' – essentially the policy cycle stages:

Step 1 - **confirm requirement** for new policy/procedure …
Step 2 - conduct **targeted consultation** with key stakeholder groups …
Step 3 - **draft** policy/procedure and implementation plan …
Step 4 - **review** draft policy/procedure and implementation plan …
Step 5 - conduct **broad consultation** with full range of stakeholder groups …
Step 6 - **revise** draft policy/procedure and implementation plan as required …
Step 7 - **submit** policy/procedure and implementation plan to **approving authority …**
Step 8 - **amend** policy/procedure **as required by approving authority** …
Step 9 - **publish** policy/procedure in Melbourne Policy Library …
Step 10 - carry out **implement**ation plan (pp. 10-14, emphasis added).

The *Melbourne Policy Framework* was silent with respect to policy review following the 2011 amendments to delete the 'review and deletion' section, other than to note that 'development or revision … may result from ... the regular cycle of policy review' (p. 8) and further, that 'for all policies and procedures, changes to titles, names, references or hyperlinks that do not otherwise affect document content may be approved by the Responsible Officer' (p. 15). The *Melbourne Policy Framework* identified approval authorities for policies, university-wide procedures and university-wide guidelines, but did not recognise approval authorities for local procedures and guidelines (that is, procedures and guidelines localised to one or more specific organisational units). Whilst the *Melbourne Policy Framework* did not policy templates or specifications; such supporting documents were available online.

The *Melbourne Policy Framework* focused on policy development, policy presentation and publication in the Melbourne Policy Library, and this focus was reflected in the policy-related activity of the University Secretary's Department in 2011-early 2012. The document detailed the policy-related responsibilities for central positions (University Policy Officer, University Compliance Officer, Responsible Officers, Implementation Officers and the Academic Secretary), and provided contact information (telephone, email, department). In summary, the 2011 version of the *Melbourne Policy Framework* included 'meta-policy-like' provisions, procedural steps, guidelines, a diagram, a process map, tables and detailed contact information to guide the development and approval of university-wide policy and university-wide procedures in a consistent format for publication in the Melbourne Policy Library. This synopsis of the *Melbourne Policy Framework* provided the basis for preliminary consultations with policy stakeholders.

Preliminary consultations were undertaken (March – April, 2012) to meet key policy stakeholders and discuss approaches to institutional policy as articulated in the *Melbourne Policy Framework* and reflected in policy management practices. Stakeholders consulted included managers and policy practitioners from human resources, finance, property services, information communication technology, the Academic Board secretariat, the Office of the Provost, the Research Office, Melbourne School of Graduate Research (MSGR), the library and some faculties and schools. The preliminary consultations confirmed the need to clarify key elements of the policy framework and introduce contemporary policy management practices in terms of centralised, strategic oversight of institutional policy development, amendment and review, co-ordination of the policy cycle, delivery of capacity building policy resources, and enhanced consultation and communication. These practices would be supportive of a shift from policy development focused activity (given pending completion of the Policy Simplification Project) to policy implementation, evaluation and practice review focused-activity with centralised strategic oversight.

Drafting was undertaken (approximately May – July, 2012) to establish the parameters for a new institutional meta-policy. The draft *Policy on Policy* was prepared using the headings in the policy template (title, relevant legislation, scope, policy, schedules, related documents, definitions, Responsible Officer, Implementation Officer, review, version history), but not the formal template due to enforced formatting restrictions. Drafting progressed alongside policy benchmarking, or policy borrowing with a view to voluntarily transferring policies and negative lessons through benchmarking in the form of copying and emulation (as per Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). Benchmarking involved analysis of the content of institutional meta-policy, attendant procedures and related local documents publicly available from all (40) Australian universities' policy web-pages and repositories. Benchmarking confirmed the limited value of comparison at the policy suite or title level (Clarke et al, 2012), and was undertaken specifically at the policy content and supporting documentation content level. The benchmarking examined: prevalence of institutional meta-policy, characteristics and key policy provisions, approval authorities (for each policy instrument; for each category or policy type; for initial approval, minor and not minor amendment), application (institution-wide; local), the relationship between central and local documents, and the policy cycle. Benchmarking suggested areas for improvement, and provided examples for policy borrowing potentially transferable to the University of Melbourne context.

Consultations were undertaken (August – September, 2012) with technical experts, policy practitioners and the Special Counsel. The draft *Policy on Policy* was circulated via email to

the Melbourne Policy Network – which includes senior executives, Deans, Heads of School/Department, corporate heads, student representatives and advocates - via the *August 2013 Melbourne Policy Bulletin*. Invitations to contribute were extended for a four week period, predicated on the advice that whilst all contributions would be given due consideration, they would not necessarily all be reflected in the final documentation. In addition, the draft *Policy on Policy* was made available on the internet-based *Draft Policy Consultation Notice Board*. Approximately 20 written and verbal responses were received.

Revision was subsequently undertaken and respondents were advised of the outcomes with respect to their individual contributions. As a result of consultations with the Senior Vice Principal detailed policy provisions regarding the *University Policy Development and Review Cycle* were extracted from the draft *Policy on Policy*, amended to read as procedural provisions, and included in a new draft *Policy Development and Review Procedure*.

Extensive consultations were undertaken with the Special Counsel for compliance checking and risk mitigation purposes. As the *Policy on Policy* was drafted to replace the *Melbourne Policy Framework* and delegations documentation was concurrently under review, compliance checking and risk mitigation strategies focused on ensuring alignment with University legislation (the Act, statutes and regulations), and internal logic and consistency. The revised draft *Policy on Policy* and new draft procedure were subsequently uploaded to the *Draft Policy Consultation Notice Board* for reference, and members of the Melbourne Policy Network advised accordingly via the *November 2012 Melbourne Policy Bulletin*.

The draft *Policy on Policy* and attendant procedure were endorsed by the advisory group to the Senior Vice Principal, the Administrative Business Advisory Group (ABAG) on 29th November 2012, endorsed by Academic Board on 6th December 2012, and endorsed by Senior Executive on 12th December 2012. The documents were then submitted through the Senior Vice Principal's report for consideration by Council (March 2013), but returned for submission through the responsible Council governance sub-committee. The documents were then submitted to and endorsed by the Council governance sub-committee, the Council Nominations and Governance Committee (CNGC) on 11th April 2013. The *Policy on Policy* and *Policy Development and Review Procedure* were approved by Council on 29th April 2013 and subsequently published in the Melbourne Policy Library (30th May 2013). Communication strategies were launched through a presentation made by the (then) University Policy Officer and Special Counsel at a Melbourne Policy Lunch in January 2013 (Freeman & Penman, 2013).

Immediately on approval the following substantive amendments had been suggested but have yet to be considered or approved by Council: amendments to the hierarchy of legislative instruments, policy instruments and related texts; amendments to the range of policy instruments; deletion of provisions regarding the application of policy instruments (and restriction of the focus to university-wide policy instruments); amendments to approval authorities; and amendments to definitions. In addition, amendments were proposed which sought to introduce mandatory compliance with presentation style guidelines, and provide broad-ranging authority to the University Policy Officer to amend sentences, restructure documents and amend policy provisions in response to internal or external review both during the policy development and review stage and after approval by the appropriate approval authority.

Case study – delegations project

The first stage of the delegations project involved an examination by the (then) University Policy Officer of draft policy and procedure documentation drafted through the Policy Simplification Project (which was undertaken by a separate organisational unit outside the University Secretary's Department). Prior to 2013, University of Melbourne delegations policy provisions and principles were dispersed throughout financial, human resources and property services policies and the introductory section of the delegations register, referred to as the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* (ROAR). The Policy Simplification Project staff drafted a preliminary *Delegations Policy*, *Delegations General Requirements Procedure*, *Financial Delegations Procedure* and schedules detailing finance, building works and research agreement-related delegations and the human resources delegations banding framework. Following an examination of this draft documentation by the (then) University Policy Officer, the delegations project was excised from the Policy Simplification Project and progressed under the auspices of a newly established Legal Policy Working Party, along with policies relating to contracts, and commercial activities and joint undertakings.

The preliminary draft documents were made available for information purposes for the first meeting of the Legal Policy Working Party (May, 2012), and with minor modification and the addition of a contracts schedule prepared by the Special Counsel, for consideration at the third meeting (September, 2012). Concurrently, benchmarking was undertaken by the (then) University Policy Officer to inform consideration of the preliminary drafts. Similar to the institutional meta-policy benchmarking, the delegations project benchmarking involved analysis of the content of Australian university delegations policy and related texts publicly available from all (40) Australian universities policy repositories. The benchmarking examined: prevalence of delegations texts including policies, procedures, registers and supporting documents; key underpinning delegations principles; scope of delegations (finance, contracts, human resources, occupational health and safety, capital and asset management, teaching and learning, research and research training); typologies adopted in delegations registers; and the relationship between delegations, institutional policy and institutional meta-policy. Again, benchmarking suggested areas for considerable improvement with respect to the preliminary draft documents, and provided examples for policy borrowing potentially transferable to the University of Melbourne context.

Based on the outcomes of the benchmarking, the (then) University Policy Officer drafted an entirely new *Delegations Policy*, significantly revised the *Financial Delegations Procedure* and deleted the second, generic procedure as it was deemed unnecessary (July-October, 2012). The draft schedules, as amended and supported by the technical experts participating in the Legal Policy Working Party, were maintained. The new draft *Delegations Policy* and *Financial Delegations Procedure* were submitted to the Special Counsel for consideration, and subsequently supported with some further clarification. The new drafts were circulated to the Legal Policy Working Party (November, 2012) for information. Compliance checking processes were truncated given the central involvement of the Special Counsel, who concurrently held the position of University Compliance Officer. The *Delegations Policy,* schedules and *Financial Delegations Procedure* were submitted alongside the *Policy on Policy* to endorsement committees (ABAG, Senior Executive, CNGC) and subsequently approved by Council on 29th April 2013. The *Delegations Policy*, schedules and *Financial Delegations Procedure* were subsequently published in the Melbourne Policy Library (30th May 2013).

As a separate, second stage of the delegations project, the (then) University Policy Officer reviewed the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* (2010). The register was initially developed by the University Secretary and approved by Council (December, 2009):

… as part of the Responsible Divisional Management project (RDM) where a range of functions carried out by individuals was analysed and decisions made on where the authority lay in a post RDM world. These functions were classified into formal delegations and management authorities exercised as duties associated with particular positions. (2011, n.p.) (According to McPhee (2008) 'The RDM project aims to define and implement a service model for business services which incorporates the principles of responsible division management, incorporates efficient and streamlined services where possible - and to oversee cost saving initiatives. The overall aim is to allow maximum investment in teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer activities' (p. 1)).

The register was amended four times during the period December 2009 – January 2011, and then reviewed by the (then) General Counsel (July, 2011) prior to the completion of the Policy Simplification Project.

Following completion of the Policy Simplification Project (which reformatted and redrafted all policies and university-wide procedures), the second stage of the delegations project was undertaken. This involved developing, in entirety, a new *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* (October – May, 2013) through close examination of the University of Melbourne Act, statutes and regulations and 224 policies and university-wide procedures held in the Melbourne Policy Library (88 academic; 109 administrative; 24 governance). An additional 35 occupational health and safety 'guidance' procedures held in the OHS Policy Library were also examined, as all university-wide OHS procedures will eventually be returned to the Melbourne Policy Library. Individual, embedded authorities were extracted alongside information regarding authority holders (position or body), source document title and any associated conditions. The draft new *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* was submitted to the University Compliance Officer (May, 2013) for consideration, and will be finalised by the University Secretary's Department throughout 2013.

Findings and discussion
Meta-policy project
The policy cycle was successfully employed to facilitate the development of the new *Policy on Policy*. Consultation and benchmarking confirmed the need to revoke the *Melbourne Policy Framework* and introduce an institutional meta-policy extending the principles articulated in the *Melbourne Policy Framework* and incorporating identified best practice features tailored to the University of Melbourne context. Consultation revealed widespread support for a shift in policy activity from formatting, publication and record keeping to policy oversight and forward planning through strategic policy management, and this is reflected in the *Policy on Policy*.

Policy stakeholders recommended that consultation be embedded for new policy development, substantive policy amendment, and policy implementation review. Several policy stakeholders stressed that the timeframe for consultation should be sufficient for genuine consultation, but not overly arduous for policy developers. Stakeholders recommended that approval authorities be clarified in the institutional meta-policy for all policy instruments (policy, procedure, guideline) to increase transparency and address evident

confusion. Similarly, stakeholders stressed the need to clarify the application of all policy instruments (university-wide, local).

Stakeholders based in faculties recommended the establishment of a mechanism to formally recognise local statements of principle; essentially local, or faculty policy, which is recognised in delegated legislation. In addition, policy stakeholders with extensive expertise in policy drafting recommended greater flexibility, within established policy templates, to write quality policy documents (for example, compliance with template headings for consistency but revoking the prohibition on levels of headings and numbered lists).

Benchmarking provided opportunities for policy borrowing, primarily by reiterating the centrality of key elements of institutional meta-policy (that is, range of instruments, classification scheme, application of instruments, approval authorities, policy cycle). Benchmarking confirmed that classification schemes where articulated in institutional meta-policy frequently serve as organising constructs for institutional policy repositories. As such, any amendment to change the classification schemes required technology-based changes to institutional policy repositories. Benchmarking confirmed the need to clearly articulate the application and approval authorities of all policy instruments, not simply university-wide policy instruments or policy instruments held in the policy repository as the institutional meta-policy represented the institution's 'master policy' for all institutional policy (not infrequently referred to as 'big P' policy).

In terms of the policy cycle, benchmarking suggested the need to incorporate requirements for quality-related policy cycle stages (that is, benchmarking, implementation monitoring, evaluation), which have been recognised as good practice university policy cycle stages (Freeman, 2010). Further, benchmarking suggested the need to formally recognise policy review, with a focus primarily on policy implementation review (that is, a review of policy practice[s]), rather than policy presentation or formatting (that is, a review of policy text[s]) (Freeman, 2012a; Freeman, 2012b). The few institutional policy review resources identified suggested the need for a University of Melbourne review schedule, feedback mechanism, implementation issues log, amended approval forms and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), which were all subsequently developed and made available online.

Features of the new Policy on Policy and attendant Procedure
The new University of Melbourne *Policy on Policy* locates legislative instruments and policy instruments within the hierarchy of governance instruments, related texts and supporting documentation as follows:

Legislative instruments:
- *University of Melbourne Act 2009*
- University statutes
- University regulations

Standing Resolutions of Council
Resolutions of the Board
Codes of conduct
Policy instruments:
- Policies
- Procedures
- Guidelines

Local documents (including local provisions, instructions, forms, checklists or business process documents). (numbering deleted, 2013, n.p.)

The *Policy on Policy* represents leading practice in comparison to benchmarked, institutional meta-policy as it comprehensively 'defines the range of University of Melbourne policy instruments; establishes a classification scheme for University of Melbourne policy instruments; defines the application of all University of Melbourne policy instruments; specifies Approval Authorities for all University of Melbourne policy instruments and establishes the *University Policy Development and Review Cycle'* (2013, n.p.).

The University of Melbourne range of policy instruments comprises policies, procedures and guidelines, which are defined as follows:

Table 1. Definitions – Policy, Procedure and Guideline

Policy	A Policy is a statement of principle that articulates, and aligns with, legislative, regulatory or organisational requirements.
Procedure	A Procedure is a statement that provides information or step-by-step instructions to implement a Policy.
Guideline	A Guideline is a statement that provides guidance to support the implementation of, and On-going compliance with, a Policy or Procedure.

Source: University of Melbourne, *Policy on Policy* (2013), n.p.

As noted, the University of Melbourne policy classification scheme is consistent with the organising construct for the Melbourne Policy Library: governance, academic (learning and teaching, courses and subjects, studying at the University and research and research training) and administrative (working at the University, finance and procurement, health and safety, managing buildings and information technology, and engaging with the community). The *Policy on Policy* explicitly establishes that 'Policy' has university-wide application whereas both 'Procedures' and 'Guidelines' 'may have either university-wide or local application (that is, application to one or more local areas such as a faculty, school, division or organisational unit)' (n.p.).

The *Policy on Policy* establishes 'local provisions', defined as 'a mandatory statement of principle applicable at the level of an organisational unit (that is, at the level of a faculty, school, division or other organisational unit), approved by the head of the local organisational unit' (n.p.) as a mechanism to recognise local policy (largely conceived as faculty policy). The *Policy on Policy* states that 'A document lower in the hierarchy must not be inconsistent with a document higher in the hierarchy. Where two documents in the hierarchy may otherwise conflict, the document higher in the hierarchy takes precedence' (n.p.). The *Policy on Policy* also includes policy provisions and a detailed summary of Approval Authorities to support increased transparency and reduce confusion regarding authorities for all policy instruments (policy, procedure, guideline), across the various categories (governance, academic, administrative), for minor and 'not minor' amendments, for establishment and disestablishment, applicable either university-wide or at the local level. The summary is also provided as a risk mitigation strategy to facilitate the easy identification of the correct authority for policy approval, amendment and disestablishment.

Table 2. Summary of Approval Authorities (University of Melbourne *Policy on Policy)*

CATEGORY	INSTRUMENT	APPROVAL AUTHORITIES		
		APPROVAL	AMENDMENT	DISESTABLISHMENT
Governance	Policy and Schedule to Policy	Council	- Minor*: Responsible Officer (University Secretary) and University Policy Officer - Not minor: Council	Council
	University-wide Procedure	- Council or V-C (delegated to Senior V-P) - University Secretary (delegated to the Provost) for Archives Procedures only	- Minor: Responsible Officer (University Secretary) and University Policy Officer - Not minor: Initial Approval Authority	- Council or V-C (delegated to Senior V-P) - University Secretary (delegated to the Provost) for Archives Procedures only
	Local Procedure	Head of organisational unit	Head of Organisational unit	Head of organisational unit
	University-wide Guideline	Responsible Officer (University Secretary)	Responsible Officer (University Secretary)	Responsible Officer (University Secretary)
	Local Guideline	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit
Academic	Policy	Board or delegate	- Minor: Responsible Officer (President of Board or delegate of the Board), Academic Secretary, University Policy Officer - Not minor: Initial Approval Authority	Board or delegate
	University-wide Procedure	Board or Provost or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	- Minor: Responsible Officer (President of Board, Provost or DVC[R]), Academic Secretary and	Board or Provost or Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

			- University Policy Officer - Not minor: Initial Approval Authority	
	Local Procedure	Head of organisational unit	Head of Organisational unit	Head of organisational unit
	University-wide Guideline	Responsible Officer (President of Board or delegate of the Board)	Responsible Officer (President of Board or delegate of the Board)	Responsible Officer (President of Board or delegate of the Board)
	Local Guideline	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit
Administrative	Policy	Vice-Chancellor (delegated to the Senior Vice-Principal)	- Minor: Responsible Officer (Function Leader or nominee of Senior Vice-Principal) and University Policy Officer - Not minor: Initial Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor (delegated to the Senior Vice-Principal)
	University-wide Procedure	Vice-Chancellor (delegated to the Senior Vice-Principal)	- Minor: Responsible Officer (Function Leader or nominee of Senior Vice-Principal) and University Policy Officer - Not minor: Initial Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor (delegated to the Senior Vice-Principal)
	Local Procedure	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit
	University-wide Guideline	Responsible Officer (Function Leader or nominee of Senior Vice-Principal)	Responsible Officer (Function Leader or nominee of Senior Vice-Principal)	Responsible Officer (Function Leader or nominee of Senior Vice-Principal)
	Local Guideline	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit	Head of organisational unit

The *Policy on Policy* articulates the fundamental interdependence between institutional meta-policy and delegations policy and arrangements:

In approving this *Policy on Policy*, Council has authorised the relevant Approval Authorities to:

- approve, amend and disestablish Policies, Procedures and Guidelines and
- approve delegations, authorities and responsibilities embedded in policy instruments and
- approve amendments to, or cancellations of, delegations, authorities and responsibilities embedded in the following instruments, provided *substantial* amendments to, or cancellations of, delegations, authorities and responsibilities in:
  o Procedures in the governance category are reported to Council
  o Policies in the academic category (where approved by a delegate of the Board) are reported to the Board
  o Procedures in the academic category (where approved by an Approval Authority other than the Board) are reported to the Board
  o Policies or Procedures in the administrative category are reported to Senior Executive. (n.p.)

The *Policy on Policy* comprehensively identifies the stages of the *Policy Development and Review Cycle*, as outlined in Figure 3. The *Policy Development and Review Procedure* articulates procedures to support the implementation of the policy cycle. Development of the *Policy on Policy* essentially both piloted the *Policy Development and Review Cycle* and concurrently demonstrated its utility in developing University of Melbourne policy.
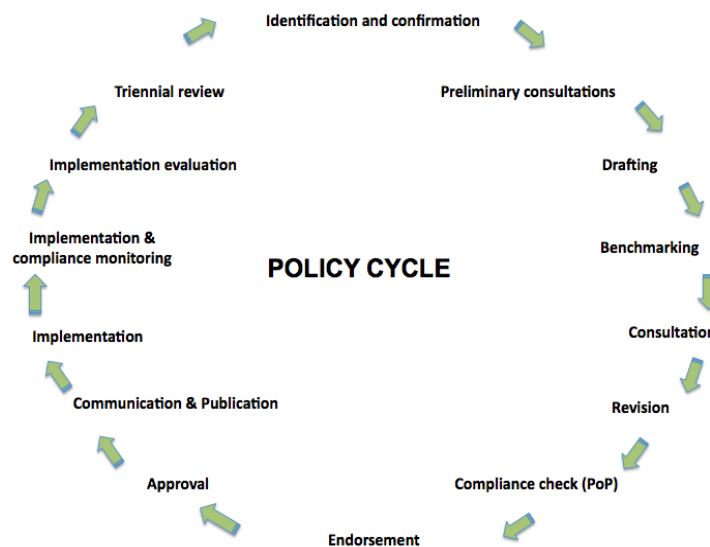

Figure 3. University of Melbourne *Policy Development and Review Cycle*

The *Policy on Policy* conceptually correlates strategic policy management with implementation of institutional meta-policy, and further defines it as:

- providing strategic oversight of the implementation of (the *Policy on Policy)*
- co-ordinating the development, approval, promulgation and review of Policies and university-wide Procedures in accordance with (the *Policy on Policy)*

63

- developing and delivering Policy development, evaluation and review resources and support
- maintaining the Melbourne Policy Library
- facilitating consultation and communication to support Policy development, review and implementation
- developing Policy implementation monitoring and evaluation tools
- managing and facilitating the *Policy Review Schedule*. (2013, n.p.)

Clarke et al. (2012) similarly propose an institutional policy system, comprising the institutional:

a) *policy set* or policy manual (i.e., policies that apply to the institution as a whole, such as computer usage, purchasing, hiring, and tenure);
b) *policy resources* (i.e., resources that facilitate policy work, such as a policy approval process, a policy office or personnel, a policy template, or a policy writing guide);
c) *policy users* (i.e., individuals and entities who use institutional policies);
d) *policy makers* (i.e., individuals and entities who write, review, or approve institutional policies); and
e) the ways in which these components interact or relate to one another. (p. 13)

Delegations project

The truncated policy cycle was successfully employed to facilitate the development of the new *Delegations Policy*, redrafting of the *Financial Delegations Procedure*, and finalisation of the delegations schedules. As noted, consultation for the delegations project was limited to members of the Legal Policy Working Party, who provided technical content expertise to support the finalisation of the finance, human resources, research-related, property services, and contracts delegations schedules. The working party and endorsement committees noted the inherent complexity of the delegations documentation - reflecting inherently complex institutional decision-making processes, and the complexity of delegations principles themselves - and recommended comprehensive communication strategies be deployed to support successful implementation. Ideally, broader consultation during the drafting stage could have fostered greater institutional awareness of the delegations framework, principles and specific requirements.

Again, benchmarking provided opportunities for policy borrowing, primarily by highlighting the importance of articulating the institutional delegations framework and locating delegations principles from dispersed documentation centrally in the *Delegations Policy*. The benchmarking revealed that the University of Melbourne already had key elements of a comprehensive institutional delegations framework including a *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* spanning academic, administrative and governance delegations, despite not having an approved overarching delegations policy prior to the delegations project. Benchmarking suggested the need to clarify the relationship between delegations, institutional policy and institutional meta-policy, and ensure that amendments to policy which intentionally or unintentionally involved amendments to delegations were appropriately authorised and recorded in the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities*. Benchmarking confirmed the good practice of the University of Melbourne in clearly articulating academic delegations in both individual policy documents and the register.

The examination of University of Melbourne policies and procedures for the preparation of the new *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* highlighted the importance of

institutional policy clearly articulating relevant delegations, and identifying the position or body responsible for exercising such authorities. The exercise confirmed the importance of alignment between legislation, policy, procedures and the register and confirmed that delegations are appropriately articulated in policy as statements of principle, rather in procedures as procedural steps.

Features of the new Delegations Policy, Procedure and Schedules and draft Register of Authorities and Responsibilities (RoAR)
The new *Delegations Policy* establishes the framework for University of Melbourne delegations, as follows:

- the *University of Melbourne Act 2009 ('Act')* and University statutes and regulations
- Standing Resolutions of Council and Resolutions of the Board to the extent that they set out delegations exercisable by position holders and bodies of the University
- University Policies and Procedures which set out delegations exercisable by position holders and bodies of the University
- (the) Delegations Policy and the Financial Delegations Procedure
- Schedules A – E to (the) Delegations Policy
- the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* (RoAR) and
- the statement of *Roles and Powers of Senior Officers of the University* derived from the Act, as well as from University statutes and regulations (appendix 1 in RoAR). (2013, n.p.)

To support the successful implementation of delegations arrangements, the *Delegations Policy* repeats delegated legislation provisions regarding Council, Vice-Chancellor and Board delegations including limitations, and clarifies that 'in addition to delegations established in or authorised by the *Act* or by University statutes and regulations, the terms of Policies and Procedures may record delegations exercisable by bodies and individuals holding specified positions at the University' (2013, n.p.). The *Delegations Policy* provides for the maintenance of the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities,* noting that: 'Delegated functions, duties or powers recorded in RoAR are derived from the *Act*, University statutes and regulations, Standing Resolutions of Council, Resolutions of the Board, Policies and Procedures, and other delegations made by Council, the Vice-Chancellor and the Board' (2013, n.p.).

Based on benchmarking, the *Delegations Policy* articulated, in one document, the fundamentally important delegations principles including: exercising delegations in accordance with institutional legislation and policy; prohibition on further delegation; delegations to positions and bodies; acting arrangements; exercising delegations within budgetary parameters and management/portfolio responsibility; the hierarchy of delegations; transaction delegations; the constitution of written approval; delegations authority differing from credit card payment arrangements; approval including suspension, amendment, or revocation; and authorisation of agents (2013, n.p.).

The *Delegations Policy* is supported by schedules A-E. *Schedule A - Financial Delegations* articulates delegations for the approval of 'purchases, payments and reimbursements; internal transactions; contracts for the acquisition and supply of goods and services not covered by Schedules B-E inclusive; leasing of equipment; short and long term hire of equipment; bad debt write-off; and asset disposal' (2013, n.p.), using a financial delegations banding

framework. *Schedule B – Building Works Delegations* establishes delegations for the approval of 'building works and building-works related contracts for expenditure and the sale and disposal of building project related items' (2013, n.p.). *Schedule C – Research Related Agreements Delegations* establishes delegations for the approval of 'research grant applications, research grant offer acceptances, financial research agreements, non-financial research-related agreements (and) designated standard agreements' (2013, n.p.). *Schedule D - Human Resources Delegations* establishes a human resources delegation banding framework. Finally, *Schedule E – Other Contract/Document Delegations* establishes delegations applicable where no financial limit is specified, and where the Chief Financial Officer otherwise has authority (2013, n.p.).

The *Register of Authorities and Responsibility* lists academic, administrative and governance delegations largely using the classification scheme adopted in the previous version, which is closely related, but not completely parallel to the policy classification scheme adopted for the Melbourne Policy Library. The register of delegations is extremely extensive, particularly with respect to academic delegations, as University of Melbourne academic policy comprehensively articulates academic decision-making authority. The register is much less extensive with respect to administrative policy, as many University of Melbourne administrative policy and procedure texts are short, explicitly operationally-focused (that is, procedure-based) and silent on decision-making authorities. The draft *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities* provides a register of:

- academic delegations (admission, enrolment, progress, support and engagement, assessment, equitable adjustment, handbook, courses and subjects, quality of teaching and learning, scholarships, prizes and student awards, fees and charges, grievances, disputes, student discipline and appeals, graduation, conferral, conferring and other ceremonies, revocation of awards, intellectual property, library, student organisations, academic calendar, research training, research, responsible conduct)
- human resources delegations (appointments, performance management, remuneration, recognition and working, conditions, grievances and disputes, conflict of interest, misconduct, theft, fraud and corruption, staff-student relationships, redundancy and redeployment, whistleblower, staff development, education and performance, travel, gifts, academic promotion, leave, leaving the university)
- occupational health and safety delegations
- university property and equipment delegations (property acquisition and disposal, capital works/infrastructure, hire or lease of equipment, vehicle fleet and other vehicles, asset management, traffic and parking, security, naming, access rights, building space allocation)
- financial management delegations
- information technology and communications delegations
- delegations regarding statutes, regulations and policy
- delegations regarding delegations (management, financial, building works, research and research-related agreements, other contracts/documents)
- general corporate provisions (planning and budget, risk, organisational units, semi-autonomous bodies, committees, corporate records, council meetings, trusts, commercial activities and joint undertakings, privacy, use of the seal, audit)
- community engagement delegations (alumni) and
- marketing and communications delegations.

The exercise confirmed that clarification of wording for the purposes of explaining delegations is necessary at the legislation/resolution/policy/procedure level, rather than at the delegations register level, as the register is intentionally a mirror of the legislation/resolution/policy/procedure rather than an interpretative document. Divergence from this principle will result in misalignment between the source documents and the register, essentially resulting in the establishment of new delegations potentially without appropriate endorsement and approval. By definition the register is not intended to establish new delegations, but rather locate in one place authorities established elsewhere in legislation, resolutions, policies and procedures. The register will, therefore, be restricted to the extent that legislation, policy and decisions touch on principles, such that gaps in legislation and policy will be reflected in gaps in the register.

Conclusion

The University of Melbourne meta-policy and delegations policy projects confirmed that the policy cycle could be successfully employed to develop institutional policy and supporting documentation, noting limitations associated with employing a truncated, or expedited, policy cycle. The meta-policy project confirmed the key elements of institutional meta-policy (that is, range of policy instruments, classification scheme, application of policy instruments, approval authorities and policy cycle stages). The University of Melbourne range of policy instruments (policy, procedure, guideline) enshrined in the *Policy on Policy* is not inconsistent with the former *Melbourne Policy Framework*. In explicitly articulating the application of policy instruments, the *Policy on Policy* recognises both university-wide and local (or localised) policy instruments. From a governance perspective, formally granting status to texts that are in use throughout the University of Melbourne is an important function of institutional meta-policy.

The *Policy on Policy* reflects the classification scheme developed for the Melbourne Policy Library, and as such differs from other institutional policy classification schemes to the extent that differences exist either with their policy repository organising constructs, or classification schemes independently articulated in institutional meta-policy. The *Policy on Policy* provisions regarding approval authorities represent a significant step forward, both for the University of Melbourne and most other Australian universities in this area, as approval authorities are comprehensively detailed for all policy instruments (policy, procedure, guideline), for each level of application (university-wide or local), for initial approval, amendment (minor, and not minor amendment) and disestablishment. Clarification of each of these authorities is both a stakeholder information and institutional risk mitigation strategy to ensure that University of Melbourne policy instruments are appropriately authorized, and consequently enforceable. Recognition of the potential for recourse based on institutional policy, coupled with the policy cycle 'implementation and compliance monitoring' requirement, the *Policy on Policy* positions the institution well to respond to external requests – for example from the Ombudsman - regarding policy instrument status, and policy implementation.

With respect to the policy cycle, the meta-policy project clearly demonstrated that the staged or sequenced policy process could be used to successfully develop policy. The University of Melbourne policy cycle has several stages in common with the public-policy based Bridgman and Davis (2004) Australian Policy Cycle (identify issues, [drafting] policy instruments, consultation, decision [approval], implementation, evaluation). In addition, there are several

policy cycle stages in common with the institutional policy cycles identified (from the Aitken et al., 2010 ATEM policy cycle: consultation, drafting, approval, implementation, communication, review; from the ACUPA cycle: issue identification, development [drafting], obtain approval, plan communication, put information online, encourage users to provide feedback [evaluation], measure outcomes by monitoring or testing [monitoring]). These various policy cycles have common stages of drafting and approval; however, the University of Melbourne policy cycle also incorporates value-adding cycle stages and TEQSA requirements not found in many of these cycles (benchmarking, compliance checking, endorsement, implementation, implementation and compliance monitoring, and triennial review). The elongated policy cycle is detailed and rigorous; it reflects the collegial decision-making framework of the university, and, based on extensive benchmarking and consultation, embeds good practice in policy development, implementation monitoring and evaluation, and practice review.

The delegations project suggested key elements of delegations policy documentation (framework for institutional academic, administrative and governance delegations, reference to guiding legislative provisions, and fundamental underpinning delegations principles). The framework for University of Melbourne delegations articulated in the *Delegations Policy* clearly demonstrates the inherent link between the delegations documentation, the *Policy on Policy* and individual policy texts, where 'Policies and Procedures … set out the delegations exercisable by position holders and bodies of the University' (2013, n.p.). Formally recognizing and articulating this linkage represents a significant step forward. Consistent with other examples of good practice in the sector, the *Delegations Policy* presents, in one text, the University of Melbourne principles regarding delegation. In this inherently complex area, this should go some way to promoting increased accessibility regarding elements of institutional decision-making.

The delegations project provides one example of clearly articulated academic, administrative and governance delegations. Given TEQSA's requirement for detailed academic delegations, and the comprehensive nature of the academic delegations documentation in particular, this particular element of the University of Melbourne delegations framework (that is, the *Register of Authorities and Responsibilities)* should provide a useful model to other institutions interested in developing such documentation. This case study provides an example of the development of centralised institutional governance documentation now required of Australian tertiary sector providers by TEQSA, and is presented as one contribution to sector learning in this important area.

Acknowledgements

Biographical note

Brigid Freeman is a Research Fellow with the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne.

References

Aitken, D., Hatwell, M., Jensen, K., Kosman, B. & Perdriau, J. (2010). *Policy without (much) pain: A guide to better practice in policy development and policy management in Australasian tertiary education institutions.* Association of Tertiary Education Management. Australia.

Althaus, C., Bridgman, P., & Davis, G. (2013). The Australian policy handbook. Allen & Unwin Australia.

Blobaum, P., Ford, T. M., Hippchen, T., Petersen, R., & Spellacy, P. (2005). *ACUPA: Exploring the Campus Policy Process*. Retrieved from http://process.umn.edu/acupa/projects/ACUPA_ExploringCampusPolicyProcess.doc

Brewer, G.D. (1974). The policy sciences emerge: To nurture and structure a discipline. Policy Sciences, 5(3), 239-244.

Brewer, G.D., & DeLeon, P. (1983). The foundations of policy analysis. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.

Bridgman, P., & Davis, G. (2004). The Australian policy handbook. Allen & Unwin Australia.

Capell, N., Ford, T. M., & Spellacy, P. (2004, July). *Institutional policy development: Effective practices and solutions*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO), Milwaukee, WI.

Clark, S. C., Griffin, R. A., & Martin, C. K. (2012). Alleviating the Policy Paradox through Improved Institutional Policy Systems: A Case Study. *Innovative Higher Education*, *37*(1), 11-26.

Commonwealth Government of Australia (2011). *Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act*. Canberra: Australian Government. Retrieved from http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2011C00582.

Commonwealth Government of Australia (2011). *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011*. Canberra: Australian Government. Retrieved from http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2012L00003/Download.

Commonwealth of Australia (2013). *Assuring quality while reducing the higher education regulatory burden.* Australian Government. Retrieved 7 June 2013 from http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/About/News/Documents/AssuringQualitywhileReducingtheHigherEducationRegulatoryBurden.pdf.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications, Incorporated.

DeLeon, P. (1999). The stages approach to the policy process: What has it done? Where is it going. Theories of the policy process, 1, 19-32.

Dolowitz, D. P., & Marsh, D. (2000). Learning from abroad: The role of policy transfer in contemporary policy-making. *Governance*, *13*(1), 5-23.

Dror, Y. (1971). *Design for Policy Sciences*. New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company.

Fitzgibbon, C. & Treloar, K. (2013, March). *Registration and accreditation: Overview of issues*. Paper presented at the TEQSA Provider Briefing. Retrieved 14 March 2013, from http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Session%205%20-%20Registration%20and%20accreditation-Overview%20of%20issues.pdf.

Ford, T. M., Petersen, R., & Spellacy, P. (2001, October). *Better than Letterman: The top 10 policy issues and best practices*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of EDUCAUSE, Indianapolis, IN.

Freeman, B. (2010). Benchmarking to Identify Good Practice University Policy Frameworks, Tertiary Education Management Conference, 3-6th October 2010.

Freeman, B. (2011). *Who (actually) does what? Exploring university delegations of authority*. Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) Policy Forum, Melbourne, 27 October 2011.

Freeman, B. (2012a). Innovative Approaches, Systems and Resources for University Policy Review, *Association for Tertiary Education Management and Tertiary Education Facilities Managers' Association*, Tertiary Education Management Conference, 16-19th September 2012, p. 91-104.

Freeman, B. (2012b). University policy review: What? Why? How? What's the big elephant? Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) Policy Development Forum VIII, October 2012, University of Melbourne.

Freeman, B. & Penman, C. (2012). *Introducing the new University of Melbourne Policy on Policy*. Melbourne Policy Lunch, University of Melbourne. Retrieved 28 April 2013 from http://www.policy.unimelb.edu.au/assets/pdf/Policy-on-Policy-22-January-2013.pdf.

Jenkins, W.I. (1978). Policy analysis: A political and organisational perspective, M. Robertson, London.

Kaplan, G.E. (2004). 'How academic ships actually navigate' in Ehrenberg, R.G. (ed) (2004). Governing Academic: who is in charge at the modern university. Cornell University Press, London.

Lasswell, H.D. (1951). 'The Policy Orientation' in Lerner, D. & Lasswell, H.D. (eds) (1951). The Policy Sciences, Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Martin, L. & Hill, K. (2010). *Melbourne Policy Framework,* University of Melbourne.

McPhee, P. (2008). *Memorandum – Responsible Division Management Project*. Retrieved 11 July 2013 from

http://www.administration.unimelb.edu.au/Site%202011/Secure/RDM%20archive/RDM_Project_Commencement_Announcement.pdf.

Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE (2013). NMIT Higher Education Office Policy Documentation Process.

Petersen, R. J. (2004). A framework for IT policy development. EDUCAUSE Review, 39(2), 54–55.

PhillipsKPA (2012). Review of Reporting Requirements for Universities Final Report, LH Martin Institute. Retrieved 3 June 2013 from http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/userfiles/files/news-media/FinalReportReviewofReportingRequirementsForUniversities.pdf.

Shattock, M. (2006). Managing good governance in higher education. UK: Open University Press

Smith, K. B., & Larimer, C. (2009). The new policy theory primer. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Universities Australia (2009). *Efficient Regulation of Higher Education and Research Universities Australia Submission to the Productivity Commission Annual Review of Regulatory Burdens on Business*. Retrieved 3 June 2013 from http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/resources/266/281.

University of Melbourne (2011). *Melbourne Policy Framework*. Retrieved 27 April 2013 from http://www.policy.unimelb.edu.au/assets/pdf/melbourne-policy-framework.pdf.

University of Melbourne (2013). *Delegations Policy*. Retrieved 4 June 2013 from https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1101.

University of Melbourne (2013). *Financial Delegations Procedure*. Retrieved 4 June 2013 from https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1102.

University of Melbourne (2013). *Policy on Policy*. Retrieved 4 June 2013 from https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1251.

University of Melbourne (2013). *Policy Development and Review Procedure.* Retrieved 4 June 2013 from https://policy.unimelb.edu.au/MPF1252.

University of Melbourne (2009). *Statute 5.1 – Academic Structures*, viewed 2 May 2013, http://www.unimelb.edu.au/Statutes/pdf/s51.pdf.

Weible, C. M., Heikkila, T., & Sabatier, P. A. (2012). Understanding and influencing the policy process. *Policy Sciences*, *45*(1), 1-21.

Yin, R. K. (2008). Case study research: Design and methods (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Case Study: Development of a policy implementation evaluation framework for the University of Tasmania Casual Teaching Staff Policy

Brigid Freeman, University of Melbourne, Jo-Anne Kelder, University of Tasmania and Natalie Brown, University of Tasmania

brigid.freeman@unimelb.edu.au
jo.kelder@utas.edu.au
natalie.brown@utas.edu.au

Abstract

The Australian federal government now requires higher education institutions to provide evidence of effective development, implementation and review of institutional policies, however little attention has been given to policy implementation evaluation and policy review. This paper presents a case study of the development of a comprehensive policy implementation evaluation framework proposed for the University of Tasmania's new *Casual Teaching Staff Policy*. The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework reflects concepts utilised in the policy development process arising from research regarding good practices with respect to university casual teaching staff.

Key words
casualisation, casual staff, policy framework

Introduction

The Australian federal government's *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* and *Provider Registration Standards* require higher education institutions to demonstrate effective development, implementation and review of institutional policy. While Australian universities have developed comprehensive suites of institutional policy, little attention has been given to policy implementation evaluation in institutional meta-policy (that is, 'policy on policy') (Freeman, 2010a). Furthermore, large numbers of Australian university academic, administrative and governance policies are overdue for review (Freeman, 2012a; 2002b), which suggests that the institutional policy cycle frequently languishes at the implementation stage. Indeed Jensen et al. (2013) report that 'many institutions are struggling with a backlog of policy review work: the document control data in their policy repositories reveals that many policies and procedures are well past the date by which the institution required that they be reviewed' (p. 35).

In terms of university academic policy and academic quality assurance, responsibilities and practices have changed over time. In the early 1990s, terms of reference for university Academic Boards frequently included the development and approval of academic policy, but few alluded to monitoring of academic policy implementation, or academic quality assurance (Stoddart, 1994). Recent research suggests a shift – in formally articulated responsibilities at least – with almost all Australian universities 'explicitly list[ing] academic quality assurance or academic standards (or both) as being amongst their reported primary responsibilities … with many Academic Boards [having] established a standing committee specifically for this purpose' (Rowlands, 2013, p. 144). Similarly Vilkinas and Peters (2013) found that 'the

majority of the academic boards said in their terms of reference that they should spend most of their time and energy on activities associated with policy (including approving and implementing policy) and quality assurance … [and] external quality audits reported that most concentrated on activities associated with policy (including approving and implementing policy) and quality assurance' (Abstract). However, Rowlands (2013) found 'little or no evidence of any … setting of key performance indicators and the monitoring of performance against them, or of auditing policy and process compliance' (p. 148), and suggested that Academic Boards were 'emblematically (but not actually) responsible for academic quality assurance' (p. 153), with ultimate authority residing with the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

If indeed, as Rowlands (2013) suggests, there exists a discrepancy between Academic Board's responsibilities and practices with respect to policy implementation monitoring and evaluation, this does not bode well for administrative and governance policy. At least anecdotally, feedback from the Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) Institutional Policy Network suggests that experience in evaluation of administrative and governance policy implementation is nascent, and far behind that of Academic Boards.

Methodology for the casual teaching staff project

The development of a policy implementation evaluation framework represents one component of a broader initiative - the Casual Teaching Staff Project - introduced by the Tasmanian Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT). The project was underpinned by a pragmatist frame (Cresswell, 2003) as it explored problems and solutions regarding casual teaching staff. The Casual Teaching Staff Project commenced in 2009 with the objective of identifying the needs of casual teaching staff and developing an institutional response to the *RED Report* (Percy et al., 2008). The Casual Teaching Staff Project established a Project Reference Group (for the period 2009-2010) and conducted a literature review around the *RED Report* core concepts (recognition, enhancement and development) and domains (systematic and sustainable policy and practice, employment and administrative support, induction and academic management, career and professional development, reward and recognition). Provisions detailed in the University of Tasmania *Academic Staff Agreement* (2010) were also examined in the review. The project conducted a preliminary 2010 survey of University of Tasmania casual teaching staff to obtain baseline data regarding the needs of casual teaching staff. The findings supported the development of an institutional policy response, and the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* was drafted over the period 2011-2012 to articulate the position of the University of Tasmania, aligned to the institutions' industrial instrument.

The 2012 survey built on the preliminary 2010 survey through mapping against the draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* headings, cross referenced to the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* guiding principles (quality learning and teaching, sessional staff support and sustainability). The 2012 survey recruited participants through an advertisement in the University of Tasmania electronic staff newsletter, and an invitation from the Provost circulated to casual teaching staff. The 2012 survey was administered online using Survey Monkey. A total of 199 respondents completed the 2012 survey, which incorporated 17 Likert scale items (Not applicable [NA]; Strongly disagree [SD] to Strongly agree [SA]) and the opportunity to provide free text comments at each question. Additionally, 13 questions enabled the collection of demographic data. The guiding principles of the *Sessional Staff*

Standards Framework provided the analytic lens for the 2012 survey data analysis. The free text responses were analysed using thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998), with subsequent coding theory-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in that the responses were reviewed systematically to extract ideas that related to the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* guiding principles (refer Brown et al., 2013, forthcoming). The Casual Teaching Staff Project conducted a pilot workshop using the BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool – B-BIT (see Harvey et al., 2013), and focus group interviews in 2013 with 2012 survey respondents in Hobart, Launceston and Melbourne.

The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework builds on the work completed to date, and represents the next phase of the Casual Teaching Staff Project. It remains subject to consultation with university senior management and policy stakeholders. The next phase involves the finalisation of the policy implementation evaluation framework. The evaluation will involve the deployment of a modified BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool (B-BIT) (late 2013/2014) with Faculties and Schools through a workshop and audit approach, followed by the repeat application of the modified B-BIT evaluation instrument (2015), implementation of a further survey of casual teaching staff (2015 survey), and additional focus group interviews (2015).

The context – increasing casualisation

Casualisation of the Australian labour market
The Casual Teaching Staff Project is contextualised by increasing casualisation of the Australian labour market. In 2011, approximately one quarter of all Australian employees - nearly 2.2 million people - were employed on a casual basis, representing a progressive increase over recent decades from 15.8 per cent in 1984 to 23.9 per cent in 2011, peaking at 27.7 per cent, in 2004 (ACTU, 2012). Over half of all people employed on a casual basis are 'permanent casuals' (ACTU, 2012), where casualisation is 'meeting continuing needs with non-continuing staff' (Brown et al., 2010, p. 179). Over 15 percent of Australian employees are employed on a regular, casual basis for over five years (ACTU, 2012). More women than men are employed on a casual basis (ABS, 2011). Whilst casual employment may lead to ongoing and permanent employment (AWPA, 2013), casuals 'are also at greater risk of moving into unemployment and out of the labour force' (Buddelmeyer, et al., p. ii). AWPA suggests that 'Australia's ability to survive and prosper in the coming decades depends on a continued effort to deepen workforce skills and capability and provide adequate and appropriate support for workers to develop the skills they need for the future' (2013, p. 33). This includes people employed casually.

Casualisation of Australian higher education sector
Whilst labour market casualisation has varied across the Australian economy, the trend is characteristic of almost all industry sectors. The ACTU suggests that this shift towards labour market casualisation has 'to an extent … taken place under the radar' (2012, p. 17). Consistent with this trend, the Australian higher education sector has become increasingly reliant on casual staff over the past two decades (May, 2011), with both proportionate increases in casual employment (12.5 per cent in 1996 to 16.5 per cent in 2011) and absolute increases recorded (10,396 full time equivalent [FTE] in 1996 to 19,009 FTE in 2011) (DEETYA, 1997; DIICCSRTE, 2012). Casual academics now comprise approximately one quarter of all Australian university teaching and research positions (NTEU, 2012), with casual academics undertaking an estimated 50 per cent of university teaching (Percy et al.,

2008). This represents significant growth from approximately 10 per cent in the 1990s (Brown et al., 2010). Ryan et al. (2013) suggest 'there is an army of casually employed academics who are used as a buffer against the vagaries and oscillations in the global higher education market, and in government policy and funding' (p. 163).

This shift towards casualisation has occurred within the context of reduced federal government funding for the higher education sector, growing student enrolments, industrial relations reforms and increasing pressure for research outputs (Ryan et al., 2013). The implications of casualisation of the academic labour market are notable both from an individual and sector perspective. Casual academics report concerns regarding underpayment and income security (Brown et al., 2010); limited professional development opportunities (Knight et al., 2007) and poor management (Percy et al., 2008). The *Review of Australian Higher Education: Final Report* found that 'sessional staff experience income insecurity, workloads beyond their paid hours, and feelings of isolation from the university community' (Bradley et al., 2008, p. 23), and suggests that 'casualisation of the academic workforce has reduced its attractiveness as a profession' (p. 71). The report also raises issues regarding the relationship between sector productivity measures and quality outcomes for students. Indeed the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) *Regulatory Risk Framework* (2012) identifies 'significant reliance on academic staff employed under casual work contracts' (p. 15) as a management and human resources risk indicator.

Against this backdrop of increasing casualisation and sector-wide implications, the *RED Report* found that 'evidence of systemic sustainable policy and practice is rare; [and] there is a general lack of formal policy and procedure in relation to the employment and administrative support of sessional teachers' (Percy et al., 2008, p. 2). This is in sharp contrast to the plethora of academic, administrative and governance policy available at most Australian universities in online policy repositories addressing university teaching and learning, research and third stream operations. In addition to addressing the policy gap, Percy et al. (2008) suggest that 'both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of [the] contribution [of casual teaching staff] need to be investigated and accounted for at an institutional level if risk management and quality enhancement policy and practice are to be effective' (p. 1).

Casualisation at the University of Tasmania
The sector-wide trend towards casualisation is reflected in University of Tasmania employment figures. In 2011, the University of Tasmania employed 338 full time equivalent (FTE) casual academic and professional staff (12.7 per cent), of the total 2,670 full time equivalent (FTE) staff compliment (DIICCSRTE, 2012). This equated to 2,996 casual staff members (academic and professional), or over half of all University of Tasmania staff (51.7 per cent) (University of Tasmania, 2011). Consistent with national trends, employment of casual academic staff has grown during the period 1996-2011, with casual academic staff now representing 50 per cent of 'teaching only' academic staff (111 FTE) at the University of Tasmania. More women than men are employed on a casual basis at the University of Tasmania, consistent with national trends (7.1 per cent and 5.6 per cent of female and male staff respectively) (DIICCSRTE, 2012).

The University of Tasmania's recent casualisation-focused initiatives may be traced to the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA) *Report of an Audit of the University of Tasmania*. This report recommends 'that [the University of Tasmania] pay further attention to the induction and training of tutors and sessional staff across the University' (2005, p. 6).

Subsequently, centrally delivered professional development programs and generic online induction resources were made available to casual teaching staff. However, casual staff related delegations remain highly devolved at the University of Tasmania (Freeman, 2010b) which mitigates against institution-wide strategy in this area. In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests varying practices in terms of recruitment, induction, management, integration and support (Brown et al., 2013).

Development of the casual teaching staff policy

The *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* was developed in accordance with the University of Tasmania University Policy Development Cycle established in the *Policy Development and Review Policy* (2010). The University Policy Development Cycle includes the policy cycle stages of: identification of policy requirements; nomination of Responsible Officer and Policy Delegate; drafting; benchmarking; consultation; revision; endorsement; and quality control. At the time of writing, the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* had been endorsed by the University Teaching and Learning Committee (September, 2012) and endorsed by the Academic Senate (December, 2012), prior to falling somewhat inexplicably out of the policy cycle as a result of staffing changeover. The draft policy may well be subject to reconsideration as a result of enterprise bargaining negotiations after which it may be submitted for re-endorsement by the Academic Senate (as required), then approval by the Vice-Chancellor prior to being promulgated and implemented by University of Tasmania Faculties, Schools and Departments.

The policy development process involved benchmarking and research regarding good practices with respect to Australian university casual teaching staff. Table 1 aligns the *RED Report, Casual Teaching Staff Policy* and University of Tasmania *Academic Staff Agreement* (2010). The *RED Report* core concepts - that is, recognition, enhancement and development - provided the organising constructs for the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy*. The *RED Report* domains and University of Tasmania *Academic Staff Agreement* (2010) headings and content informed the development of policy content. As such, the policy development process explicitly aligned the research literature and the university's industrial instrument with policy headings and content. This map also provided the basis from which to explore the perspectives of casual teaching staff at the University of Tasmania through surveys.

Exploring perspectives of casual teaching staff at the University of Tasmania

The Casual Teaching Staff Project was initially established to explore and respond to the needs of casual teaching staff. The 2012 survey provided data regarding the needs and perspectives of such staff; this information feeds into the first phase of the policy implementation evaluation framework ('identify needs'). This section presents three perspectives of casual teaching staff from the 2012 survey. Firstly, data in response to a question regarding the primary reason for undertaking casual teaching employment; secondly, data relating to the headings in the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy*; and thirdly, a

Table 1. Relationship between the research literature (core concepts/domains), industrial instrument headings and policy headings

CASUAL TEACHING STAFF POLICY – HEADINGS	RED REPORT – CORE CONCEPTS	RED REPORT – DOMAINS	ACADEMIC STAFF AGREEMENT – HEADINGS
*Develop institutional **policy and good practices***	*Develop policy and risk management practices*	Systemic and sustainable **policy and practice**	
Recruitment and **Employment**	*Develop data collection and reporting systems*	**Employment** and administrative support	Classifications & Payments (casual rates) **Employment** arrangements (casual employment; reimbursement; minimum periods; semester breaks)
(including **induction**)		**Induction** and academic management	Employment arrangements (**induction**)
Integration			
Communication			
Evaluation and **recognition**	**RECOGNITION**	Reward and **recognition**	Employment arrangements (**recognition** of casual service)
Professional development in Teaching and Learning	**ENHANCEMENT** **DEVELOPMENT**	Career and **professional development**	Employment arrangements (access to **professional development**)

model showing the relationship between the ten themes that emerged from the 2012 survey in relation to the guiding principles in the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework.*

Perspective 1 - Primary reason for undertaking casual teaching employment

2012 survey respondents (n=199) were asked the question 'What is your PRIMARY reason for undertaking casual teaching employment?' 21.4% of respondents identified 'I enjoy sharing my knowledge and skills' as the primary motivation, and a further 20.9 per cent 'To enter full-time academic work'. Very few respondents indicated that casual teaching employment was their chosen career (1 per cent).

Free text responses provided insight into the motivations of respondents. Respondent 11 cited:

A combination of factors including a hope to enter full-time academic work, suitable employment as I study and as a step in the 'new' me's life as I pursue my goals and ambitions.

Respondent 12 added 'I need to earn a living and this has been an outstanding opportunity to do so in my area of passion and expertise'. Respondent 1 conceived casual teaching employment as a pathway to permanent academic employment: 'To further my career and obtain more permanent academic employment'. In terms of the perspectives of the experience, Respondent 46 responded:

Love it!!! Have met some amazingly talented people who share their expertise, provide a model of good teaching, assist me with my study - both practically and emotionally, and have formed some excellent working relationships and valued friendships.

Respondent 19 stated 'It's enjoyable but…' and Respondent 17 summed up several respondent's answers by stating: 'I feel used'. Respondent 14 stated 'I have not had any other choice'.

Such responses contribute to our understanding of the motivations and needs of casual teaching staff as a basis from which to consider through the proposed evaluation how, and to what extent, the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* addresses both staff and institutional needs.

Perspective 2 – Data relating to the headings in policy
Recruitment and employment
The draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* includes provisions aimed at ensuring that 'recruitment practices for casual teaching staff will be: transparent; compliant with University policies and procedures; [and] compliant with the *University of Tasmania Academic Staff Agreement*'. The draft policy makes explicit reference to casual rates of pay, appointment instruments, utilisation and access to resources and facilities. In addition, the draft policy establishes minimum induction requirements for casual teaching staff 'engaged by the University to work more than 30 hours' (Induction section, paragraph 1) and requirements regarding the identification of supervisors.

In response to the question 'Please indicate how you were first recruited for a casual teaching academic position at UTAS', a majority responded 'I was approached directly (in person or by email) by a UTAS staff member' (65.1 per cent). Respondent 10 reported that 'All of my roles at UTAS (I am now up to role 19) have been through word of mouth'. The length of time employed as a casual teaching staff member varied, with almost one third (32 per cent) of respondents employed on a casual basis between two and five years. More than half (54 per cent) had an estimated one to two appointments per year in most years, while 36 per cent reported more than two appointments per year.

With respect to conditions of employment, Respondent 55 identified the tension between high expectations for quality teaching and pressures on employment conditions:

Because universities in Australia, and [the University of Tasmania] in particular, are becoming increasingly performance focussed, beyond what is motivational towards excellence and heading into the danger zone of detrimental and unrealistic expectations, there is the pressure to perform in ways that generate excellent and outstanding student feedback results, which means many hours of extra unpaid work.

This is echoed in other responses: 'It is always a given that you work more hours than you are paid' (Respondent 34); Respondent 33 suggested that:

tighter time restrictions for marking (and maximum amounts of time/student for marking) … takes advantage of peoples' professional standards. By this I mean I will continue to take whatever time it takes to mark assignments/exams, support students etc. irrespective of what I will be paid.

Positively, over half of respondents (57.2 per cent) reported having been adequately briefed about teaching responsibilities, including teaching and learning policies, assessment requirements and learning outcomes, however a majority (64 per cent) reported not participating in formal inductions for teaching as they were not aware of induction programs available. With respect to induction and associated processes, Respondent 18 suggested that 'The processes for casual staff had not been thought through in terms of what information they need when in order to do the job we have asked of them'. Respondent 7 simply asked 'What induction manual!!??'. These responses suggest that any evaluation of institutional

practices give particular consideration to conditions of employment, including specifications for rates of pay and reimbursement for work completed, and induction.

Professional Development in Teaching and Learning

The draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* states that 'The University will endeavour to provide casual teaching staff, other than those employed on an occasional or ad hoc basis, with adequate and appropriate access to professional development opportunities', with particular mention of support with respect to assessment (Professional Development section, paragraph 1). Further, the policy supports reflective practices and evaluation of professional development activities undertaken. The 2012 survey revealed that respondents had received invitations to a range of professional development opportunities including student feedback for evaluation of teaching quality (71 per cent), inclusion in team teaching (60 per cent), mentoring (46 per cent) and peer review (28 per cent). Responses to the 2012 survey confirm the importance of professional development: 'Ongoing professional development is always appreciated' (Respondent 23). Respondents identified a range of desirable professional development opportunities including 'opportunities to attend or present at conferences' (Respondent 23), 'peer review and observing peer's teaching' (Respondent 25), 'more mentoring, more information and support regarding human resources issues (ie hiring and firing casual employees, dealing with team issues)' (Respondent 29), and 'opportunities to undertake qualifications' (Respondents 37 and 40). Respondent 46 reported that:

I teach with a great team, however we are so busy trying to get our own jobs done that we don't have much time to share ideas/support one another as much as i think we should. A mentor system would be excellent if we had the time.

These responses affirm the importance of professional development – generally and specifically in relation to teaching and learning – for casual teaching staff and support the inclusion of institutional practices in this area in any policy implementation evaluation framework.

Evaluation and Recognition

The draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* states that the 'University will provide casual teaching staff with opportunities for evaluation, performance review, recognition and reward, where appropriate' (Evaluation and Recognition section, paragraph 1). Responses to the 2012 survey confirm the importance of recognition: 'What is more important for me is being made to feel like my hard work counts for something' (Respondent 23), and the consequences when this does not occur: 'I really feel like the casual teaching staff are treated as second class employees, or indeed, not as employees at all' (Respondent 56). Respondent 11 stated that 'Whilst the 'nuts and bolts' support is satisfactory, the moral support is not'. Reflecting the tenuous nature of casual employment, Respondent 17 suggested that 'As a casual employee I am reluctant to disagree with anything!' Again, these responses point to current practice-related issues and confirm the importance of including an evaluation of casual teaching staff recognition within the policy implementation evaluation framework.

Integration and Communication

The draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* establishes provisions to integrate casual teaching staff into Schools, relevant committees, teaching teams, mentoring relationships and learning and teaching events. In addition, the draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* establishes communication protocols to enhance communication regarding institutional legislation, policy, roles and responsibilities, opportunities for professional development and mentoring,

resources and facilities, support services, and opportunities for interaction with colleagues. These provisions could go some way to addressing concerns raised by respondents in the 2012 survey. For example, whilst Respondent 20 reported 'It is a supportive encouraging environment', a response more reflective of others was:

With budget restraints, there has been an increased marginalisation of 'the casuals' and fewer opportunities for planning and development with the whole team (Respondent 15).

Overall, the 2012 survey provides a mechanism to identify the critical perspectives of casual teaching staff aligned to provisions articulated in the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* for the purposes of policy implementation evaluation.

Perspective 3 – Model showing relationship between themes and guiding principles
A thematic analysis of free text responses to the 2012 survey was undertaken systematically to extract themes, and map these themes to a shorthand version of the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* guiding principles – referred to as 'meta-themes': support, quality learning and teaching, sustainability. The analysis – reported in Brown et al. (2013, forthcoming) - revealed ten themes, nine of which mapped to the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* guiding principles/meta-themes; and one of which remained unaligned ('enjoyment of teaching').
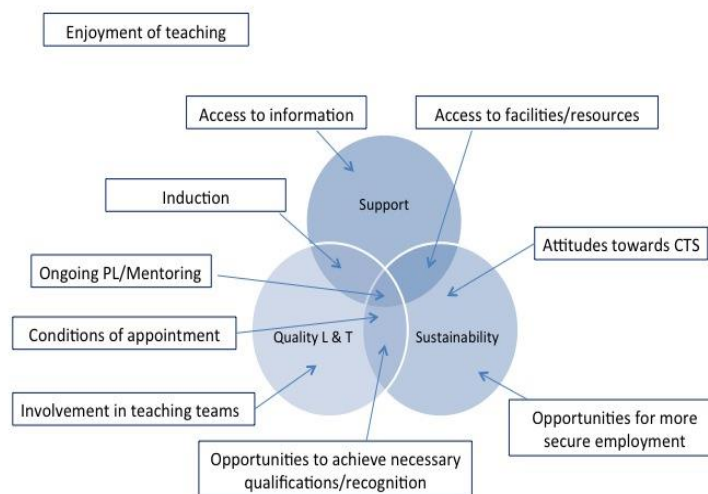

Figure 1. The three meta-themes and ten themes identified emerging from the 2012 survey (refer Brown et al., 2013, forthcoming)

Figure 1 depicts the relationship between the three meta-themes, and ten identified themes. These themes will be used to inform the development and deployment of the policy implementation evaluation framework.

The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework will draw on the rich data provided by these three perspectives, including: an appreciation of the motivations for

undertaking such employment; perspectives specifically related to policy provisions; and thematic responses aligned to the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* guiding principles.

Exploring policy evaluation

This section explores critical aspects of policy evaluation including institutional meta-policy requirements, evaluation definitions, evaluation objectives, and evaluation approaches. Consideration of these aspects contributed to the development of the proposed policy implementation evaluation framework.

Institutional meta-policy requirements

The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework for the University of Tasmania will be deployed in accordance with the institutional meta-policy requirements. The University Policy Development Cycle established in the *Policy Development and Review Policy* (2010) includes discrete evaluation-related cycle stages in addition to pre-approval cycle stages, as illustrated diagrammatically in Figure 2, below.
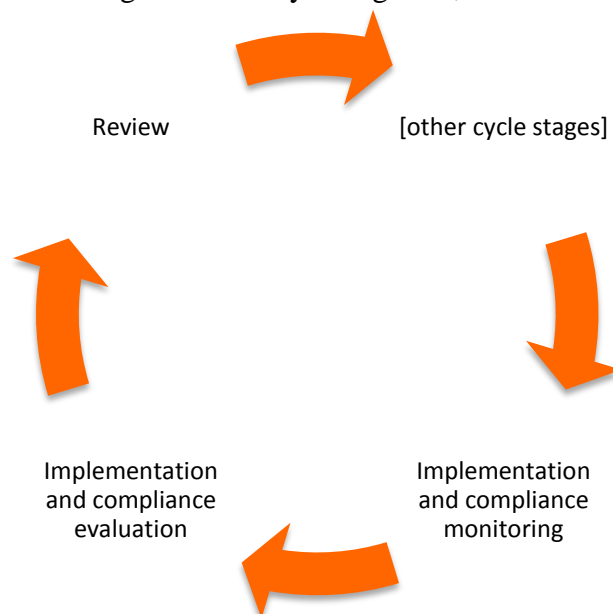

Review   [other cycle stages]

Implementation   Implementation
and compliance   and compliance
evaluation   monitoring

Figure 2. Evaluation related stages: University of Tasmania University Policy Development Cycle

The attendant *Policy Development and Review Procedure* states that 'The Responsible Officer and/or Policy Delegate will establish and implement evaluation mechanisms to evaluate policy implementation and compliance, and inform the formal review process' (2010, section 3.1.13). As such, the institutional meta-policy differentiates between monitoring, evaluation and review, without prescribing specific requirements regarding evaluation method, which remain the responsibility of the Responsible Officer (in this instance, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor [Students and Education]).

Evaluation definitions

Scriven (1986) defines evaluation from a value judgment perspective, maintaining 'that there is a science of valuing and that is evaluation' (p. 32). Further, Scriven (1986) asserts that 'bad is bad and good is good and it is the job of evaluators to decide which is which' (p. 19). The United States Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation *Program Evaluation Standards* defines evaluation broadly as the 'systematic investigation of the worth or merit of an object' (1994, p. 3). Building on this theme, Trochim (2006) defines evaluation as 'the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some object' (Definitions of Evaluation, paragraph 1). In both instances, evaluation is a systematic assessment of some 'object', where an object is a policy, process, program, plan or product. Evaluation may be formative (to 'form' the object for the purposes of development) or summative (to provide a 'summation' identifying outcomes or effects). Perhaps most usefully for the purposes of this case study, Weiss (1998) incorporates the principle of systemic investigation alongside concepts of judgment against established standards and evaluation utilisation by defining evaluation as the 'systematic assessment of the operation and/or outcomes of a program or policy, compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards, as a means of contributing to the improvement of the program or policy' (p. 4).

Evaluation objectives

The objective of evaluation is to enhance the quality and influence of interventions (Owen, 2006). Van Der Meer and Edelenbos (2006) clarify that:

evaluation can be ascribed two main functions in the policy process:
- it supports and facilitates accountability and transparency by assessing policy output and outcomes (and comparing these with policy goals) by assessing the extent to which actual results can be ascribed to the policy; [and]
- evaluation may contribute to learning processes leading to improved policy-making and/or implementation' (p. 201).

Similarly, in terms of the dual roles of evaluation in both policy development (that is, analysis of alternative policy options), and policy implementation (that is, amendment with a view to improving policy quality, efficiency and/or effectiveness), Weiss (1999) suggests that evaluation can 'help policy makers understand the issues better, provide a context for appreciation of their nature and scope and the frames of reference that make them conceptually understandable, and help them choose the policies or modifications that are likely to be effective and/or cost-effective' (p. 474). Further, Weiss et al. (2008) assert that:

Evaluation is a type of research that should be particularly well used because it deals in the currency of policy and programs. Evaluation gives direction about which interventions have had good effects and which kinds of interventions have been less successful. Therefore, an alert policy maker should derive guidance on which road to travel in the future. (pp. 29-30)

Weiss cautions that 'evaluation is not the star in the policy drama' (1999, p. 438), lamenting the apparent rarity of evaluation utilisation. Rather than direct influence as originally anticipated, evaluation utilisation is now considered to occur through a process of enlightenment whereby findings 'reach decision makers in unsystematic and diffuse forms, 'percolating' into the policy arena and influencing thinking about policy issues, providing

policy makers with a background of information and ideas that affected the ways that they viewed issues and the alternatives that they considered' (Weiss, 1999, p. 141).

Factors influencing evaluation utilisation include evaluator credibility (Chelimsky, 1997), evaluation method (stakeholder contribution, timeframes, methods) (Weiss, 1999; Van Der Meer & Edelenbos, 2006), capacity of policy makers (Dror, 1971) and the political environment (Weiss, 1999). Notwithstanding concerns regarding the apparent lack of uptake of evaluation findings, objectives that are particularly relevant to policy implementation evaluation include improved policy through post-evaluation amendment, increased accountability and transparency through mapping of policy goals to outcomes, and increased clarity regarding the success or otherwise of policy interventions.

Following Cook (2000), Bickman (2000) notes that 'good measurement is critical for a good evaluation' (p. 108), and further, that 'the lack of attention to measurement development in many fields means that good measures may not be available' (p. 108). However, he cautions that 'performance indicators are often seen as a substitute for program evaluation' (p. 109). Concurring, Sanderson (2000) cautions against a purely instrumentalist view of evaluation:

However, the taken-for-granted, common sense approach to policy evaluation derives its logic from the conceptualization of the process of policy formulation and implementation as a rational cycle of goal specification, design, implementation, evaluation and re- design – what Jenkins-Smith and Sabatier (1993) call the 'stages heuristic'. (p. 437)

Sanderson (2000) argues against a methodological focus simply establishing 'clearly defined objectives and intended outcomes, reliable ways of measuring them and sound methodological designs for identifying the effects attributable to policy interventions' (p. 439), suggesting that this approach does little in terms of understanding causation, institutional context and program theory. Sanderson (2000) asserts that such approaches have 'resulted in a neglect of the task of explanation – of seeking to understand links and interactions between policy interventions, the cumulative impact of policies and the influence of institutional regimes' (p. 439), agreeing with Schmid (1996) that we need to 'open up the black box [of] … policy formation and implementation processes' (p. 2). In order to shift from a primarily instrumentalist approach focused on measurement of goals, objectives and effect, Sanderson (2002) suggests that we posit the question: 'what works for whom under what circumstances, and why?' (p. 19).

Evaluation approaches

Evaluation approaches vary according to purpose, extent of stakeholder consultation and collaboration, inclusion of quantitative and/or qualitative methodology, theoretical underpinning, utilisation-focus and focus on formative and/or summative approaches. Evaluation method may focus on policy outcomes, outputs, efficiency or effectiveness. The CIPP model (Stufflebeam, 2003), a theory-based evaluation method, encompasses context, input, process and product evaluations:

Context evaluations assess needs, problems, assets and opportunities to help decision makers define goals and priorities and help the broader group of users judge goals, priorities and outcomes. Input evaluations assess alternative approaches, competing action plans, staffing plans, and budgets for their feasibility and potential cost-effectiveness to meet targeted needs

and achieve goals … Process evaluations assess the implementation of plans to help staff carry out activities and later help the broad group of users judge performance and interpret outcomes. Product evaluations identify and assess outcomes … both to help staff keep an enterprise focused on achieving important outcomes and ultimately to help the broader group of users gauge the effort's success in meeting targeted needs'. (pp. 4-5)

Zhang et al. (2011) summarise the key evaluation questions applicable to Stufflebeam's CIPP model as: What needs to be done? (CONTEXT); How should it be done? (INPUT); Is it being done? (PROCESS) and Did the project [policy] succeed? (PRODUCT) (pp. 64-66). The CIPP model and associated questions have informed the development of the proposed policy implementation evaluation framework.

The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework

Once the Casual Teaching Staff Project − and university senior management - had identified the need to develop an institutional policy response, the project followed the policy development process articulated in the institutional meta-policy (that is, the *Policy Development and Review Policy*). As noted previously, the institutional meta-policy explicitly establishes the requirement for policy implementation evaluation, without prescribing method. As such, whilst the Casual Teaching Staff Project was predicated on an expectation that evaluation would follow policy implementation, the evaluation method itself was emergent. Having already established a method of mapping research literature to institutional policy and standards, the Casual Teaching Staff Project continued this method to develop the proposed policy implementation evaluation framework.

The proposed approach maps an established evaluation model − Stufflebeam's CIPP model (2003) to evaluation-relevant institutional meta-policy requirements, and project phases. Stufflebeam's CIPP model (2003) asks 'What needs to be done? (Context); How should it be done? (Input); Is it being done? (Process) and Did the policy succeed? (Product), and the institutional meta-policy requirements concern evaluation (Design) and institutional policy review (Review). The policy implementation evaluation framework − context, input, design, process, product, review (CIDPPR) - may be depicted as follows in Table 2.

Table 2. Model – Institutional policy implementation evaluation framework

PHASES	PHASE 1 - CONTEXT	PHASE 2 - INPUT	PHASE 3 – DESIGN	PHASE 4 - PROCESS	PHASE 5 - PRODUCT	PHASE 6 - REVIEW
SUMMARY	IDENTIFY NEEDS	DETERMINE INSTITUTIONAL POLICY RESPONSE	DESIGN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	COLLECT CREDIBLE EVIDENCE	FINALISE EVALUATION and MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS	REVIEW INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
QUESTION	What needs to be done?	How should it be done?	What is the policy implementation evaluation framework	Is it being done?	Did the policy succeed?	Does the policy need to be amended / revoked / left as is?
METHOD	o Conduct bench-marking and literature review o Collect preliminary data	o Determine the institutional policy response (e.g. new / amended policy) o Draft institutional policy	o Develop a policy implementation evaluation framework o Collect baseline data o Refine the policy implementation evaluation framework and evaluation instruments o Conduct consultations with management and other stakeholders	o Collect credible evidence o Conduct policy implementation evaluation using evaluation instrument(s)	o Analyse data regarding evidence of impact o Map to institutional policy o Draft proposed policy review recommendations o Identify exemplars / good practice o Finalise report and recommendations	o Based on evidence of policy implementation evaluation, recommend institutional policy review outcome: • continue un-amended; • be amended (minor/major); • be revoked

Table 3 demonstrates how the Casual Teaching Staff Project maps to this framework.

PHASES	PHASE 1 - CONTEXT	PHASE 2 - INPUT	PHASE 3 – DESIGN	PHASE 4 - PROCESS	PHASE 5 - PRODUCT	PHASE 6 - REVIEW
SUMMARY	IDENTIFY NEEDS	DETERMINE INSTITUTIONAL POLICY RESPONSE	DESIGN POLICY IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION FRAMEWORK	COLLECT CREDIBLE EVIDENCE	FINALISE EVALUATION and MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS	REVIEW INSTITUTIONAL POLICY
QUESTION	What needs to be done?	How should it be done?	What is the policy implementation evaluation framework?	Is it being done?	Did the policy succeed?	Does the policy need to be amended / revoked / left as is?

METHOD	Establish a Project Reference Group (2009-2010)
	
	Conduct benchmarking and literature review
	RED Report (core concepts and domains)
	. *Academic Staff Agreement* (issues)
	o
	Collect preliminary data
	o 2010 preliminary survey
		Determine the institutional policy response (e.g. new/amended policy)
		
		Draft institutional policy (*Casual Teaching Staff Policy*) (headings and content)
			Develop a policy implementation evaluation framework
			o BLASST Project *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* (guiding principles, standards, criteria)
			
			Collect baseline data
			o 2012 survey (meta-themes and themes)
			o BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool (B-BIT) workshop
			o focus group interviews (2013)
			Refine the policy implementation evaluation framework and evaluation instruments
			
			Conduct consultations with management and other stakeholders
				Collect credible evidence
				
				Conduct evaluation using evaluation instrument(s)
				   modified BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool (B-BIT) instrument (late 2013 / early 2014) with Faculties / Schools through workshop and audit (baseline data regarding institutional practices on policy approval)
				
				Conduct evaluation using evaluation instrument(s)
				   modified BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool (B-BIT) instrument (2015)
				2015 survey
				focus group interviews (2015)
				(post policy implementation data)
					Analyse data regarding evidence of impact
					
					Map to institutional policy
					
					Draft proposed policy review recommendations
					
					Identify exemplars / good practices
					
					Finalise report and recommendations
						Based on evidence of policy implementation evaluation, recommend institutional policy review outcome:
						o continue un-amended;
						o be amended (minor/major);
						o be revoked

Phase 1 - Context, which involved benchmarking, the literature review and the 2010 preliminary survey to identify 'what needs to be done?' has been completed. Phase 2 – Input, which involved drafting of the institutional policy ('how should it be done?') has been completed. Phase 3 – Design, is currently underway. To date, this has involved the identification of relevant standards and criteria fundamental to this policy implementation evaluation framework. The BLASST Project's *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* (Harvey et al., 2012):

sets in place criteria and standards by which we measure the quality of performance and outcomes in learning and teaching, and in management and administrative policy, procedure and practices around sessional staff. The Sessional Staff Standards Framework positions the Institution's approach to sessional staff within the institutional policy framework … (p. 1)

In addition, the design of the policy implementation evaluation framework has included the collection of baseline data through the 2012 survey, workshop and focus group interviews in 2013. Consultations with senior management and other policy stakeholders are planned for late 2013/early 2014. Phase 4 – Process involves the collection of credible evidence through the deployment of the modified evaluation instrument using an audit and workshop approach (late 2013/early 2014). The proposed evaluation instrument is a variant of the BLASST Benchmarking Interactive Tool (B-BIT) which will enable an evaluation of institutional practices against the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* (that is, good practice, minimum standard or unsustainable). In this instance, the *Sessional Staff Standards Framework* provide the necessary standards and criteria. In other instances, the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* or other related standards may provide the necessary benchmarks.

The design phase will be followed by Phase 5 – Product, which involves further data collection exercises using the evaluation instrument, survey and focus group interviews in 2015. Recommendations will be drawn from an analysis of the data in time to formally contribute towards Phase 6 – Review. This phase involves implementation of the policy review process (2016) scheduled three years post policy approval. The proposed policy implementation evaluation framework is comprehensive. It clearly provides a basis for a review of policy driven practice, as opposed to the more common approach involving the review of policy presentation (Freeman, 2012a).

Conclusion

The Casual Teaching Staff Project, initiated by the Tasmanian Institute for Learning and Teaching, has adopted a long term view. In part, this is attributable to the commitment of the Institute to the provision of learning and teaching focused professional development for staff – including casual teaching staff, and the leadership taken by the Institute in the development, evaluation and review of academic policy at the University of Tasmania. This long term view has shaped both a research and practice-driven approach to the development of the draft *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* and the considered development of the proposed policy implementation evaluation framework. Whilst not all policies will warrant or receive this level of scrutiny and support, this case study provides an exemplar for potential transfer.

The Casual Teaching Staff Project has been underpinned by the sentiment that institutional policy can drive change in institutional practices to produce positive outcomes for policy stakeholders – in this instance, arguably the whole university and students. This aspiration is pressing, as casual teaching staff represent a large and growing proportion of academic staff. External reviews and our survey results confirm that improvements are required, however baseline information is now required regarding actual institutional practices with respect to casual teaching staff. It remains to be seen how, and to what extent, the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* – once approved and implemented – brings about change. Concurrent implementation of the *Casual Teaching Staff Policy* and the related policy implementation evaluation framework provides an opportunity to monitor practices and track change.

Policy implementation evaluation remains the 'black box' of institutional policy. This case study has identified a potentially transferable, phased policy implementation evaluation framework incorporating Context, Input, Design, Process, Product and Review (CIDPPR). Whilst recognising that evaluation is more than measurement of institutional performance, emerging policy implementation evaluation frameworks may provide clarity regarding the nexus between policy, business intelligence systems and practice, and provide a genuine basis for institutional policy review.

Biographical note

Brigid Freeman is a Research Fellow with the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. Dr Jo Kelder is a research project officer in the Faculty of Health Science, University of Tasmania. Dr Natalie Brown is the Head, Teaching Institute of Learning and Teaching, University of Tasmania.

References

ABS (2011). *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*, *Australia.* Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics. 6310.0.

Australian Council of Trade Unions. (2012). *Lives on hold: Unlocking the potential of Australia's workforce.* Melbourne: Australian Council of Trade Unions.

Australian University Quality Agency (2005). *Report of an Audit of the University of Tasmania*. Melbourne: Australian University Quality Agency. Retrieved from http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/auditreport_utas_2005.pdf.

Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (2013). *Future focus: 2013 National Workforce Development Strategy,* Canberra: Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency. Retrieved from http://www.awpa.gov.au/our-work/national-workforce-development-strategy/2013-workforce-development-strategy/Documents/FutureFocus2013NWDS.pdf.

Benchmarking Leadership and Advancement of Standards for Sessional Teaching (n.d.). *BLASST Benchmarking Information Tool – B-BIT* (web-page). Retrieved from http://blasst.edu.au/

Bickman, L. (2000). Summing Up Program Theory in P.J. Rogers, T.A. Hacsi, A. Petrosino & T.A. Huebner (Eds), *Program Theory in Evaluation: Challenges and Opportunities, New Directions for Evaluation* (pp. 103-112). American Evaluation Association.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development.* Sage: Thousand Oaks.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H., & Scales, B. (2008). *Review of higher education in Australia, final report*. Canberra: Australian Government.

Brown, T., Goodman, J. & Yasukawa, K. (2010). Academic casualisation in Australia: Class division in the university. *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 52, 169-182.

Brown, N., Kelder, J.A., Freeman, B. & Carr, A. (2013, forthcoming). *Message from the chalk face – casual teaching staff tell us what they want.* Journal of Teaching and Learning Practice.

Buddelmeyer, H., Wooden, M. & Ghatous, S. (2006). Transitions from casual employment in Australia project 09/05, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research. Retrieved from http://www.melbourneinstitute.com/downloads/labour/9-05%20Final%20Report.pdf.

Chelimsky, E. (1997). The Political Environment of Evaluation and What It Means for the Development of the Field, In: E. Chelimsky & Shadish, W.R. (Eds), *Evaluation for the 21st Century A Handbook* (pp. 53-68). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

Cook, T.D. (2000). The false choice between theory-based evaluation and experimentation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 87, 27-34.

Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*
(2nd ed.). London: Thousand Oaks.

Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (2012). *Staff 2012: Selected Higher Education Statistics (Tables A1.3, A1.4, A1.14).* Retrieved from http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/HigherEducationStatistics/StatisticsPublications/Pages/default.aspx.

Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (1997). *Selected Higher Education Staff Statistics 1997 (Appendix 1, Appendix 1.1)*. Retrieved from http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/HigherEducationStatistics/Documents/Publications/Staff1997.pdf.

Dror, Y. (1971). Design for Policy Sciences. New York: American Elsevier Publishing Company.

Freeman, B. (2010a). *Benchmarking to Identify Good Practice University Policy Frameworks*. Paper presented at the Tertiary Education Management Conference 2010, Melbourne. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/1126873/Benchmarking_to_identify_good_practice_university_policy_frameworks.

Freeman, B. (2010b). *Report on the University Policy Benchmarking Project: Implications for the University of Tasmania.* Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/1978171/Report_on_the_Review_of_the_University_of_Tasmania_Delegations_Register.

Freeman, B. (2012a). *Developing approaches, systems and resources for university policy review.* Paper presented at the Tertiary Education Management Conference 2012, Adelaide. Retrieved from http://www.temc.org.au/temc-refereed-papers.

Freeman, B. (2012b). *University policy review: What? Why? How? What's with the big elephant.* Paper presented at the Association for Tertiary Education Management Policy Development Forum VIII, Melbourne. Retrieved from http://www.academia.edu/2060244/University_policy_review_What_Why_How_Whats_the_big_elephant_Association_for_Tertiary_Education_Management_ATEM_Developing_Policy_in_Tertiary_Institutions_forum_University_of_Melbourne_26_October_2012_invited_Presentation_.

Harvey, M., Luzia, K., Brown, N., McCormack, C., McKenzie, J.A. & Parker, N.J. (2012). Connecting quality learning and teaching with sessional staff standards: the BLASST project, Research and Development in Higher Education: Connections in Higher Education, 35th HERDSA Annual International Conference, Hobart, Australia, July 2012 in *Research and Development in Higher Education: Connections in Higher Education* (Eds) N. Brown, & S. Jones, Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Incorporated (HERDSA). Retrieved from http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2012/.

Jensen, K., Freeman, B. & Hatwell, M. (2013). *A guide to better practice in institutional policy development and policy management in Australasian tertiary education institutions* (2nd edition). Melbourne: Association for Tertiary Education Management.

Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation (1994). *The Program Evaluation Standards*, 2nd edition. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.

Knight, P., Baume, D., Tait, J. & Yorke, M. (2007). Enhancing part-time teaching in higher education: A challenge for institutional policy and practice. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 61, 420–438.

May, R. (2011). Casualisation; here to stay? The modern university and its divided workforce. Paper presented at the 25th Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand Conference, Auckland, New Zealand.

National Tertiary Education Union (2012). *Unofficial communication on analysis of 2011 higher education statistics*. Melbourne: NTEU. Unpublished research note.

Owen, J.M. (2006). Program Evaluation Forms and Approaches (3rd edition). Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin.

Percy, A., Scoufis, M., Parry, S., Goody, A., Hicks, M., Macdonald, I., Martinez, K., Szorenyi-Reischl, N., Ryan, Y., Wills, S. & Sheridan, L. (2008). *The RED Report, Recognition - Enhancement - Development: The contribution of sessional teachers to higher education.* Sydney: Australian Learning and Teaching Council. Retrieved from http://ro.uow.edu.au/asdpapers/135/

Rowlands, J. (2013). The symbolic role of academic boards in university academic quality assurance. *Quality in Higher Education*, *19*(2), 142-157.

Ryan, S., Burgess, J., Connell, J., & Groen, E. (2013). Casual Academic Staff in an Australian University: Marginalised and excluded. *Tertiary Education and Management*, *19*(2), 161-175.

Sanderson, I. (2000). Evaluation in complex policy systems. *Evaluation*, *6*(4), 433-454.

Sanderson, I. (2002). Evaluation, policy learning and evidence-based policy making. *Public administration*, *80*(1), 1-22.

Scriven, M. (1986). New frontiers of evaluation. *Evaluation Practice*, *7*(1), 7-44.

Schmid, G. (1996). 'Process Evaluation: Policy Formation and Implementation' in G. Schmid, J. O'Reilly & K. Schomann, K. (Eds), *International Handbook of Labour Market Policy and Evaluation*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Stoddart, M.D. (Ed.), (1994). The Structure of Academic Boards at Selected Australian Universities (Occasional Papers Series) (Canberra, Department of Employment, Education and Training [DEET], Australian Government Publishing Service).

Stufflebeam, D.L. (2003). *The CIPP Model for Evaluation*. 2003 Annual Conference of the Oregon Program Evaluators Network (OPEN), Portland, Oregon, 10 March 2003. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/58435354/The-Cipp-Model-for-Evaluation-by-Daniel-l-Stufflebeam.

Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (2012). *Regulatory Risk Framework*. Retrieved from http://www.teqsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/TEQSARegulatoryRiskFramework_0.pdf.

Trochim, W. (2006). *Research Methods Knowledge Base.* Retrieved from http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/intreval.php.

University of Tasmania (2010). *Policy Development and Review Policy*. Retrieved from http://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/81194/Policy-Development-and-Review-Policy.pdf.

University of Tasmania (2010). *Policy Development and Review Procedure*. Retrieved from http://www.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/81196/Policy-Development-and-Review-Procedure.pdf.

University of Tasmania (2010). *University of Tasmania Academic Staff Agreement.* Retrieved from   http://www.human-resources.utas.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0013/64012/ASA_2010-2012.pdf

University of Tasmania (2011). *2011 Pocket Statistics.* Hobart: University of Tasmania.

Van Der Meer, F.B. & Edelenbos, J. (2006). Evaluation in Multi-Actor Policy Processes: Accountability, Learning and Co-operation. *Evaluation*, *12*(2), 201-218.

Vilkinas, T. & Peters, M. (2013). Academic governance provided by academic boards within the Australian higher education sector. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*. doi:10.1080/1360080X.2013.825419

Weiss, C.H. (1998). Evaluation Methods for Studying Programs and Policies (2nd edition). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Weiss, C.H. (1999). The Interface between Evaluation and Public Policy. *Evaluation*, *5*(4), 468-486.

Weiss, C. H., Murphy-Graham, E., Petrosino, A., & Gandhi, A. G. (2008). The fairy godmother—and her warts making the dream of evidence-based policy come true. *American Journal of Evaluation*, *29*(1), 29-47.

Zhang, G., Zeller, N., Griffith, R., Metcalf, D., Williams, J., Shea, C., & Misulis, K. (2011). Using the Context, Input, Process, and Product Evaluation Model (CIPP) as a comprehensive framework to guide the planning, implementation, and assessment of service-learning programs. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, *15*(4), 57-84.

Building a Successful Business Case for Procurement of a New University Building

Andrew Hutson and Mary-Louise Huppatz
Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne
aewhuts@unimelb.edu.au   mhuppatz@unimelb.edu.au

Abstract

With government funding streams narrowing and an increase in the number of facilities nearing the end of their lifecycle, universities are faced with complex and completing demands for investment from an already stretched infrastructure budget. So how does a faculty or school move to the front of the line with their request for a new building? This paper outlines the experience of building such a case for support: from the first internal explorations within the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne, to assessment of current facilities, through to articulation of a strong and robust case to the University's Finance Committee. It also explores the experience of an unsuccessful application for government funding and the impact of this on business planning. The Faculty's business case was distinctive as it incorporated multiple streams of investment and demonstrated investment in the campus as a core outcome for the project.

Key words

university capital works, infrastructure funding, business case

Introduction

The University of Melbourne is currently constructing a new building for the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, due for completion in late 2014. This is a substantial project of 17,000m^2 in the heart of the University's main Parkville Campus. The process of working toward achieving a new home for the Faculty has been long and arduous as the University has limited resources for infrastructure projects and there is understandable competition within the institution from other faculties and groups for access to these funds. The project for a new Faculty building began many years ago with the concept being mooted to the recently arrived Vice-Chancellor in 2005. His comments included the prescient extract *'… this will be an exciting project, if a challenge to finance'* (Davis, email to Faculty Dean, 30 June, 2005). This quote from an email from the Vice-Chancellor to the then Dean pointed out the inherent problem faced by faculties and the University in attracting funding for major projects

To provide some background to the project, the Faculty had been housed within a building originally constructed in 1961. While this does not seem that long ago, the fabric of the building had deteriorated and was in dire need of an injection of funds for maintenance. The existing building was too small for the needs of the Faculty and the prospect of a new purpose built facility tailored to the specific needs of the teaching and research disciplines of the urban environment was very attractive. To achieve such an undertaking involved a great

deal of resolve and determination within a fiscal environment that while challenging in the mid-2000s by the late part of the decade was being bruised by the global financial crisis.

The Faculty is relatively small compared to the mainstay faculties of the University such as Arts, Science and Medicine. Despite its size, Architecture, Building and Planning has in recent years achieved kudos within the University by being well-run and financially successful. Being a relative minnow in the institution, the push to acquire a new building amongst competing interests of other sectors of the University created its own challenges.

The process undertaken by the Faculty and the University to progress the new building project involved a series of presentations, preparation of conceptual schemes, business plans and financial justifications over a long period of time within a context where the process of how infrastructure projects were approved by the University had undergone significant change. This paper will offer this project as a case study outlining these processes and the trials and tribulations of getting such a significant project out of the ground.

In looking at the timeline in establishing a bid for the new building a number of clear phases can be identified.

- The first is the initial ***Groundwork*** phase where the Faculty commenced the process of proposing a new building and requesting University support.
- The second phase was ***Building the Foundations*** for the bid. This phase included the period of establishing a preliminary capital bid as part of the Faculty business planning and getting the project onto the University's Capital Works Priority list.
- The third phase was the ***Design Phase*** where the design competition for the New Building was undertaken and architectural consultants selected. This phase also coincided with a changing governance landscape within the University in regard to approval processes required for major projects.
- The fourth was the ***Major Projects Phase*** where the requirements for the justification and ultimate approval for new projects came under a new system. With this change came new and more stringent requirements for the provision of a project business case.
- The last period was the ***Approval Phase*** where the project received staggered approvals to proceed through various costed stages of schematic design, documentation, tender and awarding of construction contracts.

These changing processes for committing to, and funding, major projects within the University coincided with the Faculty's submissions for the new project. In many ways the evolution of these processes set ground rules that were road-tested on the project in respect of accountability and the financial viability of the scheme. The Faculty had to navigate its way through the changes and lessons were learnt by all parties in the establishment of a firm framework for major project approval procedures.

Background

The Faculty has a long history of borrowed and sub-standard accommodation. The University's first architecture students studied within the Engineering Building until 1919 when the University of Melbourne established the Architectural Design Atelier together with the Royal Victoria Institute of Architecture. The University's Building Committee made 500 pounds available for accommodation which was used to purchase a *'small building*

sheeted with galvanised iron roof and painted weatherboards' (Selleck, 2003, p.586). For many years the Faculty operated *'out of army huts near the engineering buildings* (Goad & Tibbits, 2003, p.74). Teaching continued in the Engineering Building until 1923 when space was made available in the new Anatomy Building. *'A new architecture building was a long time away'* (Selleck, 2003, p.586).

In fact, it was another forty years before the Architecture Building was finally realised and it has remained the main accommodation for the Faculty until 2012. Located on the eastern side of campus, the building was designed by the then Head of Architecture, Professor Brian. Lewis and built during the period 1962-1965. It is widely acknowledged that this building would not have resulted but for his dogged endeavour to secure funding and materials with the design fluxing to accommodate the donation of building materials *'Built through hard-earned donations'* (Goad & Tibbits, 2003, p. 74).

Over time the building had a number of upgrades with alterations and additions being made during the periods 1989, 1995-1997 and 1999 to remedy operational issues. By 2007, this seven storey building contained a wide range of teaching spaces (lecture theatres, design studios, seminar and tutorial rooms), computer labs, staff office accommodation, library, exhibition spaces, research spaces and a workshop. The Faculty also spread out into two adjacent sites, the Old Commerce (1938) and Baldwin Spencer buildings (1880).

Both the Architecture and Old Commerce buildings were nearing the end of their life cycle. The space available in the existing Architecture Building fell well under the allocations recommended by the Tertiary Education Facilities Manager Association Spatial Guidelines for the accommodation of staff and teaching facilities. The building also suffered from an array of system and structural deficiencies including significant deterioration of the structural concrete framework.

In summary, the existing facilities were inadequate for the spatial needs of the Faculty at the time and within future projections. It was recognised that if the infrastructure was to be retained it would require a substantial renovation and extension.

Groundwork - Up to 2007

The initial explorations for a new facility for the Faculty began in earnest in 2005. The then Dean established an internal working group to explore the options for upgraded accommodation. This timing coincided with the appointment by the University Council of the new Vice-Chancellors This appointment in itself was portentous as the Vice-Chancellor from the beginning indicated an enthusiasm for a new Facility project.

Key to this period was the work undertaken within the Faculty to look at planning options and set some broad costs. The working group was active in planning and visited several interstate academic facilities to establish a context for project scope and briefing for the New Building. In May 2005, the Dean wrote to the Vice-Chancellor outlining a case for a new building and included an initial cost estimate of which the Faculty offered a direct contribution of approximately eight per cent from its operating reserves toward the project. Interestingly, this memo also contained the first mention of the Faculty's offer to raise funds for a new building which was reinforced with the appointment of an External Relations Manager to commence scoping fundraising opportunities.

The Faculty leadership group (Faculty Executive) identified in early 2006 that a new building was one of four key strategic areas of future planning. Noted outcomes from the annual Leadership retreat record a commitment to working with the University Master Planner and Vice-Principal (Property and Buildings) in pursuing the viability and potential locations for this project. The proposed Faculty contribution towards the project at this time had doubled but it was not clearly stated how this was to be achieved.

In early 2006, various sites and configurations for a new building were considered by the Faculty Working Group. These options included sites within and outside the main campus. Consultant Quantity Surveyors were also appointed to provide indicative costings for the various site and configuration alternatives.

Building the foundations – becoming a University priority

In late January 2007, the new Dean joined the Faculty and was advised by the Vice-Chancellor that securing a new building was to be a key priority in the new role. Momentum started to build and a number of people were tasked with responsibilities relating to this project including the newly appointed Assistant Dean (Facilities) and the new Faculty General Manager.

The Faculty's 2007 Business Plan, prepared as part of the periodical planning requirement for the University central management, proclaimed its enthusiasm for the project and remarked on it being *'... excited by the University's commitment to a new purpose-built facility.'* (February 2007). The plan outlined an annual contribution toward the project from the Faculty's operating budget for the period 2007-2012, accessing capital reserves as well as funds raised through philanthropic endeavours. This business plan and commitment to raising funds signaled an important and unequivocal determination on behalf of the Faculty to progress the project.

From early 2008, the Faculty was in planning mode with a number of preliminary initiatives implemented to build towards development of the submission of a specific business case for a New Building. The Dean commissioned a workspaces consultant to assist the Assistant Dean (Facilities) in outlining the process of planning and preparing an aspirational brief for the project. As part of the preparation of the aspirational brief, the workspaces consultant undertook extensive consultation within the Faculty which reinforced the ambition that as primary users the membership of the Faculty should engage in the planning stages.

The aspirational brief proved to be a key document as it was repeatedly referenced as a fundamental ambition in future funding applications, business cases and fundraising proposals. The four key themes, which emerged within this brief, were those of Built Pedagogy, the Academic Environment, the Design Studio and the Living Building. Combined these presented the Faculty's vision for a living, pedagogical building that was to be an exemplar of sustainable design and transformative teaching.

As part of this preliminary planning stage, a consultant was engaged to audit the current facilities and analyse various scenarios for future accommodation of the Faculty's needs. In July 2008 they delivered an accommodation brief and options study. This study was provided to assist the Faculty in assessing various building options to determine the preferred

design approach. The options included refurbishing current accommodation, replacing existing facilities with a new building of the same size or, the preferred scenario, a new building designed to accommodate expansion to future-proof the Faculty. This analysis was key as it demonstrated that the existing building was in a state of decay, its basic structure was inappropriate for Faculty needs and that there were myriad regulatory failings. Combined, these elements made the building expensive to refit with an outcome that would serve the Faculty poorly. The proposed refurbishment costs were found to be in the same ballpark as costs for a new building. This report enabled the Faculty to build a detailed case based on demonstrable needs and cost benefit analyses.

During this time the Faculty actively worked to secure the project on to the University's Capital Works Program. As part of its 2008 Business Plan the Faculty submitted a two page capital bid. This requirement and mode of the capital bid was representative of the University project planning at the time. Cases were proposed and submitted to the University but were not always reliant on strong financial models. Whilst nearly always presented as an examination of need, some elements in these submissions presented were often anecdotal and the cases not subject to the same degree of rigorous review as is the situation today. Our understanding is that there was a process of assessment of priorities overseen by senior staff working with the relevant governance committees which would then make recommendation to University Council.

Design phase

Design Competition
The proposal to hold a design competition for the project was first mooted in May 2005, with the Faculty sketching out a proposal to fund and run a design competition as part of a case submitted to the Vice-Chancellor. The use of a competition was a departure from the University of Melbourne's traditional approach to the appointment of consultants, a task overseen by Property and Campus Services. As documented in a previous conference paper *'Designing the Vision: the Role of the Design Competition in the delivery of University Buildings'* (TEMC September 18, 2013) architectural selection was undertaken through either direct selection from the University's Register of Consultants or through a limited call for Expressions of Interest.

Launched in mid-2009, the Faculty instigated an international Competition to select the architectural team to design the proposed building. The competition was conducted in two stages with submissions assessed by an international panel. The partnership of John Wardle Architects and Office dA won the competition and were appointed architectural consultants to the project and have worked tirelessly with the Faculty to realise the aspirational vision for the building.

The competition process was relevant to the development of the final business case for a number of reasons. First, it was able to be conducted without requirement for formal funding commitment from the University for the project. It meant that the preparation of the final business case could proceed using the outcome from the competition to support the spatial and financial analysis of the viability of the project. Separate approval for the competition to proceed, although not in itself sanctioning the project, added significant weight to the subsequent case for the new building. It provided image and substance for the project that could form the basis for cost analysis and presented an architectural reality for the site at the

centre of the campus. The status of the competition and subsequent project business case was assisted through having the Executive Director, Property and Campus Services as a member of the Competition Panel and the Vice-Chancellor as its Chair. Whilst the competition was for the design of a University building, it was run and funded solely by the Faculty. This may appear to be a large investment but was seen to have been worthwhile in allowing the project to gain traction and recognition across the University.

Government Funding
Government funding has traditionally been a key source of funding for infrastructure projects within the Higher Education sector. Launched by the Labor Federal Government as part of the 2008-2009 budget, the Education Investment Fund was one of three 'nation building funds' designed to stem the impacts of the so-called global financial crisis. This source did enable the University to apply and receive Education Investment Funding for a range of large-scale capital works projects.

As with securing a place on the capital works list, the Faculty had to position itself and jockey for position to be selected by the University to apply for this funding. The Faculty navigated a place into the third round, submitting an application for funding under the Sustainability Stream. This application entitled was submitted in September 2009 but was ultimately unsuccessful.

Much work had gone into building the case for this funding application, with the Faculty working with representatives of the Finance and Planning Group and external consultants to endeavor to present the best case to secure funding. Its rejection for funding was therefore a blow to the progress of the project.

Impacts and Outcomes – Faculty Contribution
The two key outcomes of 2009 – the running of a highly successful international competition and the failure to secure federal funding – left the Faculty on a horns of a dilemma. Momentum for the project had been gained through the design competition, and negotiations were underway to secure the winning design team as consultants. Work was also taking place in a range of sub-projects which would all contribute to the preparation of the case for a New Building. This included the hiring of expertise from the Business Projects Group in the University's Finance and Planning Division who were retained by the Faculty to develop and test the Faculty's modelling.

The impact of not securing government funding though, had the potential to derail the project. In light of the failed funding application and the danger of the project losing support the Dean and General Manager made a key decision to double the Faculty's financial commitment – split evenly across obtaining philanthropic donations and contribution from Faculty reserves. This offer was essential in ensuring that the project got across the line. As the Dean stated when interviewed, *'we knew that we would never get a building if we didn't step up to do it'* (24 July, 2013).

Major projects phase

The previous sections of this paper have focused on the chronological development of the preliminaries stages of the business case. This section will explore the parallel development of the University's processes for approving Major Projects. In summary, the requirements for

approval became more stringent and a case for financial viability for projects had to clear a number of hurdles. The change of processes, while understandable in ensuring transparency and financial rigor, impacted directly on the progress of the faculty's plans as this substantial shift required as reassessment and extensive reworking of the project business case.

Traditionally, the University funds capital projects from its reserves – a position which is impacted by local and global events. Examples of this include the global finance crisis, changes to government funding models and events that impact international student flow.

In late 2008, the University started to tighten up its commercial operations, emerging from concerns of University Council around financial reporting. A new budgeting model was implemented moving away from the traditional University model. The Planning and Finance division were merged to bring a strategic change in how University finances were managed. This was a critical juncture as the University was stepping up construction on projects, actively seeking to acquire strategic land acquisitions and had a backlog of repairs needed to out-dated systems. On top of this was a long list of capital plans nicknamed 'the Field of Dreams'.

In 2009, the University appointed a Vice-Principal (Major Projects) as part of a move towards refining the capital works process. A working paper *'Planning, Management and Governance of Major Projects'* released internally in July 2009 was a precursor to the pending changes which included the establishment of a Major Project Group in 2010. This group was implemented to help the University have more control about how decisions were made and became responsible for the management, governance and reporting of all projects within the University's Major Projects portfolio. This group now oversees the coordination of the initial feasibility planning and business case development for major projects and assists with the project management and monitoring of projects subsequently approved for implementation.
In addition to this, the University established the Infrastructure Planning Group. This committee, which meets bi-monthly provides a control layer and is a forum to provide advice to the University on infrastructure planning and budget, including planning of the University's built and virtual environment, the prioritisation of capital and information projects, and the renewal of the University's information technology and physical infrastructure assets.

These emerging new requirements for the justification and ultimate approval for new projects had impact. Not bought in at the same time, the controls were progressively tightened and for each stage that the Faculty reached there appeared new and more stringent requirements in the provision of a project business case. The metaphors of hurdles and gates were often mentioned in the research for this paper with the Faculty being a test case for each new stage. An additional hurdle was the emerging requirement for capital works to generate an increased return with the Faculty under sustained pressure to demonstrate how any University funding would achieve a large return on investment.

The University now operates under a seven stage project management framework – idea, start up, project initiation, implementation planning, implementation, transition and closing; and operations. Each stage has a series of designated activities and matching outputs linked to approvals and indicative spends. Critically, there are a series of Go / No Go gates now in place and major projects are monitored closely as they approach each stage.

A key parallel change which also occurred during this time was the change of the universities budget model with the requirement that expenditure of all Faculty surpluses had to be agreed by the centre. This meant that the Faculty needed to have agreement on any proposal to use net funds, rather than turning them over to the University.

Business case

Over the preceding years, the Faculty had developed and submitted a range of business cases – to garner support from senior executives, to secure a place on the capital works list and to secure a position to apply for Federal funding. Whilst the case was initially prepared on a needs basis in regard to the failings of current accommodation, it grew to be a comprehensive and intricate submission in response to the changing criteria required to achieve University funding approval. Significant work was undertaken around the time of the Education Investment Funding application and throughout 2010 to build the final and most extensive business case, submitted to University Council's Finance Committee in December 2010.

This case was developed together with support and contributions from key staff in the Finance and Planning Unit and Property and Campus Services. The case was presented as a *'once in a life-time'* opportunity for the Faculty to achieve strategic objectives in relation to the position of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning and the Melbourne School of Design' (Executive Summary page three).

Its structure and content were in line with the new University template 'Business Case for Major Projects' (October 2010). The case was structured under 11 standard headings (outlined below),
- Executive Summary
- Context
- Strategic Intent
- Project Objectives and Outcomes
- Project Description
- Governance
- Timeline
- Financial Plan
- Human Resources
- Key Performance Indicators
- Quality Control.

The 50 page document also contained six attachments which presented data on cost / use breakdown, case flow projections, benefits realisations, engagement agenda and risk. At the core of the business case was the testing of three key scenarios – the *preferred scenario* of a new building to accommodate expansion, a *replacement scenario* of a new building of the same size as current and a *refurbishment* of the existing building.

In the exploration of the three scenarios, the Faculty presented a multi-factoral case. The principal benefit outlined was to ensure the financial capacity of the Faculty to deliver its strategic goals. The business case presented the inadequacies of the current buildings which the Faculty demonstrated would require it to downsize over time to fit the facilities, at a time when it had an increasing demand and student load. Another key element of the argued case

was the Faculty's careful financial management, projected to return a positive net Faculty operating position throughout the project. This positive operating position was linked to the realisation of anticipated additional revenue from invigorated teaching, research activity and industry partnerships. The New Building was also presented as a University building which would contribute to revitalisation of the Parkville campus. Finally, the New Building would demonstrate leadership in environmental design and sustainable practice, a link to the Faculty's strategic future and marketability.

The business case in regard to the preferred scenario of a new building also argued that the quality and design of the building would ensure that it had an enduring lifespan significantly beyond that of a standard construction and the 33 year depreciation lifespan assumed by the University. The refurbishment option would only gain an additional ten year lifespan. In addition, the case outlined how delaying the project would increase costs and risk, estimated at five per cent per annum.

The business case was approved by the Finance Committee but with a number of caveats. The Faculty was required to report on a regular basis to the Finance Committee on continued capacity to meet both capital and philanthropic contributions on a regular basis. The project was also required to go through a value management process to ensure alignment of purpose with the available resources.

Realisation

After a sustained period of further justification through 2011 (in line with the evolving Major Projects process) the project was approved to proceed to tender in February 2012. It was not until November 2012 that the project got 'over the line', with the approval of a financial risk assessment and management plan in response of the preferred contractor at a specially convened meeting of the Finance Committee. Site preparation works were well underway at this juncture, and staff had commenced relocation to temporary accommodation. Demolition commenced in December 2012 and the main contractor commenced on site in February 2013. The project is currently proceeding within schedule and on budget with the Faculty programmed to move into the new facility around Christmas 2014.

The University continues to monitor the Faculty's performance against business case with the Dean having to report to Finance Committee on a continuing capacity. Central to this is the maintenance of a net operating position that covers the cash flow requirements needed to pay for the building

Conclusions

The securing of funding for any new building is a complex and challenging process which can often take years. In today's economic and political climate, projects compete to draw on University resources during a time of great pressure on University revenue streams. Over the past years, the process of capital works planning at the University of Melbourne has evolved in response to the University's need to not only manage the demand for capital works funding, but to ensure the successful realisation of projects within agreed outcomes.

Business cases are now submitted to rigorous review and negotiation through a number of phases. They must go beyond an examination of need with a broader range of factors to be

explored including financial viability and ability to generate income. Quite often they will explore impact on reputation, ranking and the relationship of quality of infrastructure to capacity to build and grow operations. In essence, business cases must be fully evaluated across a range of criteria with the core being strong financial modelling.

The process to the successful achievement of a business case for the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning was a demonstration of this developing process. The outcome was that the process was very much 'stop-start' as the Faculty worked to meet new and evolving requirements throughout the project. The project's progress was impacted globally (through the global financial crisis), nationally (through loss of possible federal funding) and locally (through the need to accommodate local priorities and meet evolving requirements). Key to its successful was the robustness of modelling which showed the impacts of non-investment with potential loss of a profitable entity to the University.

The key things learnt from this exploration and which might provide guidance to those looking to develop business cases for future capital works are:
- Always start with a concept design to enable all parties to work toward an imaged outcome. It helps to be able to see what the project could be when building support. In this respect the architectural completion bought focus to the project both in respect of formulating a project brief and in testing potential outcomes.
- Find a champion(s) – Universities are political and hierarchical but inevitably faculties will need to work with individuals in crucial positions who have discretionary authority. The key is to have them on your side.
- Find ways to inject funds to act as a catalyst and leverage the project – whether through government or industry investment or from capital resources. Securing alternative sources of funds outside the university encourages the institution to seek matching funds.
- Demonstrate funding sources – present a clear argument regarding relationship between quality accommodation and incomes streams e.g. increasing student demand translating into increased income or identify incremental revenue streams such as a third party tenants or external users. In the current climate it is very hard to get a case across the line if unable to demonstrate growth. It helps to show a mix for greater profitability and flexibility.
- Collate data and use well – model financial outcomes rigorously and do not rely on vague estimates. Projects should not be vulnerable to rejection due to inadequate data including analysis of student numbers and financial projections.
- Model the costs of operating a new facility, and demonstrate the impact of costs on future operations
- Use a blend of funding sources. A mix of funds from Faculty reserves and real prosects of philanthropy can reduce the financial exposure of the university.
- Business cases are not just about presenting a solution – ensuring a robust exploration of core business issues that will be addressed assists in developing a compelling case for support.

Acknowledgements

considered responses. In addition we would like to acknowledge Gemma Tan for her detailed research in sourcing key data and background information.

Biographical Notes

Andrew Hutson is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne.

Mary-Louise Huppatz is the Manager, Planning and Operations in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne.

References

Goad, P., & Tibbits, G. (2003). *Architecture on Campus: A Guide to the University of Melbourne and its Colleges*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Hutson, A., and Huppatz, M-L. *Designing the Vision: the Role of the Design Competition in the delivery of University Buildings*. Paper presented at TEMC, 17-19 September 2012, Adelaide, South Australia (TEMC Conference Paper) Retrieved from http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/10533/20121126-1305/temc.org.au/temc-2012.html

Selleck, R.J.W. (2003). *The Shop: The University of Melbourne 1850-1939).* Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Workshopping the workspace: Consultation in designing the shared academic workplace

Andrew Hutson and Andrew McAlinden
Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne
aewhuts@unimelb.edu.au   andrew.mcalinden@unimelb.edu.au

Abstract

The issue of academic workspace has been a hot topic in regards to the provision of new buildings for tertiary education. The traditional mode of separate academic offices, where amenity and size are determined by seniority and status, has been questioned over the last decade, with a number of institutions in Australia and overseas attempting to accommodate academics in a variety of open work environments. A range of reasons for the change in academic working paradigm have been expressed, from encouraging greater peer cooperation and increasing collaborative research, through to the more prosaic desire to reduce space and therefore infrastructure costs. The design of shared academic workspace within the new University of Melbourne building for the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning was developed through a process of consultation and engagement with the architects and academic user groups, to arrive at a design that accommodated a range of workspace desires.

Key words

Academic workspace, open plan, collaborative working, stakeholder consultation.

Introduction

The issue of academic workspaces has become vexed over the last decade with the orthodoxy of providing a separate, closed (cellular) office for each academic, being challenged. There is a body of literature and case-studies that have looked at differing accommodation models. These variants on non-cellular planning have been called open-plan, shared workspaces, clustered models and collaborative working environments. Each descriptive term brings with it alternative spatial arrangements and associated evocative imagery.

The interest in opening up the workspaces for academics is borne from a range of issues. These include the desire to spatially engineer a collaborative working environment, more efficient use of space, flexibility in future configurations, environmental reduction in energy usage and the relationship of changing expectations of office accommodation of professions that are linked to the academy. While interpretations of an open-plan model bring potential benefits it would be fair to say that there has been a general resistance from academics who see shared office space as being counter to their academic practices. It may be convenient to see the traditional cellular image of an academic workspace as anachronistic in today's world but to do so would be to dismiss the real issue of how academics efficiently and effectively operate. There may be a concerted push toward new academic workspace typologies but this in itself should not disregard the concerns many academics have that change may not be for the better.

The design for the new building for the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning (Faculty), at the University of Melbourne (University), was an opportunity to test the academic workspace orthodoxy and explore different approaches to accommodation. This exploration was a joint endeavour by the Faculty and the Architects - John Wardle Architects in association with NADAAA (Architects). This paper will describe the detailed and thorough process that was undertaken with the academic body to ensure consultation and engagement could be achieved and realised throughout the design phase.

The old Faculty building, now demolished to make way for the new structure, housed academics in the traditional mode of single offices. While there was no explicit Faculty policy, the size of office correlated with seniority. To explore new models for academic workspaces in the new building it was important to engage and consult with the academic staff who would occupy the facility. The process undertaken by the Faculty and the Architects was extensive in allowing concerns of academics to be raised, feedback to be provided and designs to be developed in response so that the academic staff can have a sense of ownership in the outcome.

The Process of Consultation
First Stage – Setting the Scene
The Faculty, in close conjunction with the Architects, undertook a process that interrogated the pros and cons of various workplace models. It was intended at the beginning of the planning stage for the new building that open/shared/enclosed work environs would be an important part of the planning discussions with the users of the building.

To facilitate the consultative process the Faculty worked through a Project Reference Group (the reference group) whose role was to act as the representatives of the Users (Faculty) and provide advice to the Dean. The design of the project was also managed by Property and Campus Services on behalf of the University, as the Client.

From the outset of the planning process the reference group worked with the design consultants to articulate the workspace issues they wanted explored. Of the planning meetings between the reference group and the Architects there were two that specifically addressed the ground rules for the academic workspaces. The Architects had considerable experience and expertise in the area of university buildings and had consolidated their previous designs in creating academic workspaces in other tertiary institutions with recent literature and case studies. They instigated a mode of consultation with the client in the form of targeted workshops to discuss, test and develop ideas with the reference group which then fed into broader staff forum.

Key Project Reference Group Workshops
At the first workspace workshop (18 May) the Architects offered a range of typologies to assist the discussion. These were proposals for fully enclosed and semi-enclosed offices, and shared workspaces.
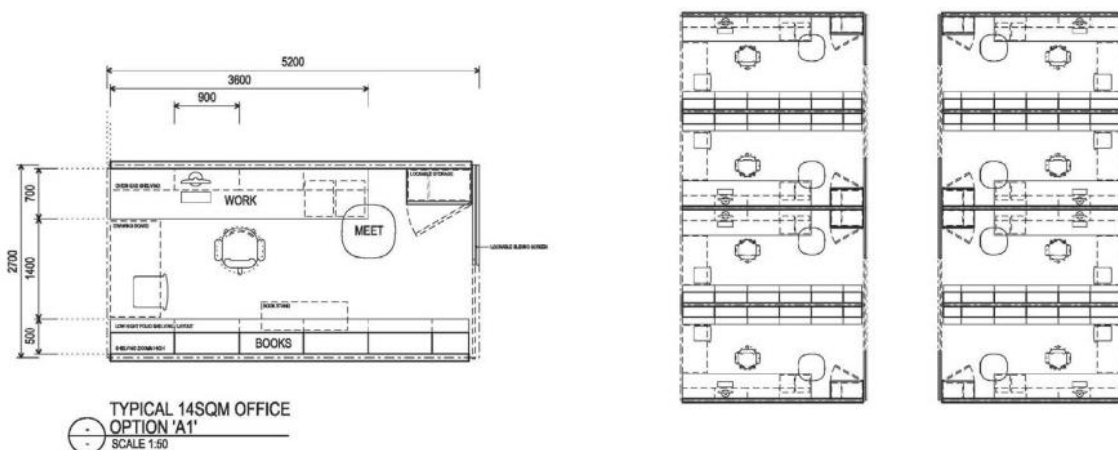
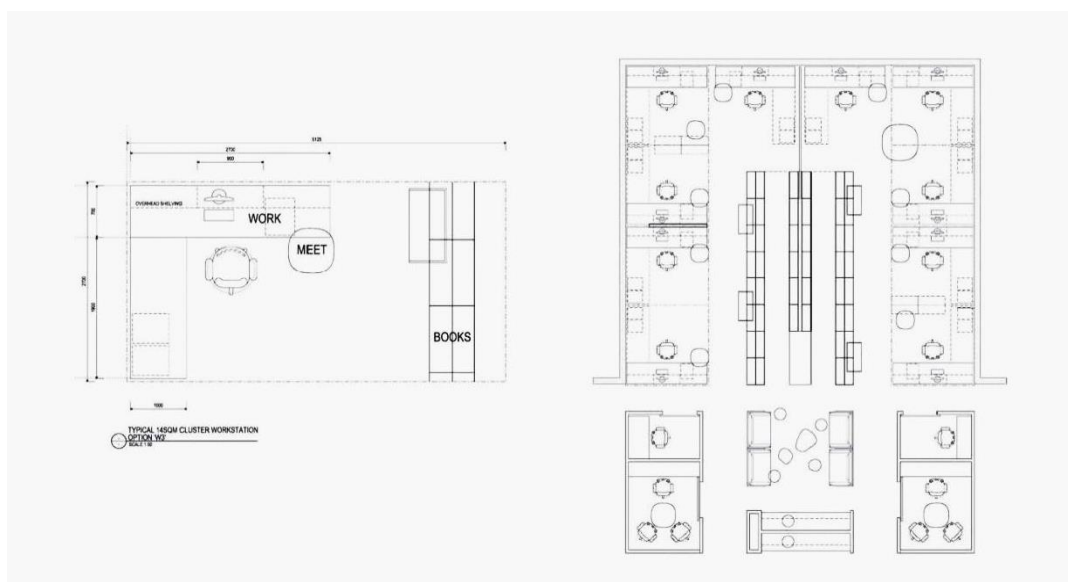**Figure 1. Early options of full enclosed and semi-enclosed offices**

Figure 2. Early design of shared workspace

The fully enclosed was as expected for an academic office; the semi-enclosed was an interesting hybrid that allowed for smaller private/discrete spaces that were separated with associated shared spaces (figure1). The shared space was an open plan with workstations separated with furniture and joinery as required (figure 2). Key aspects of this iteration of the plan were:

- It accommodated 10 people in the cluster.
- There were windows to three sides and all workspaces were against a window.
- There was a central 'library' space that accommodated book shelves, some or all of which could be locked behind glass doors.
- There were shared meeting spaces that were both formal and casual.
- The services consultants were an integral part of these workspace workshops in presenting the relative advantages of shared open space in regard to the desired mixed-mode mechanical and natural ventilation systems. This system has a strong

environmental sustainable design potential that can be better reached without enclosed office spaces.

The other important rule was that the allocation of floor space would be the same per academic irrespective of whether the workspace was enclosed or shared. Behind this approach of equity was a crucial decision made by the Faculty, that shared space would not be a means of saving space and that the shared space would have as good - if not better - amenity compared to the enclosed office format.

The concept of the shared library was an attempt to consolidate shelving in the section of the floor plan that received the least daylight.

Feedback from the workshop was given to the consultants. This centred on looking at differing formats for meeting spaces, staff lounges and further developing options.

At the next workshop with the reference group (23 May), the consultants presented developed versions of the workspace typologies to incorporate into the presentation to all academic staff.

General Staff Forum #1
The broad process of consultation began with a context-setting staff forum (9 June) that outlined the current research and literature on changing academic workspaces and manifested options prepared by the Architects. The importance of this stage was to not only acclimatise the staff to consider changing spatial expectations but more importantly to locate the academic workplace within the broader move toward open plan offices.

During this General Forum a focussed survey of the recent literature on academic workspace was presented. This included the publication by DEGW (Harrison & Cairns, 2008) where the researchers carefully documented the usage and specific needs of a number of academic workspace case studies. This study also documented feedback from academics regarding differing configurations. Within this study the researchers looked to key workplace characteristics as valued by users and provided a number of planning models ranging from individual workrooms with shared common facilities through shared zones or 'quarters' that accommodated sharing of up to 8 people; clusters with shared space for 6-12 people; hubs and clubs with larger open configurations.

The scene-setting also discussed and provided access for the academic staff to other publications outlining changing workplaces strategies (Becker 2000); the case for new academic workspaces (Pinder et al. 2009); the balance between collaborative workspaces and privacy in the academic context (Parkin et al 2011.

At this initial General Forum, the concept of non-cellular academic workspaces was expanded upon, based on issues raised in previous case studies and recent literature. There was an open discussion and an invitation for the academics to provide feedback via email to be collated and re-presented at a future presentation.

At this first meeting it was important to outline basic reasons for the Faculty considering shared workspaces for academics. These were generally:
- Workspace design for non-academic disciplines such as professional staff, general office and administrative working within and without the University had evolved into

a range of open work plans. Universities are considering whether perceived benefits in the shared and collaborative work environment have relevance to academic undertakings.

- The nature of academic work in regard to teaching and research involves to an increasing extent, collaborative and joint project practices. Shared space may encourage such collaborations and impact positively upon the efficiency of such practice.
- The isolated nature of cellular offices may be counter-productive to evolving approaches to group research and team teaching.
- The professions aligned with the academic disciplines of the Faculty (architecture, landscape, planning, construction and the like) have generally embraced open work space planning for many decades.
- There are environmental sustainable designadvantages to having more open floor plates within new buildings in regard to efficiencies and control of mechanical services.

Within this aspect it was important to expand on the differences between what could be described as general open office usage to the more specific needs of working practices of academics.

Plans prepared by the Architects showing both cluster (figure 3) and cellular versions were presented to the Forum. Here the purpose was not to set down the solution but to give flesh to the concept and encourage specific feedback.
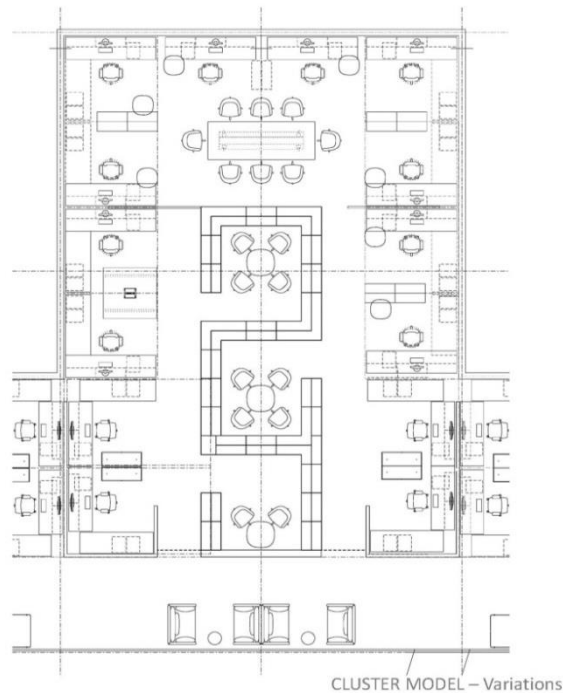

CLUSTER MODEL – Variations

CLUSTER MODEL – Variations
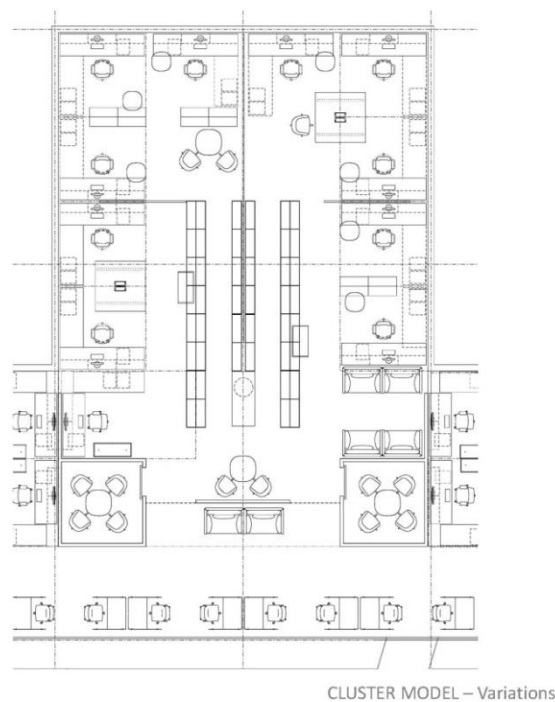
Figure 3. Shared workspace design options, June 2011.

Of the feedback received from the academic body, the majority expressed a preference for cellular offices. The reasons given were generally:

- Need for acoustic privacy- can't work with distractions.
- Visual privacy required - for various reasons including confidentiality.
- Need to accommodate private meetings with students and others.
- Need for lockable security for books and files.
- Lack of control over student access to open plan spaces. (This seemed to be a concerning regard to the established model of students being able to go to the office to catch the academic.)

A sample of the feedback follows:

- 'I can say without any doubt, that by far the best option to do class preparation and write papers/do research make important phone calls etc is the individual closed office. Of course there is a need for 'break out space' for small teams to meet, but frankly I think this is best done at Brunetti's or Castro's [cafes] anyway.'
- 'As many of us tell students that they will not pass design studios if they propose new buildings which rely on 'borrowed light', I think this is minimum requirement for the new building's work spaces.'
- 'I greatly value quiet and privacy, and also the ability to personalise my space. A single office is essential for my productivity.'
- 'I want my own cell space- lockable with books inside it. I want privacy for my discussions with RHD students or other staff, particularly on the phone. I need to be able to choose when I am sociable.'

The focus of this feedback and subsequent concern is that academics work in a particular way that cannot easily be accommodated in open clusters. It is an inward and private activity first and foremost with collaboration an important, but secondary, aspect.

Feedback from some academics supported clustered plans with the reasons being:
- It can promote collaborative working relationships
- A more open environment would encourage informal communication
- It can offer greater spatial variety.

Samples of feedback supporting clustered workspaces follow:
- 'I like that each person will get access to xsqm whether they are in an individual office or in a cluster. Clusters of 2 up to 6 or 8 could each work well.'
- 'The grain of the office layout does not need to be consistent across the floor plate but could change to suit whether staff wanted individual space or group space. As long as the space per person stays consistent then nobody will be unhappy!'
- 'We could have really interesting combinations (of enclosed and shared space) reflecting ways of working as a discipline cluster, a research group, a group of individuals, and a community of all of the above. So, my question in the end becomes: Does it have to be one or the other? Can't we have a mix of the two solutions in such a way that those who want to work as a group or in a spatial cluster have a chance to do so and those reluctant to give up individual spaces are allowed to continue to work that way?'

The nature of the feedback was important and reinforced the general perception that the easiest way of ensuring all staff were happy would be to provide cellular offices. The Faculty took the position to pursue cluster planning and to see what forms it could take to accommodate the academic needs and concerns. The purpose was to test new layouts to encourage interaction and collaboration. The Faculty was aware though that the approach must lead to comfort and acceptance from academic staff in the provision of work spaces as a disgruntled academic body would sour the move to new accommodation.

Second Stage - Sketch Design
The next presentations (11 and 15 July) to the reference group addressed both specific and broader feedback from the academic staff.   The planning of academic spaces was incorporated into the wider sketch design plans to illustrate how various configurations would gel with the teaching, professional and staff amenity spaces.

Terminology
It was at this stage that the term of establishing academic 'villages' within the staff community became a concept for describing the planning ideas. This terminology coupled with the descriptions of academic 'clusters' was important in presenting workspace ideas. It is easy to dismiss such terms as spin but they are a closer description to the intent behind the spatial options than the catch-all phase of open-plan, which itself can be a pejorative expression evoking images of the broad office landscapes.

General Staff Forum # 2 Developing the Sketch Design
At the second open staff forum (9 August), the Faculty and the Architects presented developments of the planning for academic spaces which incorporated a range of academic workspaces. Here there were workspace clusters of 6 academics, smaller enclosed spaces

with associated shared space and fully enclosed offices (figure 4). Soon after this meeting the Architects presented the planning in greater detail to the reference group.
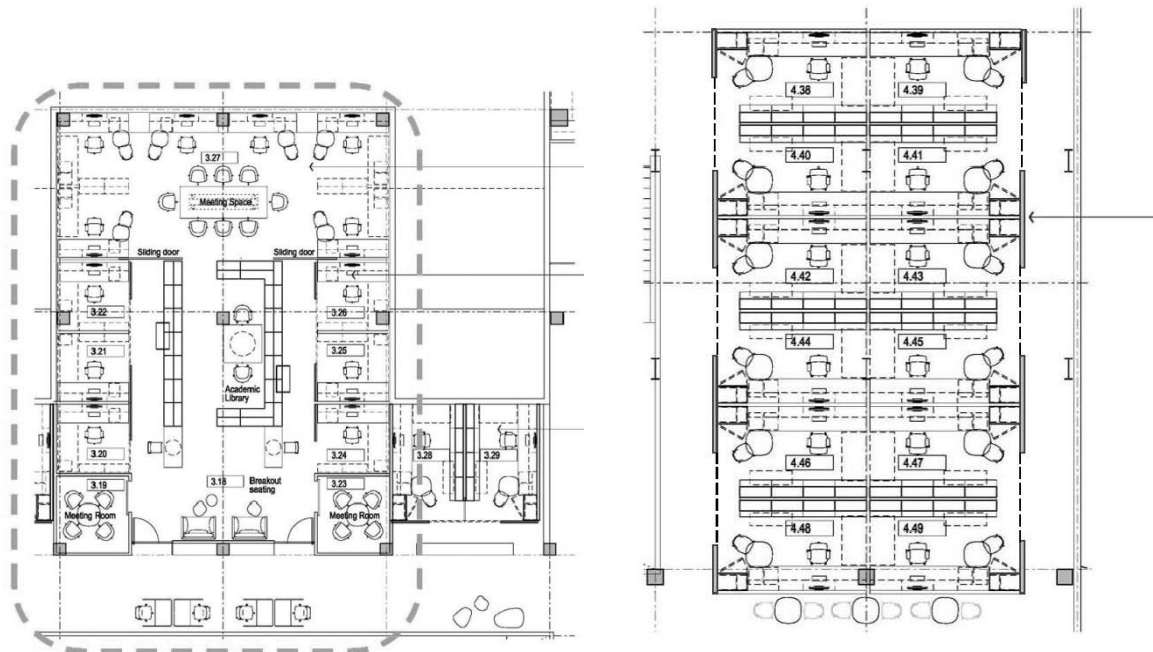

Figure 4. Shared workspace and semi-enclosed office options presented at sketch design.

At this stage of the design process the consultation with academics had fleshed out the main issues and provided opportunity to offer planning options and ideas that worked with the various pros and cons of shared space concepts.

It was seen that one size would not fit all requirements and that a cocktail of various spaces would need to be provided. At this stage an overall plan indicated 71 open cluster spaces (Level B and above, Level A, Research Assistants and Sessional tutors), 41 semi-open spaces (Level B and above) with medium height partitions and 24 cellular offices (Level B and above) with full height partitions.

Another presentation to academic staff by the Faculty, without the Architects, was undertaken to allow for a full and frank discussion of the proposals. This session allowed the Faculty to receive more detailed feedback and a get a feel for the number of staff with various preferences.

Staff were provided with the workspace design options following the workshop and requested to provide comments on the proposed designs.

Feedback
- 'I spend about 60 hours a week at work and, except for time at meetings or classes, work in circumstances where I require quiet. Open plan academic workspace is not a good option unless there is both visual and auditory separation from others.'
- 'And for those who don't want to work in a shared environment - they will certainly work at home a lot more, thus having the opposite effect on research productivity and collaboration than desired in the new building.'

- 'For the record, I will need to have my own office. That is, a lockable enclosed space that enables me to have work space relatively free of distractions but that also is adjacent to areas defined for flexible/group use and staff interaction.'

Third Stage - Design Development Stage

Project Reference Group Presentation
The Architects presented the academic workspace options from the design development stage to the full reference group membership, incorporating feedback gathered from the academic community (1 September).

The designs presented, further expanded on the use of consolidated libraries as a shared resource with potential for mixed use as meeting space and quiet study.

A cluster size providing workspace for 6 (Level B and above) academics was shown as a discrete space, which became the precursor for the final design options (figure 5).
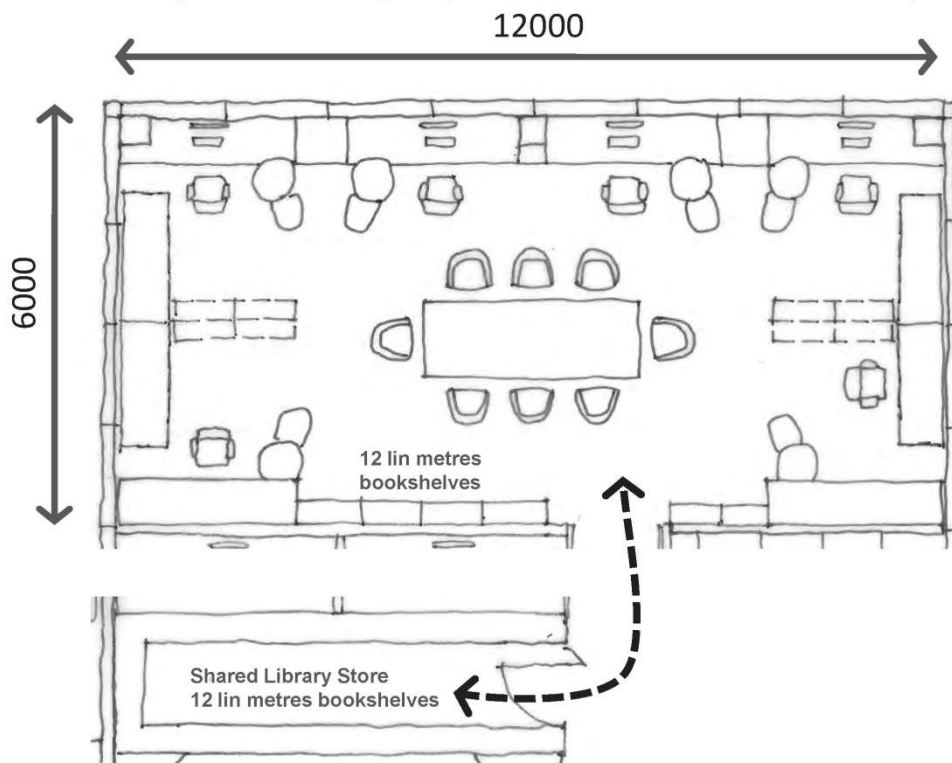

Figure 5. Shared workspace cluster option for six staff (Level B and above), Sept 2011.

Design development continued with a presentation (19 October) to the full reference group team. Responding to feedback regarding the importance of both amount and security of library space to academic staff, compactus shelving forming individual libraries was incorporated into the design, with the separate library space being absorbed into the overall plan. The potential outcome was to increase collaborative space within the cluster, whilst providing height options to define individual areas and maintaining light and ESD

requirements. These proposed units were intended to accommodate book storage and to offer privacy units between designated spaces.

At this stage of the design development there were a range of cluster options to accommodate different academic groupings of 3, 4, 6 and 8 people (figure 6), along with options for enclosed office (figure 7).
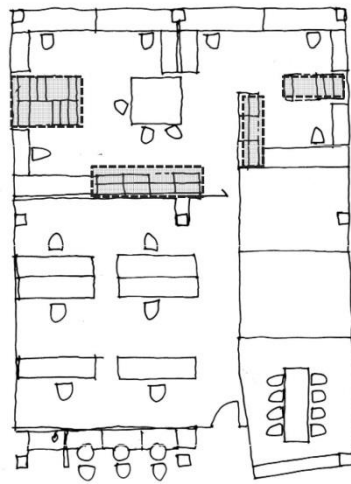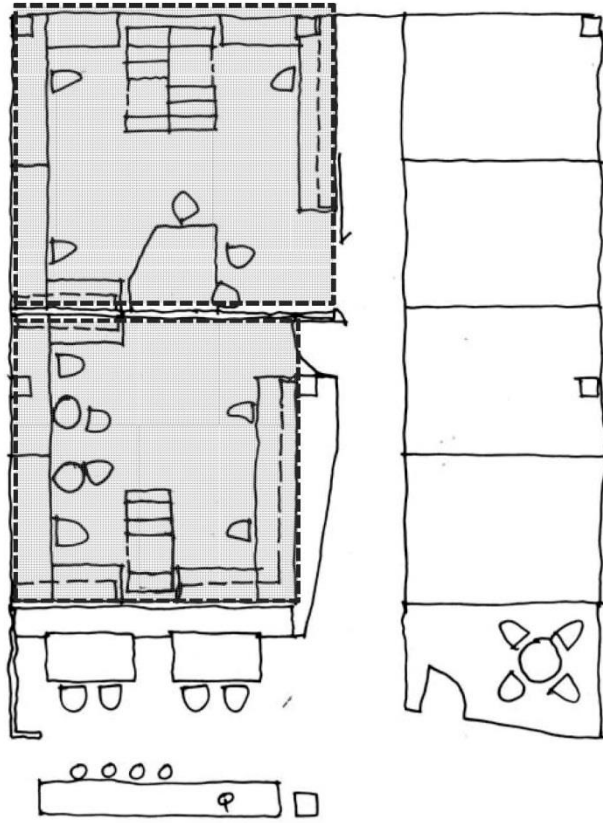
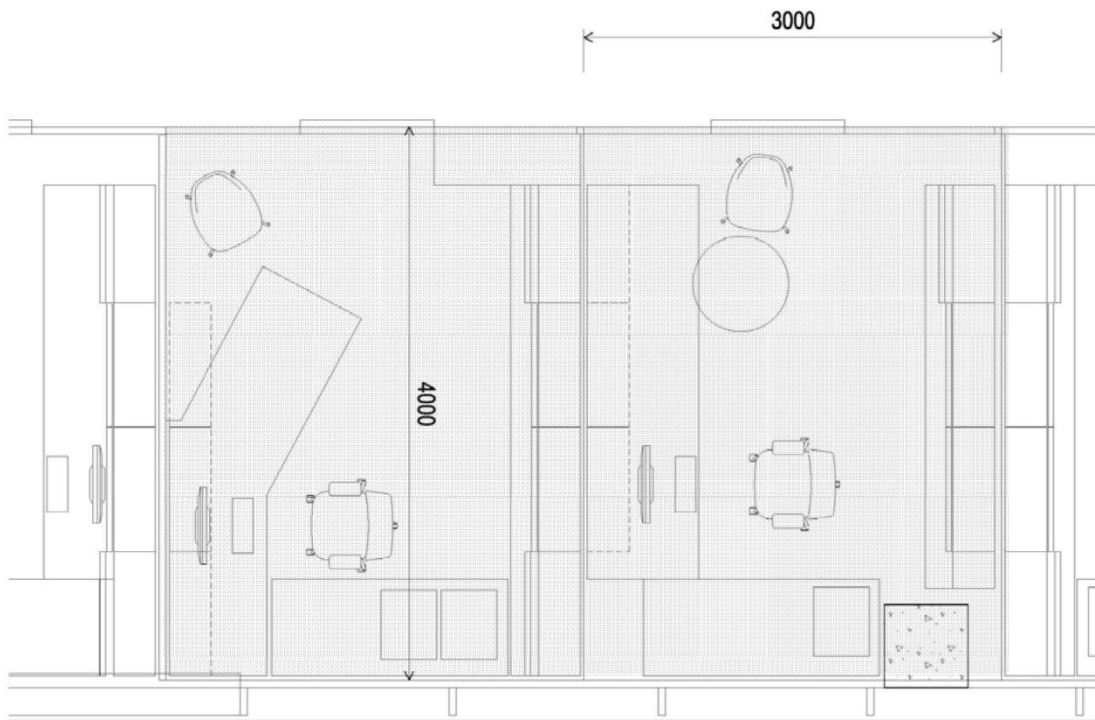**Figure 6. Shared workspace designs incorporating compactus units, October 2011.**

Figure 7. Enclosed office design, showing 2 furniture options, October 2011.

General Forum #3 – Final Presentation
A final presentation was made by the Architects (9 November) to the Faculty's academic staff. The plans provide 95 workspaces (Level B and above) - 59 clustered and 36 enclosed, giving a 68/32 per cent mix respectively.

The size range of clusters settled on 4 to 6 staff from this point onwards, which was in response to the feedback from the Faculty regarding the maximum number of staff in one cluster, the flexibility for research groups to grow and for the space to be adaptable. The layout of enclosed offices, open offices and formal and informal meeting spaces around the clusters were tested with a number of options (figures 8 and 9).
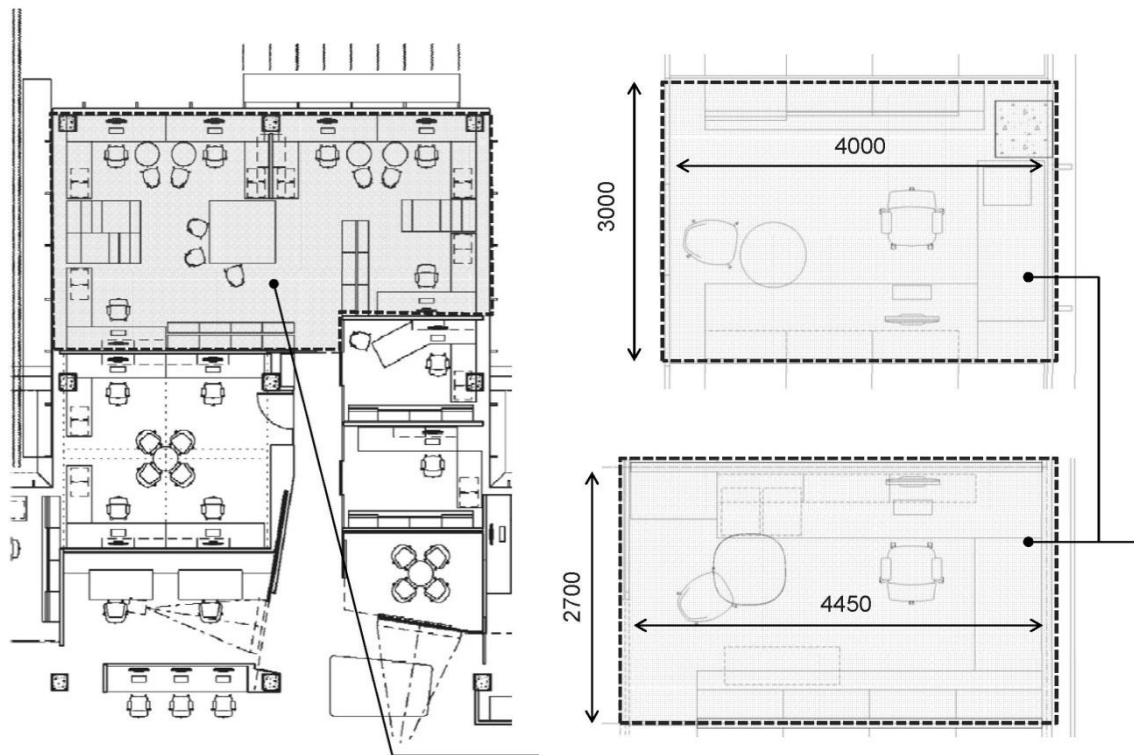

Figure 8. Shared workspace cluster and enclosed office design, November 2011.
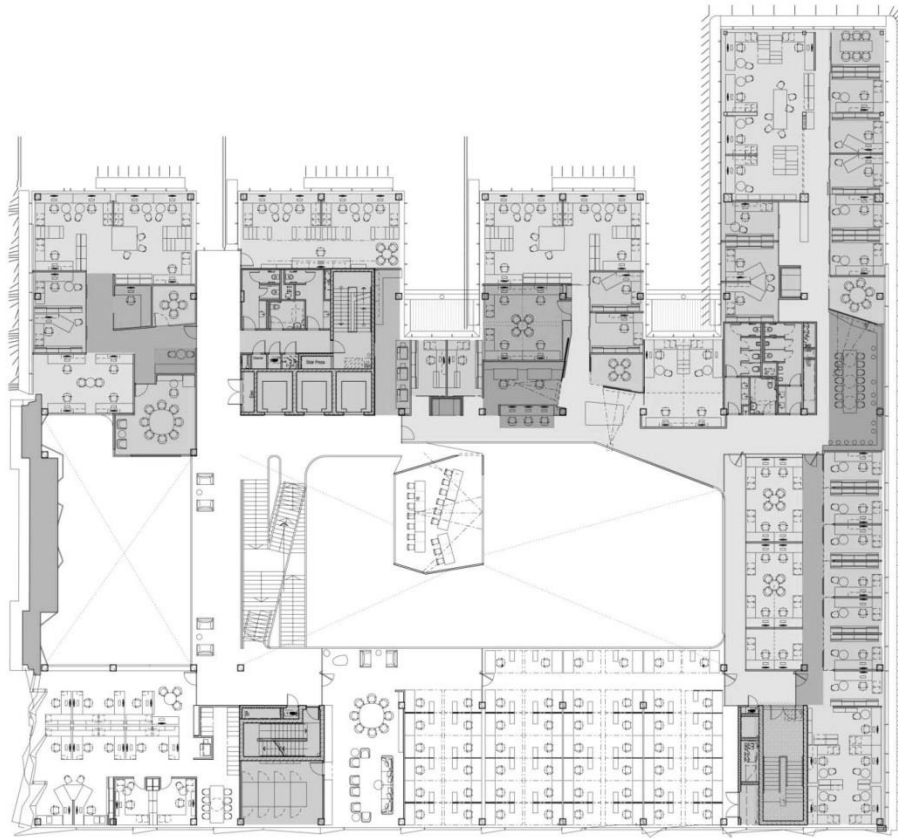
Figure 9. Floor plan of building showing academic workspace layout, November 2011.

At the end of design development stage (8 February 2012), the reference group was presented the final designs for academic workspaces.

The large clusters (six staff) are located at the ends of the fingers/corridors, maximising access to windows and light and fulfilling the requirements that staff in shared spaces are not disadvantaged. Access to dedicated private meeting spaces is provided to the clusters (figure 10).

Workspaces for senior tutors and research assistants are adjacent to both clusters and enclosed office spaces, providing opportunity for collaboration and interaction between senior and junior academics (Figure 10).

Enclosed offices come in three options to give academics choice in workstation type and location and a balance between work area and meeting space within the office (Figure 11).
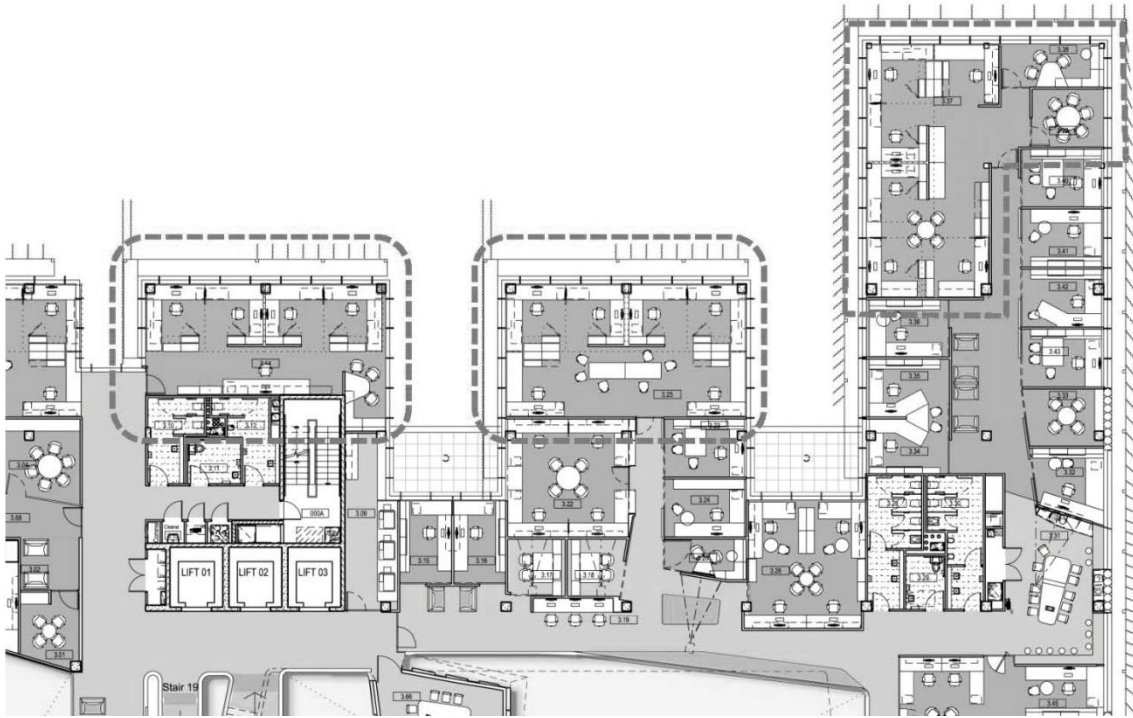
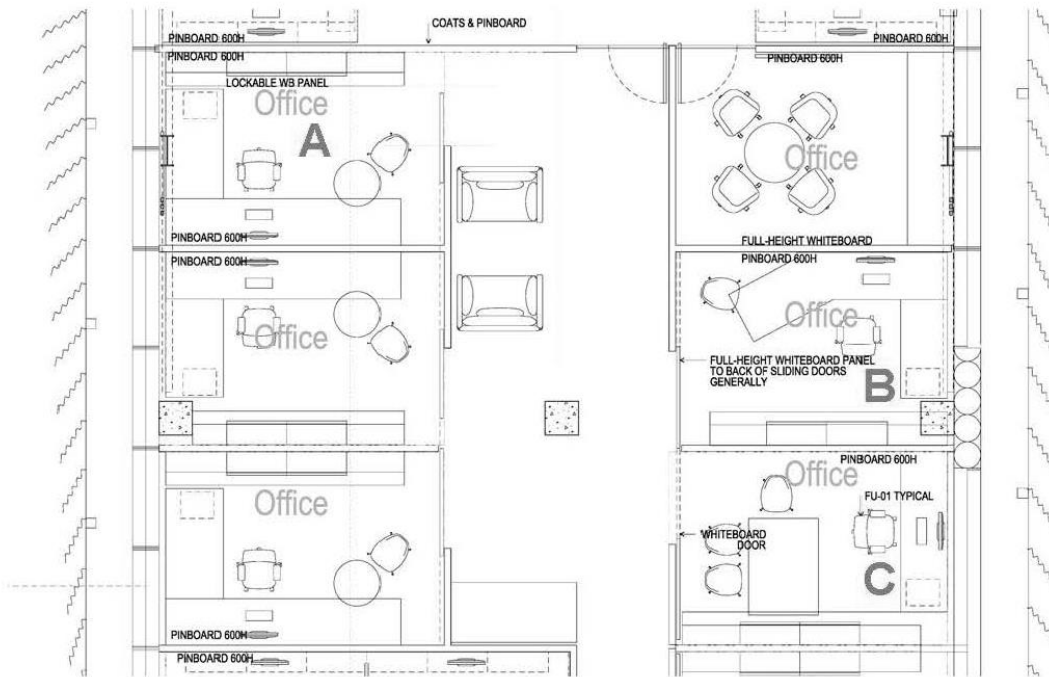**Figure 10. Shared workspace cluster location within general academic work areas, February 2012**.

Figure 11. Enclosed office design showing 3 furniture options – A, B and C – February 2012.

120

Final Designs

The review of preferences for the type of workspace from academics led to an estimate that 65 per cent preferred cellular offices and 35 per cent preferred cluster plans. This was a rough count, as the individual desires of academics three years into the future can only be speculated on. Also, one must factor in the natural inertia toward the change generally. The cellular office is a well-known model and for many, comfortable. A new model for academic work would require some to be convinced that the benefits outweigh perceived downsides.

It is important to note that the proposal to explore shared workspace was supported by the leadership of the Faculty in a direct manner. The Dean, Deputy Dean and General Manger advised that a shared working environment was the preferred model for their office environment in the new building. The planning for this area incorporated the same principle for the cluster planning elsewhere (figure 12).
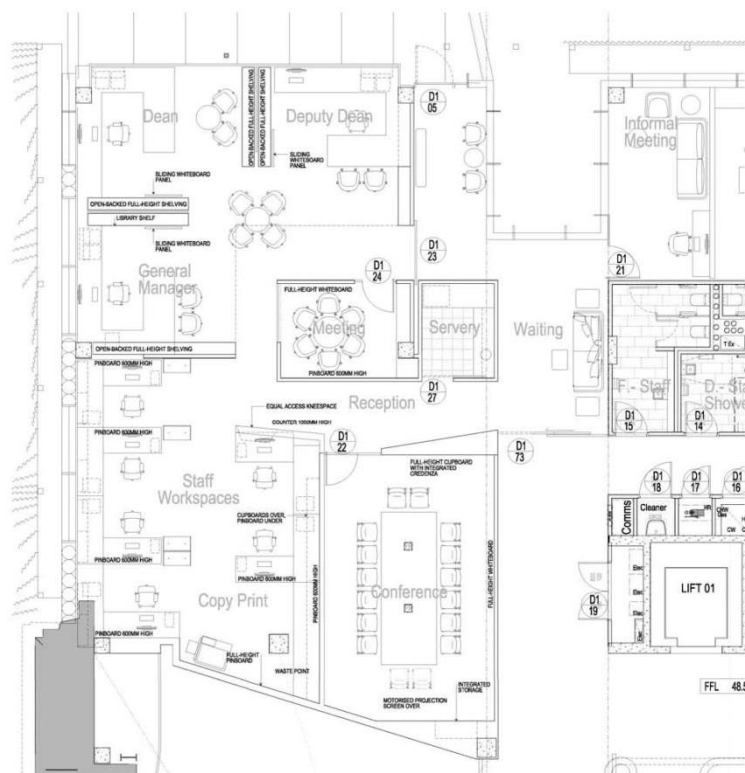
Figure 12. Plan for the Office of the Dean and General Manager, Feb 2012.

The final planning outcome established a plan which has 55 per cent cluster and 45 per cent cellular spaces, for Level B and above academic staff. The clusters ranged from 4-6 people. The semi-open arrangements were discarded as being neither fish nor fowl and offering no real benefit over the proposed enclosed office or shared cluster.

This split is based on the projected academic staff numbers of 96 (Level B and above), whereas the current staff numbers are 75. This means that the estimated number of academics who would prefer enclosed offices can be reasonably accommodated in the new building. It is also presumed that as the new arrangements are seen in use that others may see the benefit

and be relocated or have their concerns regarding shared spaces resolved. Also as the academic body evolves with new members they will be encouraged to be accommodated into shared space and advised of this requirement.

Decanting
As the new building was to be constructed on the footprint of the old, the Faculty had to move to temporary accommodation for the two year construction period. The decant required the temporary building to be renovated to house the Faculty which in turn provided the opportunity to set up shared academic space and test out the reaction and usage patterns.

In the decant building there are spaces that accommodate 3-6 academics at various levels. Some of the spaces have no divisions between workstations while others have low height joinery and partitions demarcating space. The spaces have associated meeting tables and hot desks for research and teaching assistants, along with shared library facilities. The responses at this stage (one semester in) are anecdotal and preliminary from the academics. Generally the reactions are that the cohabitation is workable, with some modification to current work practices. These include issues of acoustic privacy which require accepted management practices such as not having calls on speaker phone, limited internal meetings and taking conversations of either a loud or confidential nature to the designated private room. Additionally, issues maintaining security of the shared environment and personal preference relating to temperature have been raised.

There are connections between the academics within these environs that provide a structural benefit of similar teaching and research interests and of the informal unstructured benefit of being within a social loop where broader academic conversations are had. A the end of the first year the Faculty will conduct a survey of responses to the spaces with a mind to how the range of accommodation offered in the new building can be allocated for the best outcome.

Conclusion

The nature of changing workspace models for academics is complex. It is not merely a matter of imposing a new order of cluster planning. The first reason for the difficulty is that a more open arrangement brings both benefits and disadvantages in respect to privacy, separation and security. Many of these issues may be ameliorated through careful detailed planning, but the evidence of a successful open mode is still to be conclusively provided in the circumstance of a high achieving and highly demanding workforce. The other consideration is that not all academics are the same and that the differing needs require a variety of spatial arrangements. This requires a careful consideration of the mix of workspace types.

The mode of consultation and workshop models undertaken by the Faculty, under the direction of the Architects, enabled clear and comprehensive engagement of the academic body with the development of the concept of cluster planning. The Architects were exemplary in working with the Faculty to address the issues raised and to demonstrate that the feedback given was integral to the progression of the plan. The key to the process was the real iterative process based on the concerns of the user group and the individual academics. The background to the planning was always that new models of shared workspace would be trialled and tested during the design phase. There was to be no imposition of a typology, but rather a desire to bring the academics along with the planning development. This paper, while describing the planning development that was undertaken, is not about the actual outcomes

but rather looks at the processes facilitated by the Faculty and the Architects to enable the academic staff to have some ownership in the outcome. Whether the planning proves successful will be determined after the new building has been occupied for a settling-in period and will be the grist for a future paper.

Acknowledgements

Biographical notes

Andrew Hutson is an Associate Professor and the Associate Dean (Resources) with the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne.

Andrew McAlinden is the Facilities Manager with the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at the University of Melbourne.

References

Becker, F. (2000). Offices that Work: Balancing Cost, Flexibility and Communication. New York. Cornell University International Workplace Studies Program.

Cairns, A., & Harrison, A. (2008). The Changing Academic Workplace. In Effective Spaces for Working in Higher and Further Education. , London: DEGW UK Ltd

Parkin, J., Austin, S., Pinder, J., Baguley T., & Allenby, S. (2011). Balancing collaboration and privacy in academic workspaces. *Facilities*, 29(½), 31-39.

Pinder, J., Parkin, J., Austin, S., Duggan, F., Lansdale, M., Demian, P., Baguley, T., & Allenby, S. (2009). The Case for New Academic Workspaces. Retrieved from https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/dspace-jspui/bitstream/2134/6037/1/AcademicWorkspace%20report.pdf

Getting the faculty ready for growth through process improvement

Mark Medosh
Queensland University of Technology, Australia
m.medosh@qut.edu.au

'If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got'.
Mark Twain (1835-1910)

Abstract

Nearly every business entity is built on the three pillars of people, technology and processes. The 'process' of doing business cannot be avoided, whether the organisation is a commercial business or a large university. The companies that get the process right tend to be more efficient, have lower operating costs, and utilise human resources optimally. As higher education increasingly faces challenges like rising costs and diminishing resources, university leaders are looking for ways to improve their institutions. Opportunities abound for process improvement on both the academic and administrative fronts. This paper discusses the importance and management of processes in any organisation, the implementation of process improvement initiatives in higher education, and examines a Business Process Improvement (BPI) project conducted in the Science and Engineering Faculty of the Queensland University of Technology.

Key words

business process management, BPM, lean, processes, business process improvement,

Introduction
Processes – why do they matter?
A process could be described as a series of steps and decisions involved in the way work is accomplished. Everything we do in our lives involves processes and lots of them such as getting out of bed and getting ready for work, or preparing a travel or a grant application. In an organisation processes are the flows of work in which people function and which departments organise. Business processes represent a core asset of corporations. They determine tasks, jobs and responsibilities and by this, shape the work of every employee. Processes integrate systems, data and resources within and across organisations. Despite the fact that processes are the lifeblood of an organisation the significance of business processes had not been appreciated for a long period (Dumas et al., 2013). Departments are only as capable as the processes that flow within and between them and people are only as productive as the processes in which they do their jobs (Brache, 2008). The ongoing demands to boost innovation and operational efficiency have dramatically increased motivation for addressing and improving business processes. The process management has finally moved from the wave of the future to the wave of the present, and we are indeed in the 'Age of Process' (Hammer, 2008, p. 14).

Business Process Management (BPM)

BPM is the art and science of overseeing how work is performed in an organisation to ensure consistent outcomes and to take advantage of improvement opportunities. BPM is not about improving the way individual activities are performed, but rather about managing entire chains of events, activities and decisions that ultimately produce added value for an organisation and its customers (Dumas et al., 2013). Customers care about one thing and one thing only - results. Such results are not acts of God or the consequence of managerial genius; they are the outputs of business processes - sequences of activities working together. 'Customers, results, and processes form an iron triangle - an organisation cannot be serious about any one without being equally serious about the other two' (Hammer, 2008, p. 4).

BPM Enablers and Prerequisites

Many organisations have experienced difficulties implementing processes and process management. Traditional organisations and their systems can be unfriendly to processes. There are five critical enablers for a high-performance process - Process Design, Process Metrics, Process Performers, Process Infrastructure, and Process Owner. The experiences of hundreds of companies shows that not all are equally able to install these five enablers and so succeed with process management - some do so effectively, while others do not. The root cause of this discrepancy lies in whether or not an enterprise possesses four critical capabilities that are prerequisites to its summoning the resources, determination, and skills needed to succeed with processes: **Leadership** - unless a very senior executive makes it his or her personal mission, process will run aground on the shoals of inertia and resistance. Moreover, only a topmost executive can authorize the significant resources and changes that process implementation requires. **Culture** - process demands that people at all levels of the organisation put the customer first, be comfortable working in teams, accept personal responsibility for outcomes, and be willing to accept change. If the enterprise culture is not aligned with these values, leadership must change the culture so that it does. **Governance** - in addition to process owners, enterprises need a process office with a BPM framework established and resources available. **Expertise** - companies need cadres of people with deep expertise in process design and implementation, change management, process improvement, and other relevant techniques.

Business process improvement in higher education

Business Process Improvement (BPI) is a systematic approach that allows companies to optimize their core processes in order to obtain the most efficient results. As higher education increasingly faces challenges like rising costs, diminishing resources, and higher expectations for service excellence and accountability, university leaders around the world are looking for ways to improve, and sometimes transform, their institutions. Universities require a complex system of processes and there are huge opportunities for process improvement on both the academic and administrative fronts. Examples of academic processes include course development and curriculum revision. Administrative processes run the gamut from hiring new employees to processing travel reimbursements to certifying research laboratories.

Brief history of continuous improvement in higher education

In the early 1900s, business leaders in America were critical of higher education and the graduates coming out of its colleges and universities. There were concerns about the cost of university education and the quality of the output. Frederick Taylor, the father of Scientific Management, was also critical of college and university education. Taylor generally viewed

engineering graduates as lazy and undisciplined, absorbers of information while producing little, and lacking hands-on work experience (Emiliani, 2012). Criticisms such as these led to a study commissioned by The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and conducted by Morris Cooke, who was very experienced in improving industrial organisations using Taylor's system of Scientific Management.

Cooke studied the cost and the output in both teaching and research in eight colleges and universities including Harvard University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Princeton University. In his report 'Academic and Industrial Efficiency' published in 1910, Cooke commented on how university administrators and faculty members think what they do is unique, and that there is little to be learned from others outside of academia. He identified the ills of university administration and academic units as bureaucratic and requiring many reviews and approvals; large amounts of time spent discussing nonsense issues and thus making no progress; no gauge of efficiency; administration has responsibility but no authority; academic departments have too much autonomy; a lack of cooperation between departments; poorly executed committee management; and that faculty routinely do work that should be done by lower paid people (Cooke, 1910). These observations and findings ring true today, over 100 years later with faculty continuing to be inward-looking and resistant to improvement ideas from outside academia, especially business.

After Cooke's work, there is evidence of many efforts by faculty, to improve their own courses and their degree programs. Much of the activity has taken place post-1970, and uses specific improvement methods such as Total Quality Management and Lean Management. Over the past 30 years, and in concert with the worldwide emphasis on quality, higher education and business have collaborated in sharing ways to increase quality in education. In the early 1990s, DuPont provided training on their quality approaches to a core group of Pennsylvania State (Penn State) faculty and staff. IBM later established grants to help numerous institutions develop quality programs. 3M is collaborating with the University of Minnesota. An education version of the Baldrige quality award was developed, and in 2001 University of Wisconsin-Stout was one of the first recipients. Troy State University in Alabama is using their state quality award as a model for improvement. Liverpool John Moores University has used the European equivalent, the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence model in their assessment and strategic planning (Penn State, 2009)

Lean university
Doing More with Less
Amid societal calls and government mandates for improved student performance, educators find themselves tasked with meeting annually increased performance expectations but doing so with shrinking financial and political influence – essentially, doing more with less. Concerned educators searching for an answer have been looking at a highly successful management approach that has been newly revised for education. The approach is based on the work of quality guru W. Edwards Deming who repeatedly demonstrated that excellence can be achieved at the least cost through process improvement. While originally studied in manufacturing, Deming's principles have proven equally applicable to service industries, including education. Deming's approach, dubbed 'Lean Thinking' for its ability to do more with less, focuses on removing steps within these processes that are not necessary and do not add value. Lean process improvement does NOT equate to layoffs nor downsizing. Rather, the Lean approach focuses on doing more with existing resources. (Ziskovsky, 2007)

The concept of 'Lean' is most commonly associated with Japanese manufacturing, particularly the Toyota Production System. But Lean foundations lie in the Socratic Method of questioning, the development of hypothesis and data driven analysis in the Scientific Method, Henry Ford's empowerment of people to improve the processes they perform, and the principles of creating a world class organisation through continuous improvement developed by quality expert W. Edwards Deming. Toyota recognized the implications and applied the collective genius of these predecessors to its car manufacturing operation (Womack, et al., 1990).

Lean Processes
Everything we do, whether in our personal life or work life, is a function of process - making a sandwich, conducting a meeting, preparing a report – they all are processes. Each process is made up of a series of discrete steps that include a defined beginning step, a defined end step, and multiple steps between the two. This series of process steps yields an intended result (product or service) that is desired (valued) by someone (customer.) The important relationship among customer, value, and process distinguishes the Lean philosophy:

Lean views a process as a function of the value added in each process step *as it is perceived by the customer*. In Lean, 'Value' is defined as the worth of something to the customer/end-user as measured by his/her willingness to pay for it in time or money. It follows, then, that if the customer/end-user doesn't value what's done in a process step enough to wait or pay for it, why waste the time, money, and effort to do it? Anything that does not add value is looked upon as waste. While people readily acknowledge that no one is perfect, it is very difficult for them to acknowledge that they could improve. That is often viewed as an admission of deficiency, or that their contributions aren't valuable. Lean approaches waste identification on a strictly impersonal basis – the waste is found in the process, not in the people (Ziskovsky, 2007).

Lean in education
Lean applications have been effective and successful in every industry in which they have been applied including service industries such as banking, law enforcement, and most recently, health care. There is no question that these same outcomes can benefit the education industry. *Education* can be viewed as a system of processes involved in providing and supporting the development of knowledge, skill, and reasoning in a student or student community. Processes make up the education service.

In its landmark 2004 study, 'Organisational Improvement & Accountability – Lessons for Education From Other Sectors', the Stecher and Kirby concluded that Lean process improvement offers educators the most powerful improvement and accountability model available to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The Rand study called for the education industry to adopt Lean process improvement principles and reap the benefits other industries has realized (Stecher & Kirby, 2004).

The Lean approach puts the customer first, develops thinking people, and creates a workplace that actively supports and nurtures on-going improvement. A pre-requisite for Lean to be effective and sustainable is strong **leadership.** University leaders must be absolutely committed to the program and consistently demonstrate this through their own personal involvement in the continuous improvement process. A second requirement is the development of a Lean **culture**. An organisation's culture is frequently described as 'the way

we do things'. Often that defines how to stay out of trouble. In organisations with traditional cultures, 'staying out of trouble' means not questioning the status quo. Lean cannot be supported in a traditional culture because its essence is to challenge the status quo.

Lean Six Sigma for higher education
Lean is a well-established business process improvement methodology to minimise or even eliminate different forms of waste or non-value added activities whereas Six Sigma has been proven to be an effective methodology to reduce variation within a business process and thereby achieve process robustness. While Lean production system has been around for few decades, it did not get integrated with Six Sigma until the early 2000s. Lean Six Sigma is a powerful methodology for achieving process efficiency and effectiveness resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction and improved bottom line results (Antony & Krishan, 2012).
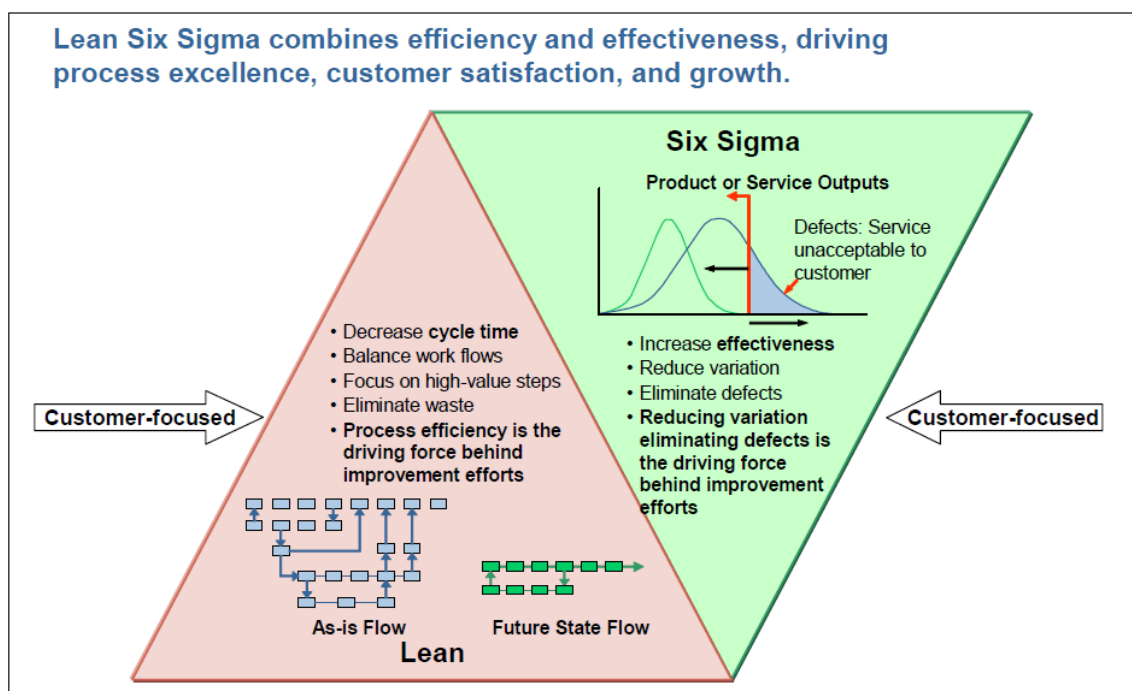
Figure 1. Lean Six Sigma

Although a number of manufacturing and service organisations are utilising the power of this integrated methodology the higher education institutions are far behind in the introduction and development of this process excellence methodology. A number of universities have embarked on the Lean initiative for the past six to seven years but not so keen in integrating Six Sigma principles for understanding and analysing variation within the university business processes. Times are now changing with the universities embracing some of the Six Sigma tools in their process improvement framework. Furthermore this year has seen the first international conference on Lean Six Sigma for higher education, held in Glasgow.

University process improvement – success stories

A number of universities have been active in applying Lean and other process improvement practices to administrative processes. These include: University of Central Oklahoma,

Winona State University, Michigan Technological University, Cardiff University, University of Minnesota, and University of St. Andrews.

University of Central Oklahoma

Under the direction of the Executive Vice President of Administration, the University of Central Oklahoma has embraced the concept of Lean Thinking as it faced significant financial issues. Outdated and patched administrative processes were contributing to employee job dissatisfaction and low productivity levels. Due to the budget cuts and insufficient funding to cover mandatory cost increases, the University needed to find ways to dramatically improve productivity and improve deteriorating employee morale. This university conducted focus groups with campus constitutes to develop a list of priorities for process improvement. The outcome was a need to overhaul a multitude of administrative processes that over time had strangled the university's ability to function efficiently. It was noticed that many of these problems were nearly identical to those seen and heard in the private sector and the university sought consultation from the manufacturing world such as the Oklahoma Alliance for Manufacturing Excellence to design and develop the Lean process improvement initiative on campus which is now known as Lean University (Moore et al., 2008).

The University of Central Oklahoma uses transactional Lean principles to improve efficiency of processes by eliminating wasteful actions that do not add value and cause downtime in a process. The acronym **DOWNTIME** represents the eight areas of waste identified in their university processes (Kusler, 2008):

Defects - corrections of errors in forms, documents or communication.

Overproduction - meetings or communication with no value, reports not used or read, or the production of more documents than needed.

Waiting - time is wasted waiting to use copiers and for meetings to start, approval on forms, or projects or reports to be completed.

Not utilising people - inadequate business tools; not being empowered to make job related decisions.

Transportation or travel - storerooms in remote locations; unnecessary approvals; filing documents that will not be accessed in the future.

Inventory - excess office supplies stored; full e-mail and desk inboxes; required meetings to attend.

Motion - storing electronic files in too many layers; looking for desk tools; sorting through paper stacks to find document

Extra Processing - unclear communication; excess copies of reports produced; poor filing systems; reviewing mail multiple times.

University of Central Oklahoma has been very successful in implementing Lean over the past 10 years. The US National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) recently honoured the University of Central Oklahoma with its 2011 Innovation

Award for the university's success adopting Lean practices, which has helped optimize financial and operational resources, saving the university approximately $400,000 annually. Of the 2,100 NACUBO members UCO is the only university to receive NACUBO's Innovation Award three times (NACUBO 2011)! University of Central Oklahoma is a process improvement exemplar much can be learnt from.

University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota has established an office of service and continuous improvement (OSCI) as a catalyst and mentor for sustainable improvement. OSCI has put together a Lean user group where people come together and learn and share their experiences. Additionally Lean improvement is communicated via wiki (articles and training materials), quarterly newsletters (success stories showcased) and annual quality fair (awards issued).

The University of Minnesota spent two years in rolling out Lean through a five-step approach (Salewski & Klein, 2009):

1. **Early Adopters** - find early adopters who have an initial interest to improve their processes. A Lean transformation in a university environment often starts with the non-academic departments.
2. **Educate** - make it clear that 'transactional lean' is different and sometimes more difficult than 'manufacturing lean.' Casual observers cannot see the wastes hidden in the business processes of the university. An effort must be first applied to create a new lean language that all departments can understand. Develop training material to educate early adopters and their staff on the power of Lean and how they can use this toolkit to achieve participative and collaborative process changes. Use training materials that include examples of lean applications in a university environment. Any reference to the old-school manufacturing examples turns the audience off and just reinforces thinking that supports the 'we are different' debate.
3. **Centralise** - create and use a central improvement office that will support departmental leaders and early adopters in their efforts to launch continuous improvement activities.
4. **Demonstrate Lean** - Select three demonstration kaizen events (Kaizen events are intense bursts of improvement activity that run over 1 week) scheduled six weeks apart. The first event should be simple, small in scope, have a high likelihood of success and have a visual solution that affects many people in the department. The second event should be slightly larger in scope and have visual benefits. The third event should be of strategic benefit, larger scope, more complexity, multi-departmental, political and have an unknown solution.
5. **Leverage Success** - after successful Lean improvement in one department spread the effort to other university areas.

University of Michigan

The University of Michigan developed a methodology for running process improvement over four major stages (Uni. of Michigan, 2010):

The first is to **Identify** the process and its elements. Specific phases involve defining the scope of the process to be analysed, as well as documenting and analysing the current state.

Next is to **Improve** the process by identifying and presenting recommendations on specific trouble areas and designing a roadmap to support improvement implementation.

It is important to then effectively **Manage** the improvement implementation and subsequent process operation using a clearly defined, approved approach.

Finally, to maintain process health and recognize ongoing improvement prospects, it is essential to **Measure** key elements.
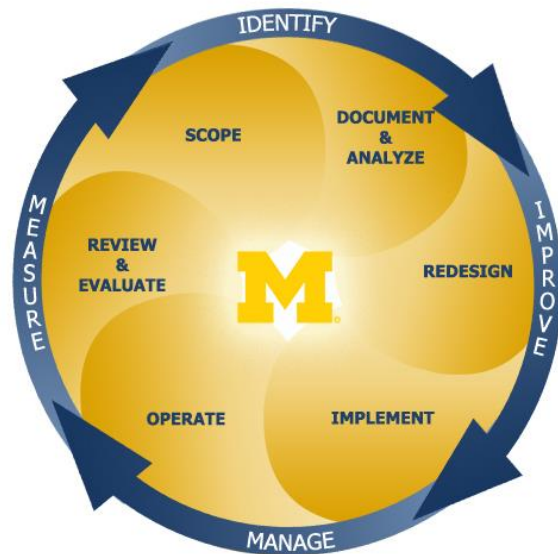
Figure 2. University of Michigan Process Improvement Methodology

The Pennsylvania State University

Penn State adopted the Fast Track improvement model, adapted from the Fast Cycle Change model developed by Dr. Ian Hau in 1997, which substantially reduces the amount of time required to complete a process improvement/redesign project by anticipating implementation needs, completing tasks in parallel, eliminating time delays, and reducing the amount of review and repetition that occurs when teams meet infrequently over several months. The total process improvement project duration is within 17-22 weeks with only a fraction of that time used for team meetings.

Figure 3. Fast Track Improvement Model, The Pennsylvania State University

132

Penn State developed a structured approach to facilitate process improvement called the IMPROVE model, which is an expansion of the Plan-Do-Check-Act model introduced by Walter Shewhart (Sherlock, 2009). This approach has helped Penn State to improve and redesign processes, programs and services.

Penn State's IMPROVE model:
Identify and select Process for Improvement
Map the Critical Process
Prepare Analysis of Process Performance
Research and Develop Possible Solutions
Organise and Implement Improvements
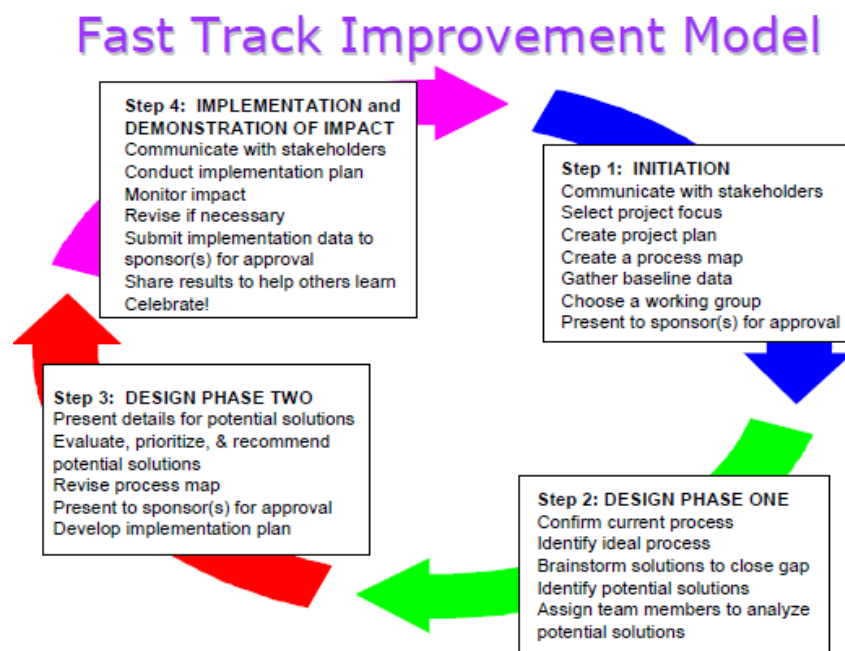**V**erify and Document Results
Evaluate and Plan for Continuous Improvement

University of Wisconsin-Madison
University of Wisconsin has similarly adopted the Accelerated Improvement Model that enables a group to quickly improve or create a process. Research shows that compressing the time spent analysing and planning changes to a process maximizes the probability that improvements will actually be implemented. Their approach is also based on research by Dr. Ian Hau and Dr. Ford Calhoun of SmithKline Pharmaceuticals (now GlaxoSmithKline), which showed that short project duration and high impact results tend to go together. When their Fast Cycle Change model was applied to knowledge-based processes in their organisation, they found that projects took about one-third as long to complete but delivered three times the impact and required only one-tenth as many resources (Hau & Calhoun, 1997)
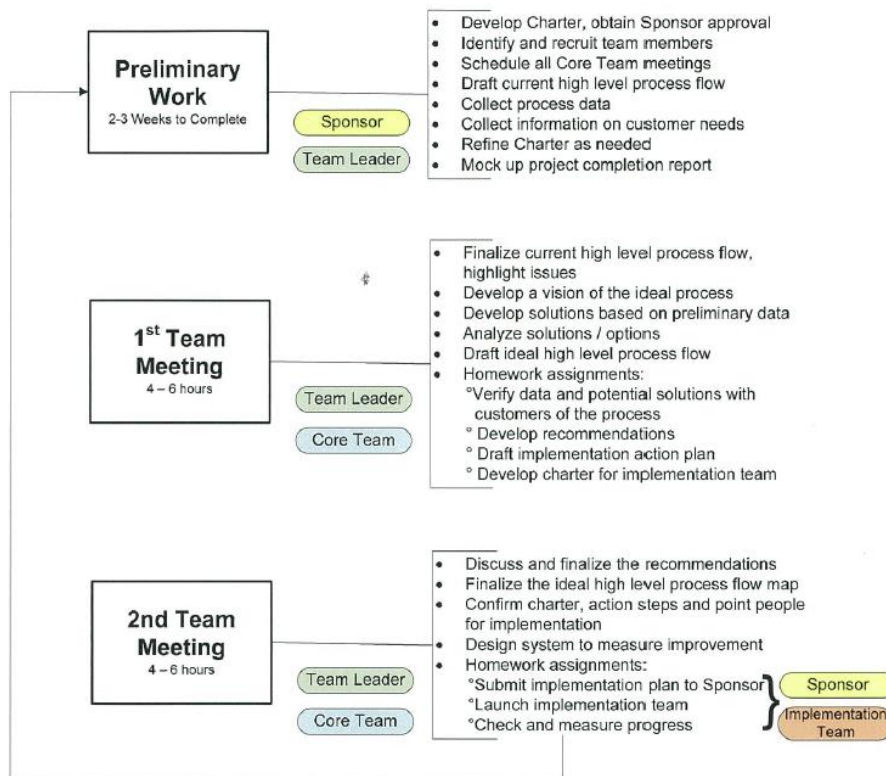

Figure 4. Accelerated Improvement Model, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Challenges to process improvement in higher education

Some of the fundamental challenges to conducting process improvement in the university setting have been identified by Antony and Krishan in their study of the application of Lean Six Sigma as a process improvement methodology for improving efficiency and effectiveness in higher education (Antony et al, 2012):

- lean terminology - there has been a problem with the terminologies taken from manufacturing industry to higher education sector and many people are uncomfortable in using a number of tools and techniques which were proved to be effective in manufacturing and service sectors.
- management support - it is absolutely crucial to have uncompromising management commitment and buy-in from the outset of the process improvement initiative and without their support and commitment the effort will be absolutely futile.
- process improvement is not a quick-fix as such attempts will be doomed to fail and eventually will be labelled as another passing management fad.
- lack of process thinking and process ownership - everything is treated as an activity or task or procedure but not processes. Process thinking is not at all prevalent in many universities and establishing processes at the workplace requires a change of mindset.
- existing culture - the culture of the higher education sector can be a big challenge in the introduction of process improvement. In order for the staff to feel that they are part of the organisation and openly talk about their improvement suggestions, there needs to be culture of openness, trust and acceptance.
- poor communication leading to the development of 'silo culture' across various university departments where staff may perceive their involvement to be a waste of time and effort. It is absolutely critical to have an effective communication at all levels and making employees aware of the need for the process improvement journey and what is their role in achieving the vision set by the senior management team.
- lack of resources is an immense challenge as employees quite often do not get enough time to execute continuous improvement projects on top of their everyday work.
- weak link between the continuous improvement projects and the strategic objectives. It is important to select those projects which are directly aligned with the university's strategic goals.

Langer has analysed how principles of Lean thinking can be adapted to a higher education context. He studied the implementation of Lean process improvement at three UK universities and recognised the following key barriers and enablers (Langer, 2011):

Barriers:

- limited willingness to invest time as 'people do not see the benefits of process improvement'.
- negative Lean connotation - When Lean came up the initial reaction of most staff was: 'Oh my god, they"re gonna cut jobs.'
- lack of dedicated resources - Put on top of a day job: 'We got to a point where, because we were doing it on top of a day job, the potential was there for a day job to suffer from it'.

- no management buy-in –'People sort of liked what we did from a distance but there wasn't any buy-in from management. As long as other people didn't have to take part in it, we were tolerated.'
- quickly fading leadership attention – 'Because the initiative was kicked off by the Vice-Chancellor, I assumed that it would have huge senior backing – which it didn't really. It was more a case of 'Go make us Lean!' and the team was left to it'.
- blame culture - Improvement is seen as critique: 'Often if you say to a manager 'you can make that better', he'll take that as criticism.' There were people who felt that they were being picked on. People tend to take things very personal. They didn't understand that it was about improving the system rather than criticising their work'.
- academic-administration divide - (senior) academic staff rejects recommendations from administrative staff: 'We are called support staff. We normally don't get involved in decision-making and planning and those sorts of things. We are just there to do rather than to think and to question.'

Enablers:

- outside support and recognition - Lean university network: 'What kept us going was that outside recognition – the Association of Business Schools and the other universities applying Lean.'
- initial leadership impulse - The Lean initiative was established by the Vice-Chancellor.
- increasing participation in training programme – 'Lean Skills for Managers' course was an eye-opener: 'Once I've gone through all the training and understood what it was all about, I was then in a position that I could apply this way of working to everything I did'.

Lean Process Improvement Rolled-out the Right Way

Without university senior management on board from the outset of the journey, it is absolutely a waste of energy and time for launching the process improvement initiative. The senior management team should attend a half-day or one day broad overview of Lean strategy and methodology, ensuring buy-in and commitment for the implementation. Process improvement project champions need to be identified across the higher education sector responsible for identifying, prioritising and overseeing projects. In order to buy-in senior management support and commitment, it is also essential to select projects which are tied to strategic goals of the University. Staff members should be given adequate time to complete their process improvement projects further to training and a committed facilitator with good technical knowledge on the topic must be in place if there are any problems encountered by staff members during the project execution phase. The employees should be equipped with project management tools, Lean toolset and change management tools.

The following points may be considered for measuring leadership commitment within a process improvement initiative (Bazler, 2010):

- commitment of both financial and personnel resources for the initiative;
- a clear strategic deployment plan showing the tangible objectives and goals of the initiative
- development of a communication plan (i.e. need for the initiative, the benefits of implementation, roles and responsibilities of everyone in the new way of thinking, etc.);
- clear direction and guidance on deploying Lean tools; and
- reward and recognition system in place.

The National Consortium for Continuous Improvement in Higher Education (NCCI)
In 1999, a small group of university leaders in the US who were engaged in improving the effectiveness of their respective institutions started a national association to network and learn from each other. As of today, the National Consortium has 80 institutional members from 32 states and 7 nations. NCCI mission is to 'advance academic and administrative excellence in higher education by identifying, promoting, supporting and sharing effective organisational practices among member institutions' (Cotter, 2007).

In 2006 NCCI conducted a survey to understand better how institutions organise their continuous improvement and to identify the common patterns among members. Thirty of its members responded to the survey with the following points emerging from the results (Paris, 2007):

- half of the institutions' improvement efforts are led by either the president/chancellor or provost.
- two thirds of the institutions, had developed units/offices charged with supporting/facilitating change initiatives, staffed with experts, with staffing ranged from a portion of an existing person's time to 65 people
- dedicated Resources ranged from zero to nearly one-third of respondents reporting budgets of more than $500,000
- some institutions, including Penn State, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, sponsor an annual campus-wide event to showcase and share improvements. They also provide institutional recognition for the individuals and groups who are making change happen.

Queensland University of Technology case study

Considering the prerequisites and challenges to process improvement in higher education discussed so far, the paper now examines a BPI project conducted in the Science and Engineering Faculty of the Queensland University of Technology. This paper focuses on the activity conducted over a six-month period and covering process identification, discovery, analysis and improvement. The implementation of the improvement recommendations has only just begun and that important phase including process monitoring and controlling will be covered in the coming publications.

Critical Business Issue
The Science and Engineering Faculty was established in January 2012 through a merger of two existing faculties. In response to the merger, the faculty services team undertook a number of interim process harmonisation activities, to meld the previous faculty processes together. This has meant often the adoption of one previous process or the other, due to the speed needed for implementation given the 2012 Semester 1 deadline. A more comprehensive and transformational approach was required through a faculty-wide Business Process Improvement (BPI) initiative.

The new Faculty identified over 360 processes inherited from the two forming faculties and 95 processes were deemed as critical for faculty functioning. Top 17 processes were ranked high priority for harmonisation and four processes were selected as the most critical to be addressed in the first six months of the BPI initiative. These include:

- Travel - planning and approval

- Course management - planning our offerings
- Research - applying for a grant
- Continuing Professional Education (CPE) - starting a new course

These four high-priority areas were chosen based on their ability to: 1) Return the greatest reduction in effort for faculty staff, 2) Deliver 'quick wins', and 3) Improve services to our students and clients (Pattison, 2012).

Getting Ready for Growth BPI Project Outline
In the initial stage of the BPI project the faculty has considered a number of related factors such as the existing knowledge of its own processes, level of staff expertise to contribute to process improvement, training required to up-skill key participants, and the high-priority areas for improvement. The faculty is home to the world-class Business Process Management (BPM) discipline and has extensively utilized this expertise through engaging key academics and their masters students in the BPI project.

The objectives of the BPI project were to:

- Achieve a shared understanding for the sense of urgency for the initiative.
- Achieve substantial and sustainable process improvement across high priority areas.
- Develop a plan for on-going improvement activities across other Faculty processes.
- Achieve 'quick wins' in the first six weeks of the project.
- Provide Faculty staff with process improvement skills.
- Develop a culture of BPI and related governance within the Faculty.

The Faculty set an ambitious timeframe to achieve the BPI project goals: In 6 days - Scope definition and shape vision; In six weeks – Some small scale process improvements achieved ('quick wins'); In six months – Demonstrated process improvement in the high priority areas, including process implementation. It was anticipated that the project will run over a period of up to two years, with intense support in the first six months from a dedicated BPI Coordinator. Only a small number of SEF staff had prior BPM training and a three days intensive BPM course was organised for all BPI project participants.

BPI Roles and Approach
The Faculty relied on the expertise of its staff and students to plan and execute the BPI project. Role descriptions have been developed for key process improvement positions including:

- Project Sponsors – to provide strategic oversight, define the program, ensure university-wide integration and provide resources.
- Executive Sponsors – to articulate a sense of urgency, shape vision and boundaries, empower process owners and remove roadblocks.
- Process Owners – to be a main driver, responsible for process design, educate other project members, be the first point of contact for process issues and improvement suggestions.
- Student teams – to model, analyse, benchmark, simulate and automate processes.
- BPI Project Coordinator – a lead coordinating role in the BPI initiative.

The BPI project team has been guided by the following process improvement principles:

1. Be bold in your process design – consider new, innovative, ambitious design alternatives and compromise as late as possible.
2. Standardise as much as possible – justify why a process deviates from the standard.
3. Base your design on 'positive deviants' – be aware of existing process designs and their comparative strengths.
4. Design based on evidence – base your design recommendation on actual evidence, not just confidence.
5. Justify each and every approval that is built into the process – consider eliminating approvals or sub delegation to appropriate officers, where possible.
6. Aim for one-step resolutions and avoid rework or iterations.

Over the six months period the four BPI projects have been intensively working on achieving the set goals through gathering feedback from key stakeholders, analysing data of trialled initiatives, inviting best speakers to talk to the teams, and analysing practices undertaken in other Faculties.

BPI Methodology
The process improvement methodology that was followed will be showcased on one of the four process improvement projects where the author of this paper was a Process Owner. The Queensland University of Technology's Continuing Professional Education is focused on making the teaching and research expertise of the University available to professions, businesses and the general community through non-award short courses, conferences and other customised education programs. The' applying for a new course project' aimed to optimise processes related to course establishment and course delivery. The project has gone through various stages in relation to process analysis, process modelling, process improvement, and the recommendations on how to manage the overall organisational change that will be brought about by the implementation thereof (McMullen et al., 2012):

STAGE 1 - the project vision and scope were defined with respect to the business problem, projects objectives, available resources and timeframe.

STAGE 2 - where the current state of each of the relevant CPE processes was documented in a form of an As-Is process model.

STAGE 3 – where issues associated to the As-Is process are identified and documented in an Issues Register. The process analyses focused on:

- **Innovative and Blue Sky Ideas Model** – whose purpose was to think outside the box and realize that good ideas start out as crazy thoughts. This removed constraints and limitations in finding ways to redesign processes and achieve strategic goals.
- **Suppliers, Inputs, Processes, Outputs and Customers (SIPOC)** - a tool from the Six Sigma methodology used by a process improvement team to identify all relevant elements of a process improvement project before work begins. This has been used to highlight the constraints and boundaries for the professional education processes as shown in Figure 5.

Suppliers	Inputs	Processes	Outputs	Customers

• HoS
• Academic Staff
• CPE Managers
• Instructors
• Faculty Staff
	• Application Form
	• Budget Form
	• Account Request Form
	• Participant Registration Form
	• Course Materials
		• Establishment
		  o Business Case
		  o Market Analysis
		  o Feasibility Study
		  o Develop Content
		  o Pilot Course
		• Training
		• Administration & Marketing
		• Delivery
		  o Application Forms
		  o Advertise Course
		  o Registration
		  o Administration
		  o Conduct
		• Evaluation
			• Invoice
			• Certificate
			• Exam Results
			• Evaluation Forms
				• Participants
				• Corporations

Figure 5. SEF CPE SIPOC Diagram

- **High-Level Process Architecture** – a written or diagrammatic summary of the value chains and business processes supported by a given organisation (BPTrends, 2012). Depicted in Figure 6 is a high-level architecture describing the core professional education processes, related governance (management processes) as well as suppliers, stakeholders, clients and supporting processes. These give a concise overview of the current state of the organisation and are useful to prepare for change.
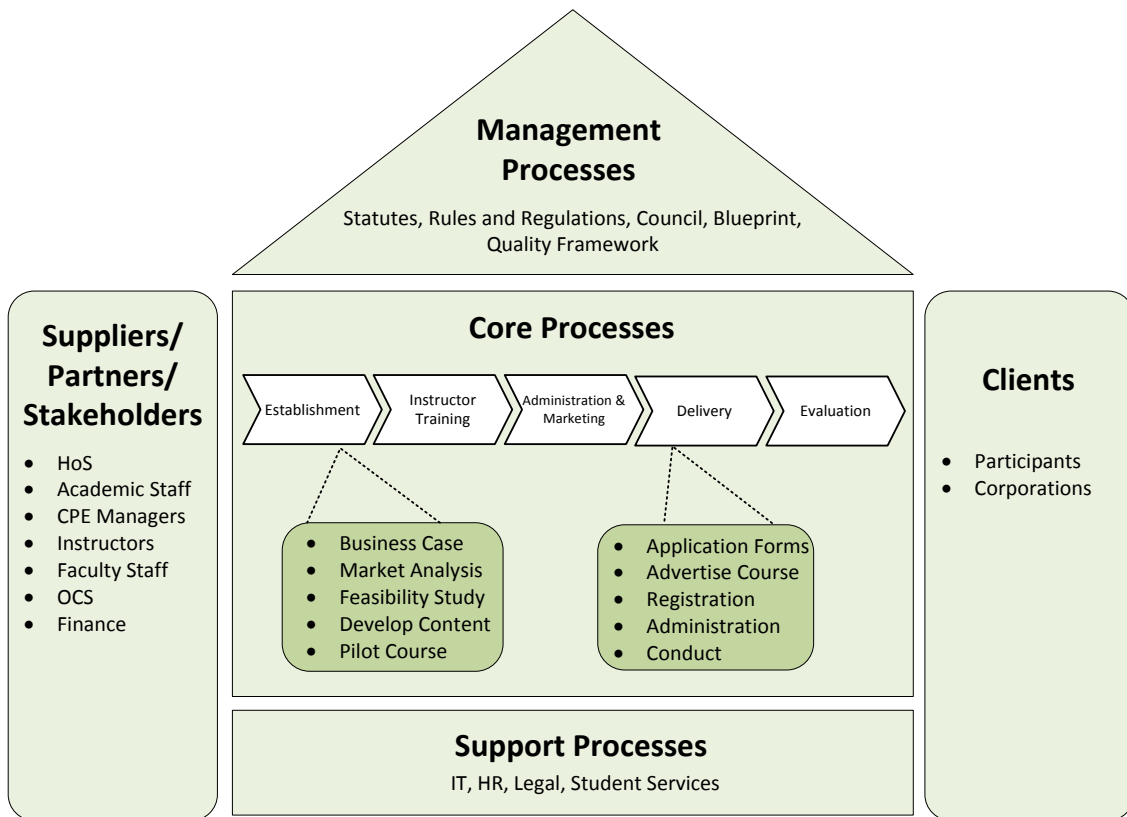
Figure 6. SEF CPE High-Level Process Architecture

- **Stakeholder-Objectives Matrix** – which provided visualization for the analysis phase and helped determine who has significant impact on different objectives in the process as demonstrated in Figure 7. The objectives have been based upon key findings from workshops, interviews, and focus groups.

	Client satisfaction	Quality Course material developed	Shortened approval process	Well-established public courses	Well-established private courses	Obtain optimum profit	Minimise costs
Head of School	1	2	2	3	3	3	2
CPE Manager	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Process Owners	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
OCS	1	1	3	2	2	3	2
Finance	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Participants	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Faculty	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Executive Sponsors	1	2	2	3	3	3	2

Instructor	3	3	3	3	3	1	1

Level of Interest	1 - Low	2 – Moderate	3 - High

Figure 7. SEF CPE Stakeholder-Objectives Matrix

- **Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed (RACI) Matrix** – an analysis technique used to identify stakeholders and their role in business processes to help facilitate with organisational changes.
- **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)** – an analysis tool designed to help uncover opportunities that the organisation is well placed to exploit. And by understanding the weaknesses of the organisation's business, it can manage and eliminate threats that would otherwise catch the organisation unawares.

This phase also included the university internal benchmarking, process-mapping the professional education market analysis process, and conducting a survey analysis to gain data for the development of an incentive model for employee engagement in professional education activities.

STAGE 4 - process improvement where changes to the professional education process were identified to address the issues documented in an Issues Register. This resulted in the development of a To-Be process model.

A comprehensive Issues Register and a list of recommendations have been developed with 'quick-wins' and longer-term benefits identified including the top seven improvement recommendations. The Faculty Executive was asked to endorse the process improvement projects recommendations. A change management workshop was then conducted aimed to assist the process improvement project teams to effect change in each of the high-priority areas. Following the workshop the process improvement teams developed high-level implementation plans where they considered the required actions, their relationship to the Faculty's strategic plan, and individual responsibilities.

The next phase for process improvement projects will focus on implementing the endorsed recommendations as well as reflecting on the success of the project to date and conducting the project evaluation. The outcome of this phase will be covered in future publications.

Conclusion

The process improvement journey in Queensland University of Technology Science and Engineering Faculty has been a success so far delivering immediate benefits through: introducing new process resulting in better use of the Faculty's resources; developing staff professionally through improvement activities; engaging more people in defining the Faculty's future; encouraging process thinking and developing a culture of continuous improvement. An ongoing leadership support, the most critical factor in organisational improvement initiatives, has been there all the way. The process improvement project executive sponsors, led by the Faculty Dean, have ensured the initiative is continually promoted, well resourced, with process improvement training provided to key participants, and process improvement projects linked to strategic goals.

In many instances the Faculty does not own the end to end process, as the overall process is governed at university level, and a list of suggested improvements that could be made at central university operations has also been identified. Ideally the continuous improvement activity will extend beyond the Faculty boundaries encompassing the overall university with processes standardised across the faculties and divisions whenever possible. One step towards a university-wide process management could be a BPM forum, with key faculty and divisional representatives involved in BPM collaborating and sharing process improvement experience.

In comparing with some of the earlier mentioned university process improvement success stories, in the next process improvement project stage the Faculty may wish to develop a more detailed process improvement framework with guidelines, tools, templates, training material, and a dedicated web page. That may require additional resources and will take some time, but ought to be a worthwhile investment in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Faculty's operations.

Over the past ten years higher education has been increasingly embracing adapted process improvement methodologies that once delivered great benefits to the manufacturing sector. BPM maturity in many universities may still be in its infancy, but their leaders are now paying attention at the 'positive deviants' of the industry looking for ways to replicate such success in order to improve their own institution. There has never been a better time for higher education to embrace business process management and it's exciting to be a part of it.

Biographical note

Mark Medosh has been Senior Professional Services Coordinator at the Queensland University of Technology since 2012.

References

Antony J., & Krishan N. (2012). *Lean Six Sigma for Higher Education Institutions: Challenges, Barriers, Success Factors, Tools/Techniques*. International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management, Vol. 61/pp. 940-948

Bazler, W. K. (2010). *Lean Higher Education: Increasing the Value and Performance of University Processes.* CRC Press 2010.

Betros, S. (2012). *SEF BPI Getting Ready for Growth Project Plan.* QUT, August 2012.

BPTrends. (2012). Process Architecture. Retrieved from http://www.bptrends.com/resources_glossary.cfm?letterFilter=P&wordid=1585D335-1031-D522-346C36D03E36DCF3 26 Aug 2012.

Brache, A. P. (2008). *What is a process*. White paper. RummlerBrache Group, 2008.

Cooke, M. (1910). *Academic and Industrial Efficiency.* The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1910.

Cotter, M. (2007). *Structured for Change*. National Consortium for Continuous Improvement in Higher Education. 2007.

Dumas, M., La Rosa, M., Mendling, J., & Reijers H. A, (2013). *Fundamentals of Business Process Management*. Berlin: Springer.

Emiliani, B., (2012). *We Can Do It – Improving the Relevancy and Value of Higher Education Using Lean Management.* The CLBM, LLC Wethersfield, Connecticut, USA, 2012

Hammer, M. (2008). *What Is Business Process Management*. Hammer and Company, Cambridge, MA, 2008

Hau, I., & Calhoun F. (1997). *Fast Cycle Change in Knowledge-Based Organsations: Building Fundamental Capability for Implementing Strategic Transformation*. University of Wisconsin and SmithKline Pharmaceuticals Report No. 161, June, 1997

Kusler, K. (2008). *A University Uses Transactional Lean to Improve Process Efficiency*. University of Central Oklahoma, 2008.

Langer, T. (2011). *The Application of Lean thinking for Improving Processes in Higher Education Institutions: Evidence from three UK case studies*. Queen's University Belfast, 2011

McMullen, R., Mohammed, A.B., Ditsoane, S.J., & Li, L. (2012). *Continuing Professional Education – A Quick-Win Report.* QUT, 10 September 2012.

Moore M., Nash M., Henderson K., (2008). *Becoming a Lean University™.* University of Central Oklahoma, 2008

Paris K. A., (2007). *Models for Organisational Improvement: A Comparison*. University of Wisconsin-Madison, January 2007.

Pattison J. (2012). *SEF Business Process Improvement Status Report.* QUT, July 2012

Porter, M. (1985). *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*.

Salewski A., Klein V., (2009). *How to Launch Lean in a University*. University of Minnesota and Rucker and Associates, 2009

Sherlock B., (2009*). Integrating Planning, Assessment, and Improvement in Higher Education.* NACUBO, 2009.

Stecher B., Kirby S. N., (2004). *Organisational Improvement & Accountability – Lessons for Education From Other Sectors*. Rand Education, 2004

The Pennsylvania State University (2009). *The Evolution of Process Improvement*, Quality Endeavours Issue No. 123, October 2009

The University of Michigan (2010). *ITS Process Improvement Methodology.* Issued by Process and Service Management, 2010.

Womack J. P., Jones D. T., Roos D., (2007). *The Machines that Changed the World*. Free Press, 2007

Ziskovsky B., Ziskovsky J., (2007). *Doing More with Less – Going Lean in Education*. A White Paper on Process Improvement in Education. Lean Education Enterprises, Inc. 2007.

Measuring learning outcomes at the course and unit level: Development and implementation of electronic course and unit reports at the University of Tasmania

Cassandra I Saunders and Sara Booth
Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU), University of Tasmania
Cassandra.Saunders@utas.edu.au
Sara.Booth@utas.edu.au

Abstract

The Australian higher education sector has recently undergone significant changes in quality assurance and standards. Universities are increasingly required to demonstrate student achievement of learning outcomes at the course and unit level. In light of this, the University of Tasmania has developed electronic Course and Unit Report templates through a comprehensive consultation process across the university. The templates were subsequently trialled with 10 courses and 36 units, providing an opportunity for the design and functionality of the reports and the accessibility and functionality of the software to be tested and reviewed. The trial highlighted the need for: fitness for purpose; alignment to other university systems/databases; software compatibility; flexibility of access, and; a central repository for all Course/Unit Coordinators. The reports provide a valid, standardised approach to measure learning outcomes, map and evaluate the quality and performance, and promote quality, consistency and transparency, of units and courses across the university.

Key words

learning outcomes; course reporting; quality assurance; unit reporting

Background

The Bradley review of higher education (2008) was instrumental in setting the context for change in accountability and transparency in the Australian higher education sector. Prior to this, Australian universities were required to produce quality assurance and improvement plans that addressed goals and strategies and provide data on quality outcomes to the government (Department of Education Science and Training (DEST), 2001). However, discussion papers that ensued as a result of the Bradley Review signified that universities need to work with government to develop a robust set of performance indicators, including measures of quality in learning and teaching (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), 2009a) and outlined four indicators that underpin institutional targets against sector-wide measures and indicators: 1) Student participation and inclusion; 2) Student experience; 3) Student attainment, and; 4) Quality learning outcomes (DEEWR, 2009b). A clear message was that universities need to be more explicit in their use and measurement of performance indicators for funding, regulatory and quality assurance purposes.

Internationally, the 2006 meeting of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Education Ministers also concluded that systems were needed to

measure outcomes (Massaro, 2010). The 'quality revolution' in higher education has emphasised the expectation that universities must demonstrate that they are providing a quality learning and teaching experience (Anderson, 2006). The recent uncapping of undergraduate student places has also led to further marketisation of the sector that has increased competitive pressures between institutions and made concern for what contributes to both national and international reputations *de rigeur* (Nagy, 2011). This is further exacerbated by the establishment of the *MyUniversity* website, whereby potential students are becoming more judicious and demanding in terms of the quality of higher education that they expect to receive.

As a result, the Australian higher education sector has undergone significant changes in quality assurance and standards in recent times with the establishment of a new national body for regulation and quality assurance, the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), which has an emphasis on threshold standards and measures. Its aim is to 'accredit providers, evaluate the performance of institutions and programs, encourage best practice, de-clutter current regulatory requirements and provide greater national consistency' ('TEQSA Act,' 2011). TEQSA has established a higher education standards panel (known as HESP), an expert Advisory Body that is responsible for the development and monitoring of a higher education standards framework (known as HESF). The HESF outlines the roles and responsibilities for higher education providers, including:

- course design is appropriate and meets the Qualification Standards,
- teaching and learning are of high quality,
- assessment is effective and expected student learning outcomes are achieved, and
- course monitoring, review, updating and termination are appropriately managed.

The HESP has also recently proposed revisions to the HESF, in particular draft Standards for Course Design (Coursework) and Learning Outcomes (Coursework). The draft HESF Standards for Course Design (Coursework) state that 'the provider utilises defined processes for designing and assuring the quality of the design of each course of study and the qualifications to which it leads', where course design includes the rationale for the course of study, course structure, mode of delivery, learning outcomes, methods of assessment and student workload and that each course of study is designed to enable equivalent student learning outcomes regardless of a student's place or mode of study.

The draft HESF Standards for Learning Outcomes (Coursework) state that 'learning outcomes to be achieved on completion of a course of study are specified for each course of study', the 'relationship between the overall learning outcomes for each course of study and the learning outcomes for units that contribute to the course of study are demonstrable' and that 'the assessment of student learning, whether at the unit level, course level, or in combination, encompasses all specified learning outcomes for each course of study'.

The HESF Qualification Standards also include a requirement that all higher education awards at levels 5-10 must meet the corresponding specifications in the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) by January, 2015. TEQSA will assesses whether the learning outcomes of a course are at the appropriate AQF level by systematically: a) comparing the stated learning outcomes for a given course with the specified learning outcomes for the relevant AQF level and qualification type descriptor, and b) assessing whether the design of all the components of the course will support achievement of the learning outcomes. Any institution found to be deficient may ultimately be at risk of losing its

accreditation within the Australian higher education system. Thus, there is a significant incentive for the management of Australian universities to ensure that they are collecting documentation demonstrating their commitment to quality assurance (Anderson, 2006). It is imperative that Australian higher education providers are able to provide evidence of this and, in response to these external requirements, institutions must strengthen mechanisms for internal accountability (Bellingham, 2008; Raban, 2007).

Internally, the University of Tasmania's Australian Universities Quality Assurance (AUQA) Audit (March, 2012) reported that 'differing interpretations of learning outcomes have resulted in some uncertainty about the application and implementation of the concept across programs and campuses. Achievement of greater consistency in approach will be an important part of future work'. The University's Strategic Plan for Learning and Teaching (2012-2014) seeks to address the issues around consistency of approach across the institution and better definition of outcomes at both course and unit level. This is further elucidated under Objective 1.4 of the Plan: Processes for assuring and enhancing quality in student learning, which states that:

'...student learning is assured by a rigorous application of a learning and teaching approach that maps for each of its programs and courses the learning outcomes to be achieved, how those outcomes are to be assessed and the contribution of those to graduate attributes, skills and dispositions…'

As a result of these national and internal drivers, it was recommended that reporting and data collection at the course and unit level be enhanced across the university through the development and introduction of mandatory, standardised, electronic Course and Unit Reports. A number of the University's policies provided scope for, or alignment to, the introduction of standardised Course and Unit Reports, in particular, the draft Course Review Guidelines and Learning and Teaching Policy and the approved Quality Management Policy. The Quality Management Policy clearly articulates that the University deploys a range of mechanisms and specific tools to implement the OADRI (Objectives, Approach, Deployment, Results, and Improvement) approach to achieve continuous improvement. These include, but are not limited to, course and unit review procedures.

Although some Faculties/Schools at the University had previously established a system for reporting at the course and unit level, particularly those accountable to a professionally accrediting body, this had not been implemented widely across the institution and was not undertaken in a standardised approach. Thus, the overarching aims of the Course and Unit Reports were to: 1) improve course and unit quality by enhancing the University's use of course and unit performance data, 2) promote quality, consistency and transparency across the university, and 3) ensure the university's compliance to national regulatory initiatives.

Methodology

Development of Course and Unit Report Templates
Prior to the development of the Course and Unit Report templates, a desktop review of Australian higher education institutions policies in course and unit reporting was undertaken by the Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU). The findings from this review were considered and taken into account in the development of the templates. The Unit Report template was also developed using existing examples from the University's' School of

Human Life Sciences and the School of Management. The Course Report template was developed using the University of Western Sydney's Course Review Form as a foundation. The templates were also based on an agreed set of performance indicators and minimum standards that align to the the University's Strategic Plan for Learning and Teaching (2012-2014) and the the University's University Standards Framework.

Both templates consisted of a combination of pre-populated data and areas requiring input from teaching staff i.e. Course and Unit Coordinators. The incorporation of qualitative and context-specific data into the reports was considered important to stimulate reflection and discussion. The Course Report also includes a Statement of Curriculum Philosophy in order to ensure a reflective approach to curriculum management and assist Faculties in planning. The purpose of the Statement of Curriculum Philosophy is to:

- set out the ways in which subject coverage is managed through the constituent units of the course,
- detail the core and elective unit structure and how this maps onto areas of specialisation and research,
- demonstrate how course teams have responded to the requirements from professional bodies and/or external accreditation, where appropriate, in relation to course design and learning outcomes,
- map the location, progression and assessment of learning outcomes and support for the University's graduate attributes across the units that comprise a course of study, and
- outline how the course is responding to the University's requirements with regard to participation and internationalisation.

The Course and Unit Report templates were converted to electronic pdf forms prior to testing by Synateq.

Consultation Process
All the University's Schools and Centres (n=43) were invited by SERRU to attend and participate in consultation workshops prior to the trial of the electronic Course and Unit Reports. The primary purposes of these workshops were to provide staff with an opportunity to discuss the rationale for, and trial of, standardised Course and Unit Reports and gather feedback on the process. 28 consultation workshops were held with both academic and professional staff across the university. The feedback received was utilised to revise and refine the Course and Unit Report templates and to inform the development of a Course and Unit Report Procedure.

Trial of Electronic Course and Unit Reports
Based on feedback received by staff as part of the consultation process above, the Course and Unit Report templates were revised and refined to enhance their usefulness and meaningfulness for teaching staff prior to testing.

It was initially planned that all courses and units would be required to trial the electronic Course and Unit Reports, respectively. However, a number of issues quickly became evident that meant that this was not feasible, including technological issues with access to, and functionality of, the electronic pdf forms, particularly for Macintosh computer users, and resistance from some staff to complete the reports due to other work commitments and a number of Faculty restructures. As a result of this, it was decided to downsize the trial.

Schools and individual staff members working on Macintosh computers were exempted from the trial. The remainder of Schools were asked to complete one Unit Report at each unit level (i.e. level 100, 200, 300 etc.) and one Course Report. Unit Reports were completed by the Unit Coordinator(s) and Course Reports were completed by the Course Coordinator(s). A total of 37 Unit Reports and 12 Course Reports were received.

Findings

Desktop Review of Course and Unit Report Policies

Nine universities demonstrated evidence of course performance reporting (i.e. not course review) in their policy frameworks. Of these, course reports are typically undertaken annually. Reporting at the unit level appears to be less common. Of the nine policies identified above, four also demonstrated evidence of reporting performance at the unit level. In all instances, the course and unit reports incorporate pre-populated data. However, not all reports require input from teaching staff. This finding is not unexpected, in the wake of increased government intervention, the emphasis has shifted to (the more easily measured) quantitative forms of quality measurement (Anderson, 2006; Vidovich, 2001). However, a study by Anderson (2006) found that many academics critiqued the quantitative approach that they argued was commonly employed in quality assurance in higher education. Interviewees represented performance indicators as 'blunt' and argued that they favoured that which could be quantified, rather than ensuring genuine quality (Anderson, 2006).

Further discussion with staff at those institutions that demonstrated evidence of regular course performance reporting also highlighted the importance of finding a balance between length of reports and provision of meaningful information. Reports that are excessive in length and do not require input from academic staff (i.e. data is entirely pre-populated) are often filed away without undergoing moderation or review and result in inaction. In contrast, Course Performance Reports at the Queensland University of Technology are condensed into a Consolidated Course Performance Report, which is aggregated to faculty and institutional level, and reported to the Academic Board. All courses are mapped to the University Blueprint. This system of reporting has increased the visibility of Course Co-ordinators. The University of Technology Sydney's (UTS) model of Course and Subject reporting was identified as a good model of reporting performance at the unit level. UTS has implemented both Course and Subject (i.e. unit) performance reports to enhance the quality and transparency of courses and units, respectively, which are aligned to the university's key performance indicators.

Consultation Process

Quality assurance mechanisms are often met with scepticism by some who view such activities as regulatory (and burdensome) when institutions themselves are considered autonomous (Bellingham, 2008). It was evident, upon the completion of the consultation process with the University's university staff that this sentiment still rings true. Concerns and valuable feedback received from the consultation process were noted and collated under six main themes: 1) Course and unit management; 2) Quality processes; 3) Staff workload; 4) Performance management, probation and promotion; 5) Course and unit performance review database, and; 6) Data and reporting. The main issues that arose during the consultation process were:

- workload implications,
- who will have access to the reports once submitted,

- how will the reports be used (e.g. probation, evaluation of performance),
- how are 'at-risk' courses and units going to be identified and what will be the process to support these,
- timing of when reports must be submitted, and
- how will compliance be monitored.

Challenges highlighted by the consultation process also included the management of the relationship between institutional and professional body reporting mechanisms so that workload and data is not duplicated. These fundamental issues have since been addressed and further elucidated in a draft Course and Unit Report Procedure, the purpose of which is to provide a clear and transparent process for staff for the quality assurance of courses and units.

The consultation process also highlighted the importance of 'fitness for purpose' of the report templates. Raban (2007) previously reported that the drive to secure the accountability of institutions to their external stakeholders, including government, undermines the creativity and commitment of 'front line' academic staff. Although the initial driver for the implementation of Course and Unit Reports at the University's was for the university to demonstrate compliance of national regulatory initiatives, there was an innate requirement by staff for the reports to be meaningful for their own purposes, namely the enhancement and improvement of their teaching practices. Clearly, Course and Unit Reports have the most value when the accountability and enhancement aspects of the process are effectively combined.

Trial of Electronic Course and Unit Reports
The trial of electronic Course and Unit Reports provided an opportunity for the design and functionality of the templates and the accessibility and functionality of the software to be tested and reviewed. The trial highlighted three key areas for improvement, the need for: 1) software compatibility and accessibility; 2) alignment to other University systems/databases, and 3) a central repository for all Course and Unit Coordinators.

The electronic pdf format that the reports were trialled in required Adobe Acrobat Pro in order to function effectively. This software is not routinely installed on university computers. In addition, Macintosh computers, of which there are a number of users throughout the university, do not support Adobe. Although the electronic pdf forms may be opened in the equivalent program, Preview, it quickly became evident that the links within the templates did not function effectively. It was also determined that users who opened the pdf forms using the free software, Adobe Reader, were able to operate and fill-out the reports, but were not able to save their input. Finally, the electronic pdf forms did not allow the reports to be shared amongst multiple users. Teaching staff found this incapability to be inadequate for courses and units with more than one Coordinator or for those who wished to include input from additional teaching staff.

The Course and Unit Report templates also incorporated sections for pre-populated data, including student load, attrition and retention and internal/external student evaluation data. In order for this data to be pre-populated, the software must be aligned and linked to other University systems/databases, in particular the online Course and Unit Handbook, Learning and Teaching Dashboard, TechOne Student Management System and the internal student evaluation system, eVALUate. However, each of these systems are independent of one another and linking the Course and Unit Report templates to these systems proved not to be possible without a central management system. Although the University's is currently in the

process of developing and implementing a new Student Learning and Information Management System (SLIMS) that aims to align to all of the university's systems/databases, this project is not due to be completed until 2014. Thus, in order for the Course and Unit Report templates to operate at full capacity, it was deemed necessary for an entirely new database to be created that incorporates all of the data required for pre-population. The trial also highlighted the lack of a central repository of all Course and Unit Coordinators, which, in turn, led to a reduced efficiency in communication with individual staff.

Amendments to the Course and Unit Report Templates and Procedure
Following feedback from the consultations with staff and the trial of the electronic Course and Unit Report templates, the templates and software have been significantly revised and refined to enhance their accessibility, functionality and meaningfulness to staff and to reduce workload requirement. Moreover, the procedure itself is now governed by an overall commitment to enhancement, rather than purely being driven to satisfy national requirements. Similar to Raban's (2007) 'modernist' approach to quality assurance, the new templates are predictive and context-focused i.e. can be utilised to inform resource allocation and long-term strategic planning decisions and lead to the selective support and scrutiny of areas of identified need or difficulty. Final versions of the Course and Unit Report templates are provided in Appendix A and B, respectively. In addition, given the issues associated with access to, and functionality of, the electronic pdf forms, the university is currently in the process of transitioning to the use of online Course and Unit Reports using eForms. This will address the issues around compatibility and provide greater flexibility in terms of accessibility and functionality. A new database that includes all of the data required for pre-population is also currently in development. This will include a repository of all Course and Unit Coordinators, the establishment of which was a key recommendation as a result of this project.

In terms of the Course and Unit Report Procedure, as originally envisioned, all courses will be required to complete a Course Report annually. The intention is that the course reporting process will adopt a supportive, rather than punitive role. In order to promote this, courses will be classified according to performance as:

- commendable,
- acceptable, or
- areas for development.

Courses in this last group may need to be reviewed in more detail i.e. undergo a full course review, based on reduced performance in one or more areas, e.g. student demand, student load, graduation rate, attrition and retention rates or Course Experience Questionnaire results. As a result of this trial, it has also been recommended that policy and processes to support courses that are identified as 'at risk' are developed and managed by the Faculties and supported by the Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching.

While it was initially proposed that all units would be required to complete a Unit Report at the end of each offering, based on feedback from staff and further discussion with Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching), this has been revised. Initiation of a Unit Report must now follow a specific trigger. Only units that are identified as 'at risk' through the internal student evaluation system, or those selected at the discretion of the Head of School, will be required to complete a Unit Report at the completion of the unit's offering.

Conclusion

Quality within universities has traditionally been assured using internal processes, in conjunction with external peer-review and professional accreditation (Anderson, 2006; Brennan & Shah, 2000; Department of Education Science and Training (DEST), 2001). However, as a result of increased government intervention, universities are progressively required to demonstrate that they are collecting documentation demonstrating their commitment to quality assurance at the course and unit level. The development and testing of electronic Course and Unit Reports at the University's has resulted in a number of key outcomes, first and foremost of which is a process by which courses and units are reported and evaluated on a structured basis and that has adopted a supportive, rather than punitive role. Additional outcomes include; 1) Templates that align to national and institutional strategic priorities, 2) A mechanism to capture the dynamic nature of courses and units, and initiate ongoing improvement processes, 3) Online forms that collect and store evidence in a secure environment and allows reports to be filtered according to needs, and 4) A comprehensive procedural document for evaluating courses and units. The methodological approach utilised here and the Course and Unit Report templates may also be utilised or adapted by higher education providers to assist in the development and implementation of their own reports to measure quality and promote change at the course and unit level.

In summary, the development of online Course and Unit Reports provides: 1) A formal, transparent system to map and evaluate the quality and performance of courses and units, respectively, at an institutional level, and 2) A means by which data and self-reporting required for both internal and external audits/reviews/accreditation can be compiled and reported. Course and Unit Reports are considered essential in order to provide a valid, standardised approach for the university to recognise good practice and areas for improvement, thereby enhancing the overall student experience and promoting quality, consistency and transparency across the university and ensuring the university's compliance to both national regulatory initiatives [e.g. mission-based compacts, the higher education standards framework (HESF and the AQF) and the internal Strategic Plan for Learning and Teaching and related policies, particularly in disciplines where no external validating or accrediting body exists.

Acknowledgements

Biographical Notes

Dr Cassandra I Saunders is a Research Officer in the Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU) at the University of Tasmania and is involved in the analysis and reporting of institutional data and research projects.

Dr Sara Booth is Head of SERRU at the University of Tasmania and specialises in standards and benchmarking at the institutional level.

References

Anderson, G. (2006). Assuring quality/resisting quality assurance: Academics' responses to 'quality' in some Australian universities. *Quality in Higher Education, 12*(2), 161-173.

Bellingham, L. (2008). Quality assurance and the use of subject level reference points in the UK. *Quality in Higher Education, 14*(3), 265-276.

Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H., & Scales, B. (2008). Review of Australian higher education: Final report. Canberra, ACT: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Commonwealth of Australia.

Brennan, J., & Shah, T. (2000). *Managing Quality in Higher Education*. Buckingham, UK: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/The Society for Research into Higher Education/Open University Press.

Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). (2009a). Transforming Australia's higher education system. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

DEEWR. (2009b). An indicator framework for higher education performance funding (pp. 31-33). Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of Education Science and Training (DEST). (2001). The National Report on Higher Education in Australia. Canberra, Australia: Department of Education, Science and Training.

Massaro, V. (2010). Cui bono? The relevance and impact of quality assurance. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 32*(1), 17-26.

Nagy, J. (2011). Scholarship in Higher Education: Building Research Capabilities through Core Business. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 59*(3), 303-321.

Raban, C. (2007). Assurance *versus* enhancement: Less is more? *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 31*(1), 77-85.

TEQSA Act, 73, Commonwealth Government of Australia (2011).

Vidovich, L. (2001). That chameleon 'quality': The multiple and contradictory discourses of 'quality' policy in Australian higher education. *Discourse, 22*(2), 249-261.

Course/Major Report

Course/Major Code	
Course/Major Name	
Faculty	
Year	
Course/Major/Discipline Coordinator(s)	
Date	

Annual Statement of Curriculum Philosophy (ASCP)
In preparing the ASCP, course/major teams are to meet to develop a statement to reflect on the consistency of the curricula and alignment with the the University's Learning and Teaching Strategic Plan. In preparation for the development of the ASCP, course/major teams should: • Develop overarching course/major/discipline level learning outcomes (no more than 10). Go to http://disciplinestandards.pbworks.com/w/page/526657697/FrontPage for Discipline Standards. These high-level threshold learning outcomes should demonstrate what a student would achieve by the end of the course/major study. • Where appropriate, the overall learning outcomes required for accreditation and/or professional recognition should be clearly identified.
Attach/provide the ASCP *(limit to 500 words)*:

Mapping and Reflection of Course/Major Curricula

In reflecting on course/major curricula, course/major teams are to undertake a mapping exercise to assist in identifying, modifying and augmenting course/major level statements which includes-
• Demonstrating how course/major level outcomes are identified throughout the units
• Demonstrating how the the University's Graduate Attributes are developed through the units
• Demonstrating progression in student learning through levels of study
• Demonstration how units support graduate employment outcomes
• Attention should be paid to the role of capstone units or core units, as well as specialised optional units.
The mapping exercise should also address the following questions:
• What are the specific highlights of the course?
• Which units exemplify or demonstrate-
   o Clear examples of research-informed curricula
   o Opportunities for students in relation to internship, work-based learning, placement, study abroad and volunteering
   o Other
• What areas of pedagogy merit particular note including:
   o Areas of innovation and experimentation
   o Areas of external (national/international) recognition
   o Collaborative teaching: across School/Faculty/Institutional/national/international

Attach/provide evidence of course mapping

Course Snapshot
The Annual Course Report Overview is available at: \\itssbycognos.its.utas.edu.au\BI Report Outputs\Annual Course Reports\
Attach Course Report Overview document

Other Course/Major Feedback
Review data from other sources not referred to in the course snapshot or underlying course data. For example, qualitative student feedback, course advisory committees or other external sources such as accrediting organisations, benchmarking projects and/or practical placement/work integrated learning providers.

Other Source of Course/Major Feedback	**Issue(s) Identified**

Course/Major Actions/Improvements

1. Provide a summary of recommended action(s)/improvements and outcomes from previous report (if applicable):

2. Provide a summary of recommended action(s)/improvements planned for the following 12 months:

(N.B. Please use the University Standards Framework to identify course initiatives. Indicate the relevant Dimension: Learning, Teaching, Curriculum and Student Experience. Information on the University Standards Framework is available here: http://www.utas.edu./student-evaluation-review-and-reporting-unit/academics-standards-projects)

Course/Major Accreditation

Is this course required to be professionally accredited?

☐ Yes   ⟹   If yes, when is this course scheduled to be reaccredited? _____
☐ No

AQF Compliance

Please provide evidence of how the course meets AQF compliance. All courses need to comply with the AQF by January, 2015. What actions have been undertaken to ensure alignment? Please go to this link for more information: http://www.aqf.edu.au

AQF Level : _____[drop-down list 1-10]

Purpose *(limit to 250 words)*

Knowledge *(limit to 250 words)*

Skills *(limit to 250 words)*

Application of Knowledge *(limit to 250 words)*

Volume of Learning *(limit to 250 words)*

Articulation Pathways *(limit to 250 words)*

Purpose *(limit to 250 words)*

Appendix B: the University's Unit Report Template
Unit Report

Unit Code	
Unit Name	
Year, Semester	
Unit Coordinator	
Campuses	
Other teaching staff	
Faculty	

Date	

Role

Briefly explain the role of the unit within the course(s)/major(s) in which it is offered and its relationship to other units in the courses.

Unit Results	HD	DN	CR	PP	UP	NN	AN	Other	Total	Fail Rate (%)	WW

Internal Moderation ☐Yes ☐No

If yes, briefly explain.

External Moderation

Were results externally peer reviewed? ☐Yes ☐No

If yes, briefly explain.

Student feedback (eVALUate)

Briefly highlight the key points (positive & negative) students made about the unit.

Staff feedback

Briefly highlight any key points (positive & negative) the teaching team made concerning the unit.

Issues of concern

Briefly outline any issues associated with the unit e.g. staffing, student, resources, facilities…

Recommendations for improvement

What changes, if any, are proposed for the unit in the next offering?

Approved by Head of School: ☐   Date: _____

Seismic shifts in trends, traditions, and technologies: Education management in a natural disaster

Philippa Seaton, Lesley Seaton and Judy Yarwood
Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
Philippa.Seaton@cpit.ac.nz
Lesley.Seaton@cpit.ac.nz
Judy.Yarwood@cpit.ac.nz

Abstract

This study explored the responses of Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology's (CPIT) Department of Nursing & Human Services learning community following the 2010 and 2011 earthquake disasters in Christchurch, New Zealand. A descriptive/exploratory case study design, aligned with the three phases of disaster response, recovery, and rehabilitation, enabled collection of a wide range of data over 18 months. Participants included managers, corporate operations and academic staff. The key themes emerging from this study were: action plans; disrupted and uncertain contexts; balancing shifting priorities of professional responsibilities and personal imperatives; communication; leadership and followership; decision-making and taking action; preparedness and thinking ahead. These findings contribute to understanding responses to a disaster, and how, following such an event, the usual business of teaching and learning may be suspended, superseded, and reconfigured. Recommendations are provided for responding to sudden disruptive events, anticipating and managing educational needs, and ensuring business continuity.

Keywords: Disaster, learning community, business continuity, educational management.

Introduction

Since September 4th 2010 Christchurch, New Zealand has experienced over 13,000 earthquakes. During this period of seismic activity, staff at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) have faced and overcome challenges that in a traditional context would have been thought insurmountable. Following the February disaster, over 24,000 staff and students were evacuated from the city campus during a state of national emergency that was in place for six weeks leaving the campus within the prohibited 'red zone' (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012) and unreachable. During this time, CPIT's teaching and learning community had to find new means of managing education in the midst of chaos. The disaster threw into stark relief the complex nature of the wider organisational community that supports teaching/learning activities and highlighted the challenges that may arise from such sudden, widespread, and continuous disruption. The ongoing nature of the earthquakes has provided a valuable opportunity to build new traditions of educational management.

Background
In New Zealand, little was previously known about adapting education processes in circumstances of sudden, large scale disruptions. Internationally, a small body of literature is available on natural disasters, for example: Hurricane Katrina (Chauvin, Hilton, Lopez & Delcarpio, 2006) and the Gippsland fires in Australia (Forbes, Jones & Reupert, 2012). Since 2011, literature is growing around the Christchurch earthquakes and tertiary education. This

paper uses CPIT's responses to the disaster to consider issues for tertiary education management - strategies, processes and people. From this specific case, lessons can be extrapolated to inform other educational organisations' preparedness for disasters. While organisations are often ready for 'one-off' challenges to the complex educational ecosystem, Christchurch is providing new insights into managing the uncertainty of unanticipated continuous disruption.

Methods

Theoretical framework
Asghar, Alahakoon and Churilov's (2006) post-disaster stages of response, recovery, and rehabilitation provided the theoretical structure supporting the study design (see Figure 1). The findings underpin recommendations aligning with Asghar et al.'s (2006) pre-disaster risk reduction processes of prevention, mitigation, and preparedness.

Design
A descriptive/exploratory case study (Yin, 1994) was conducted over 18 months. This longitudinal design permitted the research team to combine varying data collection methods and ensure that critical post-disaster timelines were considered given the prolonged disruption in Christchurch. Whilst acknowledging the importance of understanding personal views in disaster situations, this study focused on tertiary education management.

Stage I **RESPONSE**	Stage II **RECOVERY**	Stage III **REHABILITATION**	Stage IV **REVISITING**
Rescue the programme	Stabilise the programme	Reconfigure normality in the programme	Revisiting response, recovery, rehabilitation (post June 2012 quake)

Figure 1: Research phases in the longitudinal case study design

Sample
The sample included professional and academic participants drawn from the Department of Nursing & Human Services, and professional, corporate services, and operational staff from the wider CPIT organisation. Selection criteria included those in key decision making roles and/or key operational roles. Also sourced were relevant documents and electronic artefacts pertaining to decisions made and actions taken, including paper documents and electronic communications (officially disseminated email, web postings, texts, and social media posts).

Data Collection and Analysis
There were three methods of data collection. First, eleven professional and operational staff individually took part in semi-structured interviews eliciting information about roles and responsibilities, decision-making and actions. Second, academic nursing staff were surveyed to gain a wider professional perspective about the response and recovery processes. Third, artefacts were used to triangulate other information. Iterative, inductive analysis (Patton, 2002) was used to uncover the themes within the interview data. Descriptive statistics were used for survey data, with open-ended survey questions being analysed thematically. Content analysis was undertaken with the artefacts data.

Ethical Considerations
Researching at a time of traumatic disaster carries particular responsibilities. In this study the researchers addressed issues of confidentiality in the face of an internationally publicised

event in which the institution was easily recognisable. Participant welfare required particular consideration and measures to reduce potential personal distress related to revisiting the traumatic situation, self-blaming and risk of organisational recrimination of individuals were instituted. These strategies are discussed more fully elsewhere (see Seaton, Seaton & Yarwood, 2013). Essentially this was designed as a 'no blame' project, with personal support mechanisms in place prior to commencement of, and throughout the project. Ethical approval was gained from the CPIT Ethics committee.

Findings

The findings derived from the interviews, survey and artefacts developed into clear themes. Notably, these themes emerged in each data set thus highlighting their centrality in disaster management. *Context* has an ongoing influence on all the other themes. *Action Plans* are fundamental at the time of a disaster in providing emergency guidance, but are also static at the point when disaster strikes. Action plans will be superseded over time by decisions made and actions taken. *Communication,* an essential component in managing business, is central, having a critical influence on *Leadership and Followership;* while the process of *Making Decisions* underpins *Taking Action. Balancing Shifting Priorities* is a pivot point in this model, demonstrating the competing demands on all those in a tertiary education organisation between *Personal Imperatives* and *Professional Responsibilities* and how the priority for any individual may, at any given time, be changing and overlaying capacity for leadership and followership, or making decisions. These interrelated themes provide a basis for preparedness and thinking ahead (Seaton et al., 2013). While not encompassing the entire study, the findings presented in the following sections are those with implications for management, corporate services, and operational staff.

Pre-quake preparedness: Institutional plans

Plans are essential for preparedness and responsiveness in emergency and disaster. The Civil Defence Act requires tertiary institutions in New Zealand to have plans in place to continue operating for the first twenty four hours after a disaster, or to look after their own personnel for that period. CPIT has always had Civil Defence Plans in place and the Health and Safety officer meets local and national Civil Defence officers every three months so communication is maintained. Robust plans existed around site safety through the Coordinated Incident Management System (CIMS) plan. At CPIT evacuation was successfully accomplished. What was less anticipated was the response of staff who appeared to have limited awareness of a disaster plan and the corporate level emergency management strategy, beyond the printed instructions displayed on walls. Participants from the academic staff group spoke of not really knowing how to respond, where to go, or what to do. This uncertainty highlights the need for ongoing education of everyone involved in a tertiary education organisation.

[i2] [People said… why didn't you put signs up… to say what to do in an earthquake. I said, they've been up for twenty years, and I showed him the signs.

[i3] We probably had a general awareness that we had an emergency plan. I don't think it was certainly in the forefront of my attention… How you keep it in one's consciousness is another matter.

Business continuity plans existed, but were often broad or leaned toward health and safety considerations rather than disaster recovery.

[i1] ... there were [institutional business continuity plans] and we were aware of them. They were, by nature, reasonably broad... If an event occurs here's the kind of things that you might do, or very specific... if we had a chemical spill or that kind of stuff.

A wide-ranging major disaster plan adequate for the scale of devastation and ensuing disruption that occurred in the earthquakes had not been considered, so existing business continuity plans proved less useful than expected:

[i2][The plan was] strategic rather than operational, so a bit of our vision for what we should do, but the actual nuts and bolts of it wasn't very clear. ... the consultants that produced it weren't really looking at the day-to-day ... operational side of it.

[i1] There was never a scenario around... you will have no power to your data centre for six weeks, but we want you to carry on delivering all the services and at the same time delivering them into sites that you'd never delivered them to before.

Plans can be fallible
The safety plans, largely at the back of peoples' consciousness before the earthquakes, can be fallible. While everyone knows to vacate buildings in the event of a fire alarm, immediate evacuation is the wrong thing to do in an earthquake. When the February quake set off the fire alarms, those who understood earthquake procedure (drop, cover, hold, and vacate after shaking stops) were in a quandary as to what action to take. Planned evacuation routes may also be potentially hazardous depending on the nature of the disaster.

[i11] ...what we didn't [realise] , and you think of those things afterwards ... is that a main exit is into the [glass roofed] atrium and when I was clearing people upstairs, the main exit is out onto the [aerial] walkway... in the event it was fine, because the atrium stood up very well... But it didn't seem such a good escape route in retrospect.

The city's emergency services were overwhelmed in the initial aftermath of the disaster, and this meant that organisations needed to provide first aid care while emergency services dealt with life threatening incidents. CPIT's first aid supplies, stored for immediate access when needed inside the buildings, proved inaccessible unless the buildings were re-entered. Such possibilities need to be considered prior to disaster events.

Leadership preparedness
Leadership is a key factor in the continuing functioning of an institution. The style of leadership and the expectations placed on staff can make a significant difference in how people respond to the unexpected. Leaders can lead in ways that will build skills within the team before they are called upon to use them, and will support not only the required followership but also leadership development in the team. Preparedness to lead and to follow in a team during a disaster relies heavily on existing relationships and ways of working together. Teamwork, role allocation, engagement and empowerment were valued and embedded pre-quake among many of CPIT's management personnel and staff.

[i1] ...when you get into those [disaster] situations it can't be a democracy, but the fact that if you've got a team that under those circumstances will take direction, to me is a reflection on the respective values that you build up over a long time... My role's all about making sure we're going in the right direction, making sure the strategy aligns to the institutional

direction, making sure we've got the right resourcing in place and the right support behind us for doing it. Making sure that we've got the right engagement with people outside the organisation… And making sure that we've got a really good environment for people to work in, so that they can actually get in there and flourish… everybody, I guess, has their style. Mine very much is, 'Don't come to me with questions, come to me with solutions.' So don't come and say, 'What am I going to do about this?' Come to me and say, 'Here's the problem and this is what I think we should do, what do you think?

The value to the organisation of professional and operational staff with vision and initiative to mitigate the effects of a future disaster is profound, as became evident at CPIT.

[i2] I used to go around every room, every year, doing a hazard identification… I made sure all our big high storage areas were all bolted into the walls and things were reasonably well secured. When… we put the new library in… I insisted that they bolt the library shelves into the floor… The architect… wasn't interested in that… But we went back and did it anyway. We drilled holes through the carpet, we bolted all those library shelves into the floor and then we got bracing fabricated… And in the September event [earthquake] none of the shelves fell over. In [another] university they all fell over, so they lost a million books on the ground.

Leadership post-quake
No matter how good an emergency or business continuity plan is, the first twenty four to forty eight hours of devastation can render plans useless. Disintegrating buildings, loss of electricity, confused, fearful and shocked people and scattered locations of leaders (who may also be suffering personally difficult circumstances) can result in a need for new ways of thinking and responding. In the first instance leadership lies with the incident controller:

[i2]… the first twenty hours, or forty eight hours, or however long it can be, is managed by an incident controller and that's not necessarily a CEO, it is someone that feeds information to the CEO to then make their decisions on. And that's basically about: what is the emergency, what's happened on site, have we got a death or whatever, are the buildings had it, what's working, what's not working, and then you go into business continuity.

However, beyond this clearly defined and assigned role, leadership is required throughout the organisation. In a disaster situation designated leaders may, or may not, be physically or psychologically able to take control. Chains of command or communication may be disrupted and leadership can arise from unexpected places. The importance of a multifaceted approach to leadership was apparent. While recognising the need for leadership to be evident and to provide direction, there was also evidence that it was vital to encourage distributed leadership and value leadership when it was demonstrated by people in non-management positions.

[i1] …people who weren't necessarily set in the way in which it had been done, but understood what it was that we were trying to do and could think through different ways of doing it… there were a number of stars who absolutely managed to think on their feet, come up with really innovative thinking about how we might get stuff to work. That's a trait that I don't think I've personally valued enough when I've been selecting staff. I've certainly been very conscious of it since.

Lateral thinking and flexibility became valuable skills; in some cases directed at providing emergency care and, in others, at restoring operations. Leadership in a disaster is not an easy

role nor one that leaders may have been specifically prepared for. Different skills may be called for in leaders at this time, as roles change, grow, or lessen, depending on the situation.

[i1] …to me, when you're on the executive team of an organisation, in the position that they're in, you have to give that away and work out what's best for the institution… you've just got lots of decisions made on the fly… if you're going to be leader in those circumstances you have to be brave, you don't have to be silly … you know, just [don't] go try things that are clearly inadvisable, but you have to be brave.

Managers and operational staff ignored their own personal fears for family and property and stepped in to look after the many staff and students stranded in the city.

[i4] They all ended up in the Recreation Centre, there was about a hundred there plus the students from [the hostels]. We managed to get quite a few people away in vans, but there was a large group, including all the [students from the hostels], who had to stay in the gym overnight… so we had a staff member who stayed, plus security stayed there, they had to make sure they were fed and all that sort of thing.

Personal versus professional considerations
Managers at various levels of seniority took the initiative, without necessarily being directed from above, to prioritise their own and their staff's activities relating to personal welfare. Where possible, staff were located and accounted for and attempts were made to tell at least one other person before leaving the campus.

[i11]…he's got young kids, and he just said, 'I've got to go.' I said, 'Yeah, absolutely fine.' A couple of other people [also left]… at the end of the day we were able to account for everyone and where they'd ended up going.

This need to balance the personal and professional needs of staff continued into the post earthquake recovery period. Management recognised the need for flexibility for staff to be absent from work in order to deal with home repairs, settle insurance problems, and so forth. Provision was also made for staff and students to have time off to seek counselling or mental health support.

Information and communication technology (ICT) preparedness
ICT plays a major role in the functioning of a modern tertiary institution and disruptions to that function can cause mayhem. In the usual course of business however, if incidents occur, although serious, they have in the past usually been short-lived.

[i1] …if somebody puts a digger through a [electric] mains, for instance, we'd… be able to shut the systems down normally, all the services would kick in behind it and twenty four hours later power would be restored and we'd be up and running again.

Fortunately, CPIT's ICT management team was proactive; new systems had recently been installed and staff were trained in their operation.

[i1] There was already work that we were doing around service levels… and the services that we deliver and making sure what kind of responses people need and how, what up time they need and how, you know, if the system falls over how long it will be down for… it's about understanding that we had risks with the then current technology, planning good robust

systems to move to, understanding why you were moving them and how we were delivering service. Right down to getting really good commitment from the organisation around training so people actually understood the new environment.

The seriousness, scale, and on-going disruptiveness of the February 2011 earthquake disaster were not envisaged. However, the systems upgrade at CPIT happened between the September 2010 and the February 2011 earthquakes. The positive outcomes of this demonstrate the foresight and commitment of the ICT department and the organisation to making the hard 'preparedness' decisions; spending the money and doing the job at a time when it might have been easier to defer.

ICT post-disaster responses
On finding that CPIT was to be cordoned off, the ICT department quickly shifted its data centre and operations to various other locations around and outside the city. Moving was a major logistics exercise that had to be accomplished in a hurry. It took a week and a half to move everything, but processes were functioning in just two days, at a time when many businesses were closed because of damage. The importance of both project control and flexibility was vast.

[i1] We had our planning meeting and we all took jobs that the project manager assigned and we all went all over the place to try and buy stuff. We had to buy pens, labels and stickers so that everything that came out had a label attached to it, where it came from, what it did. Every single cable - both ends were labelled to where they were plugged into. [Everything] was labelled with the name of the server that they were attached to, to be rebuilt at the other end... that whole environment... was set up in under two days from nothing to working.

ICT built a new website, once power was available, in order to contact staff and students. Texting was another option, but this was reliant on functioning telecommunications networks which were not necessarily always available.

[I1] So texting is an optional service. If the Telcos turn off as soon as the network becomes overloaded... you start getting calls dropping out or you can't get through. The Blackberry messenger is a data service and it worked when the voice and the text weren't working.

Back-up systems were not necessarily accessible in this disaster because of prolonged exclusion from the CPIT premises. If backup systems are located in the same areas as the systems they back up then there is a problem. Difficulties can also arise in unexpected ways where systems that would have provided easy backup, are unable to do so because of the timing and extent of the disaster. This shows the complexity and demands of planning for organisational preparedness.

[i1] For example ...disaster recovery for payroll is we can just ring the bank and the bank will run the previous fortnight's payroll and that will pay 95% of our staff pretty accurately. But if it happened to... be inaccessible in the first pay run of the academic year, when... staff who work part time in the academic areas aren't on the previous fortnight's payroll, we've got a disaster.

Communication
Many areas of the city lost their electricity and mobile phone coverage, making communication difficult. Travel for face-to-face communication was problematic, with many

roads impassable for weeks or covered in sewage or liquefied silt. Trying to contact widely-scattered staff and students (many had left the city) was a major challenge, quite aside from trying to continue a teaching and learning programme. With so many buildings damaged or cordoned off for long periods, planning meetings were often held in the homes of those who still had electricity, road access and an inhabitable dwelling. Initial ad hoc communication, with various departments acting independently, provided some risk of conflicting information about buildings, campus access and procedures was disseminated. The situation was ripe for rumours to spring up regarding campus safety. There was a need for clarity, consistency and inclusiveness. Senior management stepped in to coordinate a unified communication process:

[i2] [you need] good procedures, very clear information so that everybody knows we're on the same page… and people have some confidence knowing that we are in control, early feedback, just pour information out of the system as quick as you can so that people have up to date information. Cause it all goes on the YouTube or something straightaway and you lose control of the communication and then other people are communicating stuff for you and you can't control it.

Once the CPIT website was up and running, contacting staff and students became easier and a unified communication procedure was established. Social media, such as Facebook, were important communication tools and those departments with access to up-to-date contact details were able to send mass texts once network coverage was again available.

Resuming management and core business (teaching and learning)
The importance of the goodwill of outside contacts and the community rapidly became clear. Although some people had to work from home, teaching staff, students and management were distributed as soon as possible around the wider city area and beyond, some at other universities, others in church halls or community centres. The online learning management system (Moodle) grew in importance as a teaching tool. The Ministry of Education was also involved in resuming core business with a liaison person from the Tertiary Education Commission being 'go-between' for CPIT and the Minister.

Collaboration and team work
The coming together and regrouping of management and staff in various temporary locations often proved useful in breaking down communication barriers between departments and various levels of management. Getting CPIT up and functioning was the joint goal. The longer term benefit has been seen in the continuation of this communication and collaboration.

[i3]… In meetings I'd see how people would talk together about working together collaboratively to find solutions, which meant possibly finding answers to questions which weren't immediately from your area. And it was a good thing, you could talk to each other across those boundaries and we could find solutions across those boundaries. [i11] The best thing that comes out of these disasters, is forcing people to communicate. And… once you've established it [it] is much easier to carry on.
Collaboration with organisations outside of CPIT was also integral to successfully restarting business. Classes for several faculties and library borrowing facilities were set up at another university, using key resources that were retrieved from the CPIT campus when librarians were briefly allowed onsite. Fortunately, many e-books were still available from an earlier trial.

Recommendations: Lessons learned

It is important to remember that people implement systems. The following recommendations therefore encompass not only lessons learned about the organisation's systems, but the ways in which people can engage with these to prepare for the unexpected.

Emergency Plans
- Emergency instructions need to be clear, concise and prominently displayed in multiple locations so people remember them. Have clear signs showing evacuation assembly points for each area. Have people go to these points in regular practice drills.
- Regularly update emergency plans.
- Keep emergency plans fresh in people's minds through regular practice. People might need to be responsible for their own safety if a safety warden is absent or injured.
- Decide evacuation routes and check these for potential hazards (eg: possible falling glass or bricks, narrow doors slowing egress). Redesign problematic routes or remove hazards.
- Appoint and train a health and safety coordinator for each building.
- Use check-lists of places/facilities to be checked in an emergency. Ensure this includes responsibility for checking areas such as elevators, toilets, store-rooms.
- Train key people in how to use First Aid equipment and provide regular practices.
- Have First Aid equipment located outside the buildings as well as inside.
- Don't just plan to have a plan – create one *now*.

Disasters may or may not be predictable. Organisational preparedness is not for a familiar situation; it is most vital for the emergency you can't predict. To help preparedness to become embedded into the organisational culture, connect people with emergency plans through promoting their understanding of roles, and undertaking regular practice. This in turn will support and promote trust in individual and organisational ability to respond effectively in a disaster.

Leadership for each faculty/department
- Remember that leadership is not the sole domain of senior management – leaders can pop up anywhere.
- Allocate roles *before* a disaster and determine who will be responsible for what; but, be flexible about 'seeing' who can fulfil these roles during a crisis.
- Embed a culture of teamwork, personal empowerment, and respect for individuals' specific skills and knowledge.
- Each department/faculty needs to create priorities for action should disaster occur (eg: immediate safety; family safety; communication; teaching and learning provision).
- Be prepared to abandon pre-conceived plans and do what is practical and necessary, even if unconventional.

To be prepared for large scale disruption, build the team *before* emergency teamwork is needed. Leadership in disaster situations needs to be dynamic, inclusive, and move from being structural to being responsive to the context.

Communication

- Maintain up-to-date staff/student contact details. Keep copies of vital lists and communication records so they are accessible offsite and in disaster conditions.
- In a disaster, make it accepted practice for people to always tell others where they are going (eg: if leaving the campus).
- Establish a plan for a unified approach to communication: avoid an 'ad hoc' culture.
- Ensure all staff and students know where to find information in an emergency.
- Provide senior staff with communication devices such as Blackberry, smart phones, tablets, etc.
- Make use of Facebook and other social media as well as the institution's official website, for formal announcements.
- Use mass texting (this means having up-to-date mobile phone numbers for all staff/ students).

People need to be, and to feel, connected to the organisation. Be vigilant about ensuring people's communication details are current and accessible at the right level of the organisation: that is, the level with which people identify, eg: at the school or faculty level. Use multiple ways of connecting. In a disaster people need to feel confident that they are not missing out on vital information.

ICT
- Have a back-up power supply or emergency system to allow data centres to be closed down quickly.
- Keep multiple data back-ups offsite in distributed locations.
- Have multiple points of delivery, with high-speed links.
- Build up a network of outside contacts who can be called on to help in an emergency.

ICT is critical for keeping people connected. Threats to communication technologies will have profound impacts on people. Confidence in technology imparts a sense of connectedness to the organisation that is keenly sought in a disaster. Support ICT staff as a vital part of the learning community.

Conclusion

The ability to manage in a disaster depends on the capacity and resilience of any given community, at that point in time. Communities however, are made up of individuals. Strengthening individual capability and resilience helps build organisational capacity to cope in a disaster. In turn the organisation needs to support individuals. This mutual benefit will only occur when people are connected to each other and the organisation.

What is perhaps most important to take from this study, is that an emergency plan does not, by itself, equal preparedness. Every institution must look to its own context, consider its own priorities, and design methods of preparedness which will work for them (Seaton, Seaton, Yarwood & Ryan, 2012, p.76).

Biographical Notes

Dr Philippa Seaton PhD, MA(Hons), BA, RN is a principal lecturer and eLearning leader. Philippa's educational and research expertise includes health workforce development interprofessional education, and eLearning and clinical simulation in the health professions.

Dr Lesley Seaton PhD, MN, BN, RN, RM. is a principal lecturer and post-graduate programmes coordinator. She has academic and research expertise in global nursing workforce development and capacity building around emergency and disaster preparedness in the health sector across the Asia-Pacific & Australasian regions.

Judy Yarwood MA(Hons), BHSc, Dip. Tchng (Tertiary) FCNA (NZ) is a principal lecturer and research leader. She is the co-chair of the College of Nurses Aotearoa (NZ). Her teaching and research interests are primary health care, health promotion and family nursing.

References

Asghar, S., Alahakoon, D., & Churilov, L. (2006). A comprehensive conceptual model for disaster management. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance,* July 20, 1–15 http://www.jha.ac/articles/a193.pdf

Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA). (2012). Retrieved from www.cera.govt.nz

Chauvin, S., Hilton, C., DiCarlo, R., Lopez, F., & Delcarpio, J. (2006). Sustaining the Teaching Mission: Lessons learned from Katrina. *The American Journal of the Medical Sciences, 332*(5), 269-282.

Forbes, J., Jones, R., & Reupert, A. (2012). In the wake of the 2009 Gippsland fires: Young adults perceptions of post-disaster supports. *The Australian Journal of Rural Medicine, 20*, 119-125.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Seaton, L., Seaton, P., Yarwood, J., Ryan, M. (2012). *Preparedness for Sudden Change: Lessons from managing large-scale disruption within a Bachelor of Nursing community*. Christchurch, New Zealand: CPIT & Ako Aotearoa National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence - Southern Regional Hub.

Seaton, L., Seaton, P., & Yarwood, J. (2013). Preparedness: Lessons for educators from the Christchurch disaster. *Kai Tiaki Nursing Research, 4*(1), 11-16.

Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods.* (2nd ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

How do Professional Staff Contribute to Retention and the First Year Experience?

Judy Szekeres
South Australian Institute of Business and Technology (SAIBT)
judy.szekeres@unisa.edu.au

Abstract
It is well documented that if a student has a fantastic experience at the start of their tertiary career, they are more likely to stay on and more likely to succeed. The corollary to this is that if they have a terrible time, they are more likely to fail or drop out and worse, they will not speak well of the institution to their friends and family. In an environment where institutions are measured by their success and retention rates, it becomes critical to manage the first year experience. While we would like our students to have a great overall experience, the importance of the first few days and months cannot be overstated. This paper examines the literature, mostly picking up on the practical suggestions about how the first year experience can be enhanced. In particular, the paper focuses on the contribution that professional staff can make to the student experience at the start of their tertiary career.

Keywords
retention, first year experience, professional staff contribution

Introduction

This paper synthesises a number of research papers focused on both improving retention and the first year experience with an implied assumption that there is a link. In considering papers for this analysis, I have focused on those that provide some practical solutions to the problems encountered. I have also focused on the work that professional staff do that can aid both retention and the experience students have in their first year. In some cases I have also reflected on our experiences at the South Australian Institute of Business and Technology, a private pathway college linked to the University of South Australia.

The cost of attrition is not only a financial one to institutions, but is also a financial and emotional cost to unsuccessful students (Heagney, 2008) and for 'society and the economy through the loss of potential skills and knowledge' (Crosling & Heagney, 2009, p9). The advice given by some to high school students that their earning power is just as great without a higher education is refutable if considered over the long term, and ignores the other benefits that accrue to those engaging in further study including better health and living conditions (Munro, 2011). This means there is a strong incentive to ensure as many students as possible complete their studies. For universities in Australia, the importance of student retention can be seen through the inclusion of statistics as a key performance indicator in some funding from federal government. There are really two measures of retention – 'the proportion of starters in a year who continue their studies until they obtain their qualification' and the 'proportion of an institution's intake which is enrolled in [higher education] in the year following their first entry' (Crosling & Heagney, 2009, p10). This second measure in particular, points to the importance students' first year plays in their retention. Munro (2011) points out that 'the first-year experience of university is seen by educators as the most crucial for determining a student's likelihood of staying or leaving' (p127).

When we think about students leaving an institution, there is rarely a single reason this happens. Any combination of the following reasons are likely: poor preparation, weak institutional and/or course match, unsatisfactory academic experience, lack of social integration, financial issues, or health and personal circumstances (Crosling & Heagney, 2009). Student engagement is defined as 'a student's academic commitment and application' and shown in time and energy devoted to educational activities (Crosling & Heagney, 2009, p11). It is a joint responsibility between the student and the learning environment, with the responsibility of staff being to provide a setting that facilitates students' engagement. I am particularly interested in the role that professional staff can take in this process.

Support services – personal and career counselling, health and welfare, learning assistance and administrative services – all play a role in ensuring student success (Peach, 2005). Some studies propose that learning assistance is better when it is contextualised (provided by faculty) rather than generic (Peach, 2005). It may also be so that faculties and schools are better placed to provide other support processes for students as they are more connected with the students' day to day lives. However, few universities offer support at faculty, school, or departmental level because of costs and lack of consistency.

Whether provided at faculty or school level, or from the centre, there are a number of different areas where institutional staff can act to improve the first year experience and retention. In considering approaches to improving both retention and the first year experience, a number of authors suggest taking a student-centred approach, rather than an institution-centred approach. This will be teased out further below.

Students from non-traditional backgrounds

Many studies show that students from backgrounds not traditionally entering higher education have particular needs in their initial interactions with their institutions. In most studies around non-traditional students, the assumption appears to be that the traditional student is white, middle-class, full-time and a school leaver.

Schofield & Dismore (2010) suggest that, whatever their background, students who score well on their first module(s) are more likely to have a smooth path through their study, while those who score in the mid-range are more likely to have to repeat modules and those who had interrupted patterns of study scored the lowest (Jeffreys, 2007 as cited in Schofield and Dismore, 2010). It appears that students who enter higher education through the traditional route have lower levels of attrition than those accessing higher education through other routes such as vocational study or special entry, and those who performed best in high school were most likely to stay enrolled. Mature-age students in the Schofield & Dismore study were the least likely to complete and those students who did complete generally had a higher entry grade than those who failed or withdrew. Yorke (2001) finds that low socio-economic status (SES) students were more likely to not complete, and these students cited economic reasons for their decisions to leave. Yorke (2001) does suggest that institutions that perform strongly in relation to retention benchmarks do so for the following reasons: 'demographic variable running in their favour; a collegiate ethos that encourages a sense of belonging in students; a determination to make the student experience as rewarding as possible' (p156). They concur with Tinto (1975, 2000) who argues that academic and social integration determines whether a student persists or withdraws.

Leese (2010) proposes that the massification of higher education requires a 're-examination of the support offered to students' (p239), particularly given a widening gap between students' expectations and their experiences of delivery. Widening participation requires a shift in a range of practices within institutions, particularly as many students are now balancing work and study, spending much less time on campus and often only attending for teaching sessions. In some cases, Leese (2010) suggests that teaching staff 'might be disassociating themselves from any 'blame' for student failure or withdrawal by locating the problem within the student' (p241). In the widening participation milieu, students may come from backgrounds where parents have little knowledge about how educational systems work and are even unsupportive or wary of their child's undertaking. There are some authors who suggest that the higher education environment is biased towards certain social groups, making transition for those outside of those groups more difficult. Students come with their own 'cultural capital', particularly true when students come from backgrounds without relevant social networks. No matter what the students' background, it needs to be valued by university staff. Being an independent learner does not mean that the institution should leave them to simply find their own way. To counteract this, Leese (2010) suggests that 'induction should be a process rather than a one-off event to ensure that students are supported to 'fit in'' (p242). This idea is shared by a number of authors and will be discussed further below.

The study undertaken by Leese (2010) showed that students had mixed feelings about university, expecting it to be different to what they had experienced so far. Students were concerned about not having the 'appropriate language needed to succeed at university' (Leese, 2010, p244), particularly as they did not always understand the language used by both academic and support staff – they come not knowing the difference between a lecture or tutorial; or a professor, lecturer and tutor; they know very little about a number of things higher education workers take for granted; they are unfamiliar with the technology used; and they are unsure about enrolling themselves. Leese (2010) claims students want structured activities to help them settle and concludes with 'it is vital to move from questioning what is wrong with the 'new student' to a system that questions what needs to change either with the curriculum or with the processes of interaction that can potentially prevent students from learning' (p247).

Clarke et al. (1999) list a number of barriers to entry for low SES students, many of which also create problems for retention: financial barriers, cultural barriers, low participation rates at high school, and limited awareness of what the higher education system offers. Once access is gained, there are a number of factors which impede progress: 'lack of time to study; underdeveloped or rusty learning skills; competing claims of employment or family; social isolation at university; and separation from familiar social networks' (Clarke et al., 1999, p40). Added to this is the need to study over a longer timeframe; suffering the stigma of the 'non-standard student'; studying in isolation; or studying in a generalist program without clear profession-based goals. It is worthwhile considering all these issues in the development of any support program which is student rather than institution focused.

Munro (2011) looks at the state of play for non-traditional university students in Australia. By non-traditional the author means a diverse cohort including international students, mature-age students, distance education students and students from lower socio-economic circumstances. Many of these students spend much time in paid work to support their studies and it is these student-workers that are the focus of Munro's study. The author suggests that this commitment to paid work interferes with students' study. He contends that the 'student-worker phenomenon has transformed the concept of the traditional university student.'(p118).

Many of them cannot fulfil the expectations that academic staff hold about how many hours students should devote to their studies. There are a number of studies, including Munro's, that show that non-metropolitan students from low SES backgrounds feel out of place in the traditional metropolitan university, although they feel more comfortable in smaller, regional institutions. It has been found that many students' individual talents and ambitions are dampened by teachers, careers counsellors and formal public examinations. For this reason, some researchers advocate 'second chance' options. Sometimes these options offered in the wrong environment (where students still feel out of place), are less helpful. Many students in Munro's study had a difficult time adjusting in first year. Partly this seems to be because they expected university to be like school where you simply turn up and do enough to pass. They found the adjustment to a different style of learning difficult, let alone fitting in socially. Many of them also struggle with balancing the life of study and work. Munro (2011) contends that if a low SES student can overcome their difficulties in first year, they frequently achieve better results than their more privileged peers (also our experience at SAIBT). While we can do little to alleviate the economic burden most students experience, we can reduce the alienation many of them feel in our large and imposing institutions, not the least of which is the 'culture of academia' which is certainly not inclusive of those who are less prepared.

Read, Archer and Leathwood (2003) talk about the 'rules of the game' of university life. They contend that 'academic culture' is predominantly white, middle-class and male (this might be contestable in some disciplines). They suggest that working-class students struggle with the financial difficulties of studying as well as the cultural ones – they are seen as 'other' by the institutional culture. These authors quote research which shows that the desire to fit in often impacts the choice of institution for students. This may be a bigger problem for more established institutions such as the sandstone universities, and less so for private providers and newer universities. At SAIBT we often find that mature students who come to us do so because we offer a transition experience before the daunting prospect of university. New and urban universities often attract students who perceive traditional universities to be outside their social and cultural milieu.

Read et al. (2003) found that 'alienation' can occur for students as early as pre-admission through reading the prospectus and not finding themselves represented – often the case for mature students and those from particular ethnic groups. Then, once enrolled, the sense of alienation can extend to the students' home life, particularly if they are from a setting where they might be the first to attend tertiary education. Once inside the institution, there are a number of activities which can alienate non-traditional and traditional students alike. The culture of academe can have its own curious practices which new students find strange and unsettling. A 'significant number of students expressed feelings of confusion and bewilderment at some 'accepted' university practices' (Read et al., p270). For many, their encounter with the higher education discourse of students as independent learners comes as a considerable shock. The lack of supervision and direct guidance and the nervousness on students' part in terms of deviating from what is accepted and tried makes becoming an independent learner a hard task.

Wood (2012) describes 'the 'learner journey' for a part-time student often appears a lonely journey, surrounded with temptations to stop studying' (p35). This author suggests that the support students need is often less about skills development than about building a trusting relationship between the student and the institution staff. Controversially, he suggest that the withdrawal of first-year students should not always be seen as a bad thing – for some this is

part of the learning curve and it is important for some to discover that further study is not for everyone.

The clear message in all of this is that non-traditional students often seem alienated by the institution. Induction and support programs need to take account of the different needs of different groups of students. Professional staff can contribute to this by:
- recognising and valuing the different backgrounds with which students come
- ensuring that in all their dealings with students they show patience with lack of understanding of institutional norms
- if they are involved in orientation programs, try to ensure that parts of these programs are to some degree targeted to non-traditional students and that some of the activities are aimed at de-mystifying the university experience
- if they can influence the structure of support programs, ensure some of the support provided is simply aimed at 'relationship' building between the student and institution rather than just about learning the ins and outs of how the institution operates.

Study skills, assessment and learning styles support

The area of study skills, assessment and learning styles support are probably the areas into which professional staff can have the least input. However, they are worth considering briefly here because they are the source of so many problems for beginning higher education students and I propose some contributions professional staff can make.

Lowe and Cook (2003) contend that assessment practices and teaching in high schools do little to prepare students for the regime in higher education where students engage in formal lectures, private reading, note taking, time management, asking questions in large groups, team work, competence in IT, and critical analysis and evaluation. These authors also contend that university teachers have not changed their style, or altered curriculum to 'reflect an emphasis on the development of skills or self-directed enquiry' (p54). This combination of lack of preparedness and ordinary teaching can result in 'an inability to make the necessary academic, social and personal adjustments to life at university' (p54). Lowe and Cook contend that many students who withdraw, really want to stay, but are unable to adjust. These authors undertook a study which examined how well students predicted the issues they would face, and following, how this related to drop-out from the university. In their study a large percentage of students were disappointed by the facilities in the university, compared to their original expectations. This can particularly be true in Australia when students come from well-resourced private (and public) schools and find themselves in universities with unattractive 1960s buildings, few recreational areas and teaching technology which is way behind that used in their schools. Facilities management staff would do well to have a look at some of the high schools in their region to see what technologies students are used to engaging with. There was a similar shift in terms of expectations about the ease of making social connections and receiving help from university staff in solving students' problems.

About one third of the participants in Lowe and Cook's (2003) study expected teaching styles similar to school. The main problems experienced were: academic workload, the pace of the material, and self-directed study. The likelihood of students dropping out is positively correlated with these difficulties – both perceived on entry and through the first semester. In Lowe & Cook's study (2003), 20 per cent of the group failed to 'come to terms with the academic and social demands of university life.'(p71). It appears critical for students to be

173

able to have peers to whom they can attach themselves in their new environment. The authors suggest the 'inaccurate prior perceptions...contribute to disengagement from the educational (and social) aspects of university life' (p74) and this can impact on academic performance and an individual's development and may directly influence student retention. They suggest the solution lies at both the pre-entry and post-entry stages. 'Institutions of higher education need to provide appropriate academic, attitudinal and social preparation for their new students' (p75). Induction then, should be seen as a process rather than an event and should be designed to promote peer group and staff-student interaction as well as academic preparation. Academic and support services should be concentrated in the early part of the first year 'with intrusive, proactive strategies being used to reach new students before they have an opportunity to experience feelings of fear, failure, disappointment and confusion' (p75).

Thomas (2008) points out that mass education has increased the reliance on large lectures which in turn reduces 'opportunities for clarification, interaction and feedback' (p69) for students. She points out that it is largely academic reasons that prompt students to withdraw, some students experiencing 'academic culture shock. Students felt that they were not prepared for the transition from school or college to university' (p70). The problems were: large class sizes, the increased workload and reduced structure and not knowing how to adjust. 'Many of these students did not want to draw attention to the fact that they were struggling' (p71). She suggests that there are three ways to support students to engage and reflect on the learning process: an extended induction and development of academic skills, learning and teaching strategies which draw on the philosophy of experiential learning , and more formative assessment.

These studies above suggest that:
- the induction process needs to be long term – not just one week or even a couple of weeks, but probably over the length of the semester or first year
- study support needs to be unobtrusive – easily accessed by students privately – so maybe online options such as chat rooms as well as face-to-face might be useful. This could be advertised by making online links pop up for students when they log into the university systems and allowing them to access it anonymously might also help
- those involved in facilities development need to aim for at least the same level of technology available to students in surrounding schools.

Approaches to Orientation

A number of authors talk about various approaches to the orientation and induction process. Many of these programs have elements embedded in them that professional staff can and do contribute to. The most common suggestions relate to length of program and its content.

Keenan (2008) states that in her research, students encountered problems settling in. They found the induction week overwhelming, so Keenan developed a different induction program described in the next section. This orientation program does not start off by delivering induction information during their first week. It was felt the information went straight over students' heads, was decontextualised, depersonalised and depressing. Instead, Keenan developed a program which provides information to students before they join the institution - information about support services, the program of study and discipline-based activity. The course teams designed activities which involved some research or reading and students were

asked to bring this with them in the first week. They were then thrown straight into group work to help build social networks and develop some output in the shape of a poster or presentation. Students also completed an online self-profiling questionnaire which asked a whole lot of questions about their previous learning experiences, how they feel about coming to the university and what they enjoyed at school. Students were also given the opportunity to ask questions on line which means an early intervention can be put in place when needed. While this is focussed on the learning experience, the idea of engagement pre-start is a valuable one, particularly the last suggestion. In fact, this pre-arrival activity could be freely available and utilised as a marketing tool as well.

Thomas (2008) suggests using student-centred strategies through induction – providing clarity about what is expected, building confidence and motivation and allowing students to integrate into the new environment (both academically and socially). Early engagement can include: the provision of timetables, course handbooks and reading lists, and materials accessed online. Involving all students and staff in induction is a useful strategy as well. Participatory approaches, drawing on students' previous experiences and existing knowledge and skills is useful, and peer learning in areas of study skills and IT can ensure that everyone has comparable skills. McKenzie & Schweitzer (2001) suggest promoting study groups through orientation (as opposed to social groups).

Owens and Loomes (2010) point out that the competition for students means it is critical to provide a first class experience for students. Their paper considers how universities have sought to achieve social integration for their students recognising that this is important for students' well-being. The authors use Central Queensland University (CQU) as a case where certain campuses have a majority of international students, creating particular problems in terms of social integration. The authors also focus on social integration outside the classroom, pointing out that the traditional idea of 'transition' to university is exacerbated for international students because they are dislocating both in terms of their academic life, and their family and cultural life. They also point out that 'if fundamental physiological and psychological needs are not met' then it is unlikely that students will succeed academically. Very often students are in a foreign country fending for themselves for the first time. The authors outline the orientation program provided by CQU, which involves social activities including, sports, cultural parties, festivals, workshops, and some welfare activities such as meditation and stress management. Through a survey and focus groups they assessed students' response to this program. As a result of the research the team have developed a number of other activities – a pre-departure DVD which includes material on Australian culture, safety, accommodation, setting up personal finances, Australian English, and so on. Most Australian universities provide international students with pre-departure information, but maybe this could be provided in a more interactive form through social media and DVDs that students could access in their own time. And maybe it needs to be more engaging rather than the dry material most commonly sent. CQU also added student mentoring and job readiness and searching workshops and less serious activities like a Monopoly club and town walks.

A UK study looking at students' transition from pathway colleges to university (Pike & Harrison, 2011) found that students from these settings were anxious about their ability to study in the higher education institution. The increased independent study was an issue for some students, as was the larger class sizes and lack of individual support. Learning the 'rules' of a new academic culture and an induction program was only found to be useful by some students, but most indicated that it would have been helpful to have more information

175

about the transition. The four themes that emerged in this research were: the need for more information and communication – particularly about who to go to for help; the differences between the college and university – the different learning styles, class sizes and workload, and the difficulty in accessing personal help from lecturers were noted; anxiety about ability to perform – students were not sure they were up to the right standard and were intimidated by the institution; negative reactions to orientation – a special orientation needs to be addressed to these students as they are going into second year, so don't fit with the first year orientation, but don't get one specific to them. An appropriately timed, relevant induction that introduces direct entrants to the new academic culture would help support these students and help them to settle in to their new programme and institution more quickly. They suggest nominating someone who can act as a reference point for transitioning students for the first few weeks. The University of South Australia is embarking on just such a project for all students and SAIBT will be trialling it in its October semester, 2013.

Krause et al. (2005) and James et al. (2010) suggest that initial orientation programs play a key role in welcoming students into the learning community and are best if institution-level programs are accompanied by department-based initiatives. They also suggest providing more personal advice and guidance about subject choices. Many students get to the end of their first year and feel that no-one knows them and so feel quite disengaged. Peer collaboration needs to be encouraged as a way of engaging students more and helping them with their study difficulties.

James et al. (2010) found that progress has been made in improving the transition to university and in the quality of the educational experience for first year students. 'The investment in high quality transition programs and in monitoring and responding to the needs and experiences of first year students is yielding dividends.' (James et al., p 4). They suggest there is a need to respond to students at risk and those who show signs of being highly disengaged. The authors suggest that one of the issues might be that students are enrolled in the wrong course and need some counselling in this area. A second suggestion is that we need more strategies to explain the student's responsibilities in the higher education partnership. They suggest a first year charter might be a starting point.

Read et al. (2003) suggest initiatives which focus on cultural aspects of the academy, particularly methods of teaching and learning. The considerable distance between lecturers and students – both in terms of status and knowledge – makes building a rapport with teachers all the more difficult. While being encouraged to present their own opinions and ideas, students' lack of expertise or status in their area of study, makes them under-confident. And the acquisition of academic writing skills is also a difficult task in a setting which does not explicitly teach it. Academic 'language' can be obscure at the best of times and downright unintelligible at the worst. 'Lack of familiarity with academic culture, and the effect of the unequal power relation between lecturer and student, can work to increase students' conceptions of isolation and alienation' (p271). The current shift to pedagogies driven by economic need – large lectures, fewer tutorials, less student contact – feeds the ideal of the independent learner but students in these circumstances feel unable to speak up. However, the shift to viewing the student as a consumer and their sense of empowerment as a result, has actually increased their capacity to make demands which institutions really now need to start addressing.

Most of the material about orientation programs points to similar interventions to ensure engagement and shore up retention:

- orientation programs need to focus both on academic orientation and on social and institutional orientation
- orientation programs should extend beyond the first week and reach out to pre-arrival and throughout the first semester at least
- orientation programs are best when they involve all staff, not just some
- peer collaboration is to be encouraged as a means of engaging students early on
- students need more information about careers and course and subject choice
- students need to understand the part they are expected to play in the life of the institution and in their own learning process
- let's accept students are actually our customers and treat them accordingly
- pre-arrival for international students needs to be more engaging
- develop a separate orientation program for those coming from different sorts of institutions such as TAFE and pathway colleges, particularly if they are not going into first year.

Students' Relationship with the Institution

The student-centred approach assumes that students who feel valued by the institution, and perceive their needs are being met are most likely to continue their program of study through to graduation. But it is hard to evaluate this relationship. While the numerous surveys we all undertake evaluate some measures, it is not clear that this captures the entire relationship.

Pompper (2006) suggests a relationship-centred approach which tracks and focuses on the relationship rather than the individual student, or the institution. A number of authors suggest that the degree of interaction a student has with the institution (their level of engagement) is likely to affect their persistence. Some research (Pompper, 2006, p31) shows that different students expect different things from both the institution and their study. Therefore he favours different approaches for different groups of students. He suggests 'the extent to which a student fits in with the dominating social and academic values of the campus influences whether that student continues or drops out' (Pompper, 2006, p31). Many of our institutions, while they cater for other groups, are actually still set up for the full-time school-leaver population. Very few universities have substantially changed their undergraduate teaching, campus, or service model to take account of different student bodies. While one could argue that this is still the greatest number of our student body and we can't really afford to turn things upside down for a different cohort, this approach could be contributing to keeping it so. And clearly students who don't fit the dominant mode need to be given some particular consideration.

While many traditional students seek a balance of social and academic life in the institution, mature students are more focused on the academic and are more committed to furthering their education for their careers – they learn more rapidly and want to engage in collaborative learning. They often have well-developed and unique learning styles and 'may not respond well to traditional teaching and assessment methods' (Pompper, 2006, p32). The perennial problem of ensuring that students are aware of support services at the time they might need them, still exists. We put the material on our websites, talk to them at Orientation about it and so on, and yet still, students don't seem to know what is available to help them. I would contend that, until they actually need some of these support services, they take no notice of what they're told about them and even forget that they are available at all. Some means of frequently reminding them of what's available might be a useful strategy. Finally, Pompper

(2006) suggests that institutions can be viewed like social systems and the more students feel integrated; the more likely they are to continue.

It is in this space of relationship building where professional staff can make a serious contribution.

- marketing departments with customer relationship management systems can turn them to good use in cementing the relationship once recruited, and these systems could well be used to provide some of the ongoing support students need. This also recognises that the marketing relationship does not stop once the student has crossed the threshold into the institution
- implement a program of frequent communication about, not only important dates, but also the support available in all its guises.

Focusing on Retention

One of the key questions we ask is why students drop out in their first year. Krause (2005) talks about the difference between 'retention' (which is more about the institution and the strategies it uses to keep a student enrolled) and 'persistence' (which is more about the strategies students use to continue with their studies irrespective of external pressures). Krause identifies some supportive mechanisms which contribute to student retention, in particular: 'a supportive and student-friendly institutional climate; an emphasis on student support prior to and during the first undergraduate year; frequent and widespread use of formative and early assessment; provision of opportunities to engage students in the social dimensions of learning activities; and an awareness of and responsiveness to the fact that students' patterns of engagement in higher education are changing.' (Krause, 2005, p57) There have been three Australia-wide studies of the first year experience, conducted in 1994, 1999 and 2004, focusing on first time entrants to higher education enrolled in bachelor or other award programs. While it has reduced over time, more than one in four students think about dropping out in their first year. Monetary considerations have an effect on students' likelihood to consider dropping out, with those who are supporting themselves or deferring payment being more likely to think of going, particularly if they are spending serious time earning their living. Amongst a number of behaviours related to study habits, gathering a group of like-minded peers is a critical factor in persistence. Those who find it difficult to adjust to University-style teaching are more likely to consider dropping out, as is an unwillingness to engage in extra-curricular activity. Krause suggests that all parts of the institution need to collaborate to produce a 'seamless' educational experience. Strategies need to be put in place to empower students to gain a sense of purpose in their studies, by using targeted career advice to help them see the possibilities offered by their course or further study. For those for whom the university experience appears alien, monitoring of students and communicating in a supportive and responsive way, is paramount. These processes of monitoring need to be communicated to students and the institution should also help students connect with others, both online and in person.

According to Crosling, Thomas and Heaney (2008) one of the critical factors for retention is how students experience their learning, and teaching that helps students to interact creates a climate which encourages them to continue. Traditional forms of teaching may not 'connect' as effectively with today's students. Added to this, students spend less time on campus than previous generations and are therefore less likely to engage and develop networks. Heagney

(2008) suggests that learning 'has to be structured to incorporate the interests and experience of all students' (p17).

In a study looking at foreign background students in the Netherlands (Wolff et al., 2008) the authors asked if the study progress of these students depended on their learning environment and if so, what did that learning environment look like. They found a particular economics course which went against the trend of foreign students performing more poorly than domestic. There appeared to be some structural differences in the approach to teaching, but probably the most significant element was a team of three student counsellors who kept track of the study progress of each student and interviewed all students at three points during the year to check how they were going. It is likely that this level of personal attention contributed significantly to success, however, this would be extremely difficult to implement in a university of many tens of thousands of students. But there still might be some lessons in this approach.

Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (1994) claim that academic performance explains less than half the dropout decisions. Demographic variables seem to have some effect, but only insomuch as they are reflective of other stressors in students' lives. These authors contend that integration into the social environment is crucial to retention, in particular, developing a peer support network. They found that amongst successful students, those who had more informal contact with lecturers, more satisfaction with course availability and more confidence about personal issues tended to persist. The authors contend that it is true that 'personal adjustment and integration into the social fabric of campus life play a role at least as important as academic factors in student retention.' (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994, p286) They suggest that separate interventions may be needed for students who struggle academically.

Yorke and Thomas (2003) chose to examine six institutions which performed above benchmark expectations for both the enrolment of non-traditional students and completions. 'The strongest common denominator identified in the six HEIs was a sustained commitment to a broad conception of 'the student experience'.' (p67) Previous research points to how relationships between staff and student is critical to success and effects how well students feel they fit in or belong to the institution. One institution had a high proportion of teacher trained staff, who therefore understood issues of pedagogy and learning. Another institution sought to involve all staff in supporting students. In all cases, students felt they were known as individuals in the institution and this intimacy made a huge difference to their feeling of belonging. All institutions were also involved in outreach activities, connecting with students before they came. 'Providing the student with information between application and enrolment can assist the development of the student/institution relationship.' (p68). Induction in the successful colleges usually stretched beyond the traditional week, and sometimes included induction into the academic discourse of higher education. In one institution the induction process included activities that may usually stigmatise students, but were compulsory for all students, thereby avoiding this problem. Another institution included some career development education in its first year – thought to be particularly beneficial when the institution is not the student's first choice.

The Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne has conducted two very long range studies of students in their first year at university (Krause et al., 2005 and James et al., 2010). In the later survey, students were more focused and had stronger occupational aspirations, but the proportion of students (18per cent) withdrawing from at least one subject had a marked increase. This is thought to partly have been due to the

increase in older students who are juggling work, family and study. One of the items explored in this study is that of students considering withdrawing or deferring from their studies. The authors point out that the reasons for doing this are many and varied – often related to family and work commitments and some because students discover they don't like studying or the university. In the 2005 study, more students felt that university had met their expectations, although international students were less satisfied than domestic. It is interesting to note that regional universities, where students are often in residence at the institution, fare much better on this score than others, and those universities with large proportions of international students have the highest numbers of those feeling that university does not meet their expectations. There had been significantly enhanced efforts to bridge the gap between school and university, possibly affecting the number of students with positive views. However, it is still less than half the respondents who felt positive about their choice of course and institution. Mature age students are more highly satisfied than their younger peers and they have a clearer sense of purpose. Certain cohorts are more likely to seek help, and in particular the low achievers, particularly domestic students, are unlikely to approach teaching staff. These are the very students who need help. We find this at SAIBT – we offer remedial programs to all students, but often those who most need them don't access them. Over the ten years there was a significant trend to spend less time on campus and for students to be working as well as studying. The study supported the idea that students who spend fewer days on campus are least likely to feel part of the learning community, despite the increase in online and remote methods for interaction. It is worrying that less than one-third of students felt that teaching staff are interested in their progress or that they give helpful feedback. The sets of students who are most at risk are school leavers who choose to spend too little time on private study, those who are doing large amounts of paid work and those who rarely come on campus.

The second of these studies (James et al., 2010) found that a number of the trends in the 2005 report continued over the next five years. First year students are spending less and less time on campus and fewer are involved in extra-curricular activities. As a corollary, fewer say they have made close friends and fewer believe that they are known to anyone on campus or think that academic staff care about their progress. So it would seem that 'the on-campus, face-to-face experience is taking on less significance and students are having less direct contact with academic staff' (James et al., 2010, p1). But this is adversely affecting their sense of belonging. It is clear that students are spending more and more time studying on line and the majority of students think their teachers make good use of the internet and the learning management system. Less than 10per cent of students reported that they did not find their course stimulating or are dissatisfied with their university experience overall and are highly disengaged but only 26per cent of students felt that staff took an interest in their progress.

Zepke and Leach (2005) have also undertaken an extensive meta-analysis of research into retention, looking at 146 studies, most of which show that 'institutional practices influence how successfully students integrate both socially and academically. Many also found that the extent and quality of student services impact on student achievement' (p49). This has enormous implications for professional staff who are usually the providers of student services which include enrolment processes including advice giving and orientation; health and counselling services; recreational services and campus facilities. For instance, 17 studies suggest that institutions that show a commitment to students' total well-being are able to improve retention outcomes. Another area for improving outcomes is provision of accurate, comprehensive and easy to follow pre-enrolment advice and academic counselling. A number of studies show that making the wrong decisions about institution or program is a major

factor in withdrawal and non-completion. There are 14 studies which show that orientation programs help academic integration and improve student outcomes – mostly because they help students anticipate correctly the institutional norms. Despite the low usage of many support services such as child care, English language support, financial support, counselling, library support and so on, for those who do use these services they often prove to be critical in the retention of these students. A large number of American institutions identify high risk subjects and provide remedial instruction in these, rather than singling out individual students for remedial instruction. This is shown to have a positive effect. Peer mentoring, where it is used, is also shown to have a positive effect. The largest challenge to prevailing thought in this research is that, rather than trying to get students to assimilate, the more positive effects are seen when students' existing cultural attributes are valued and accommodated. Students need to be able to find a way to stay connected to their lives outside of study.

So the contributions that can be made by professional staff in this space are:
- ensure the institution remains committed to providing a full range of student services
- provide a very comprehensive pre-enrolment course and career counselling service
- develop a peer-mentoring program that is easily accessed by new students
- encourage the institution to be more flexible in its offerings (this would also increase the usage rates of facilities)
- a seamless educational experience should be provided – administrative services need to be well integrated with teaching
- targeted career advice should be provided
- implement an individual contact program where staff contact students proactively at least twice a year.

Conclusion

Student engagement and retention has been well researched since the 1990s. The assumptions underlying many of the suggested actions in this paper are that engaged students are intrinsically motivated, students and teachers need to engage with each other, institutions should provide an environment conducive to learning and students and institutions need to work together to enable social beliefs and practices to be challenged. Zepke & Leach (2010b) propose ten actions to improve students' experience:
- enhance students' self-belief
- enable students to work autonomously and feel they are competent to achieve their own objectives
- recognise that teaching and teachers are central to engagement
- create learning that is active, collaborative and fosters learning relationships
- create education experiences for students that are challenging, enriching, and extend their academic abilities
- ensure institutional cultures are welcoming to students from diverse backgrounds
- invest in a variety of support services
- adapt to changing student expectations
- enable students to become active citizens
- enable students to develop their social and cultural capital.

Of these actions, professional staff can contribute to most of them. Student self-belief is reported as a key attribute to motivation. Closely related is the ability to work autonomously and feeling competent to achieve their own objectives. It might seem obvious to state that

teaching and teachers are central to engagement, but it needs to be said. This suggests that almost anything the institution does outside of this arena is peripheral to getting students to engage in the learning process. Actions outside of the academic realm can help, but never replace, the good that teachers can do and in large institutions with big first year intakes, this can be a real challenge.

However, it is clear that professional staff can contribute to the enrichment of students' experience. Students have to feel that they are accepted in the institution. 'Students labelled 'non-traditional' often do not have that sense of belonging' (Zepke & Leach, 2010b, p172). This would explain why a number of people don't identify themselves as disabled or low SES, or indigenous, when they are. So the authors suggest ensuring a consciously welcoming institutional culture to all students. They also suggest investing in a variety of support services, including orientation, essay writing, mentoring, and being willing to adapt to changing student expectations. As students' sense of belonging stretches well beyond the classroom, there is plenty of opportunity for staff from all parts of the institution to contribute to students' well-being.

So while the critical relationship for students is in the academic arena, professional staff have much they can offer student well-being, including as outlined throughout this paper:
- recognising and valuing the different backgrounds with which students come
- ensuring that in all their dealings with students they show patience with lack of understanding of institutional norms
- if they are involved in orientation programs, try to ensure that parts of these programs are targeted to non-traditional students and that some of the activities are aimed at de-mystifying the university experience. Providing separate orientation program for those coming from different sorts of institutions such as TAFE and pathway colleges, particularly if they are not going into first year
- encouraging long term induction processes – not just one week or even a couple of weeks, but probably over the length of the semester or first year
- providing study support which is unobtrusive
- those involved in facilities development need to aim for at least the same level of technology available to students in surrounding schools
- encourage support systems aimed at 'relationship' building between the student and institution rather than just about learning the ins and outs of how the institution operates
- orientation programs need to focus both on academic orientation and on social and institutional orientation and should involve all staff, not just some
- peer collaboration is to be encouraged as a means of engaging students early on and there should be a peer-mentoring program that is easily accessed by new students
- students need more information about careers and course and subject choice
- students need to understand the part they are expected to play in the life of the institution and in their own learning process
- let's accept students are actually our customers and treat them accordingly
- pre-arrival for international students needs to be more engaging
- marketing departments with customer relationship management systems can turn them to good use in cementing the relationship once recruited
- implement a program of frequent communication about, not only important dates, but also the support available in all its guises
- ensure the institution remains committed to providing a full range of student services

- encourage the institution to be more flexible in its offerings (this would also increase the usage rates of facilities)
- a seamless educational experience should be provided – administrative services need to be well integrated with teaching
- implement an individual contact program where staff contact students proactively at least twice a year

A business argument can easily be mounted for almost any of the strategies suggested – keeping a recruited student is definitely cheaper than recruiting a new one and attrition is the largest single financial failure point of any institution.

Biographical note
Judy Szekeres is the College Director at SAIBT, following a 35-year career in education and over 20 year in higher education at various Australian institutions.

References

Clarke, J., Zimmer, B., & Main, R. (1999). Review of the under representation in Australian higher education by the socioeconomically disadvantaged and the implications for university planning, *Journal of Institutional Research*, 8(1), 36-55

Crosling, G., Thomas, L., & Heagney, M. (Eds) (2008). *Improving Student Retention in Higher Education,* Routledge, Abindgon

Crosling, G., & Heagney, M. (2009). Improving student retention in higher education, *Australian Universities' Review*, 51(2), 9-18

Gerdes, H., & Mallinckrodt, B. (1994). Emotional, Social and Academic Adjustment of College Students: A Longitudinal Study of Retention, *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 74, 281-288

Heagney, M. (2008). Student Success and Student Diversit. In Crosling, G., Thomas, L., & Heagney, M. (Eds) *Improving Student Retention in Higher Education,* Routledge, Abindgon, 17-28

James, R., Krause, K-L., & Jennings, C. (2010). *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: Findings from 1994 to 2009,* Centre for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne

Keenan, C. (2008). Students getting down to work before they start at University: a model for improving retention. In Crosling, G., Thomas, L., & Heagney, M. (Eds) *Improving Student Retention in Higher Education,* Routledge, Abindgon, 82-87

Krause, K-L. (2005). *Serious thoughts about dropping out in first year: Trends, patterns and implications for higher education,* Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development, 2(3), 55-68

Krause, K-L., Hartley, R., James, R., & McInnis, C. (2005). *The first year experience in Australian universities: findings from a decade of national studies,* Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne

Leese, M. (2010). Bridging the gap: supporting student transitions into higher education, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34(2), 239-251

Lowe, H., & Cook, A. (2003). Mind the Gap: are students prepared for higher education?, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 27(1), 53-76

Munro, L. (2011). 'Go boldly, dream large!': The challenges confronting non-traditional students at university, *Australian Journal of Education,* 55(2), 115-131

Owens, A., & Loomes, S. (2010). Managing and resourcing a program of social integration initiatives for international university students: what are the benefits? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 32(3), 275-290

Peach, D. (2005). Ensuring student success – the role of support services in improving the quality of the student learning experience, *Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development,* 2(3), 1-15

Pike, A., & Harrison, J. (2011). Crossing the FE/HE divide: the transition experiences of direct entrants at Level 6, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 35(1), 55-67

Pompper, D. (2006). Toward a 'Relationship-Centered' Approach to Student Retention in Higher Education, *Public Relations Quarterly*, 51(2), 29-36

Read, B., Archer, L., & Leathwood, C. (2003). Challenging Cultures? Student Conceptions of 'Belonging' and 'Isolation' at a Post-1992 University, *Studies in Higher Education,* 28(3), 261-277

Schofield, C., & Dismore, H. (2010). Predictors of retention and achievement of higher education students within a further education context, *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34(2), 207-221

Thomas, L. (2008). Learning and teaching strategies to promote student retention and success. In Crosling, G., Thomas, L. & Heagney, M (Eds) *Improving Student Retention in Higher Education,* Routledge, Abindgon, 69-81

Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research, *Review of Educational Research*, 45(1), 89-125

Tinto, V. (2000). Taking Student Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of College, *NACADA Journal*, 19(2), 5-12

Wolff, R., Severiens, S., & DeCrom, R. (2008). Educational innovation: an unexpected diversity tool? In Crosling, G., Thomas, L. & Heagney, M (Eds) *Improving Student Retention in Higher Education,* Routledge, Abindgon, 44-51

Wood, C. (2012). Exploring the retention of students studying higher education at partner colleges, *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 17(1), 21-37

Yorke, M. (2001). Formative Assessment and its Relevance to Retention, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 20(2), 115-126

Yorke, M., & Thomas, L. (2003). Improving the Retention of Students from Lower Socio-Economic Groups, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 25(1), 63-74

Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2005). Integration and adaptation. Approaches to the student retention and achievement puzzle, *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 6(1), 46-59

Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010a). Beyond hard outcomes: 'soft' outcomes and engagement as student success, *Teaching in Higher Education*, 15(6), 661-673

Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010b) Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action, *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 11(3), 167-177