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STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRES: DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

A Guide to Support Australian University Teaching and Learning Centres in Strategic Leadership for Teaching and Learning Enhancement

March 2010

Lead institution
Deakin University

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, Monash University, RMIT University
The University of Newcastle, University of New England

Project leader
Dr Dale Holt – Deakin University

Project team members
Dr Lorraine Bennett – Monash University
Dr Di Challis – Challis Consultancy
Merryn Falk – Merryn Falk Consultancy
Professor Gail Huon – The University of Newcastle
Associate Professor Sandra Jones – RMIT University
Mr Amgad Louka – RMIT University
Professor Ian Macdonald – Victoria University
(Previously University of New England)
Professor Stephen Marshall – Macquarie University
Dr Robyn Muldoon – University of New England
Dr Stuart Palmer – Deakin University
Associate Professor Ian Solomonides – Macquarie University

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
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Australian Learning and Teaching Council
PO Box 2375
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
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List of acronyms

ALTC  Australian Learning and Teaching Council  
ANOVA  Analysis of Variance  
APD  Academic Professional Development  
AUQA  Australian Universities Quality Agency  
CADAD  Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development  
CDDE  College of Distinguished Deakin Educators  
Centre  Teaching and Learning Centre  
CEQ  Course Experience Questionnaire  
CILT  Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching, Victoria University  
CoP  Community of Practice  
CoP-iA  Communities of Practice in Academe  
CQI  Continuous Quality Improvement  
DEST  Department of Education, Science and Training  
DSO  Deakin Studies Online  
DVC(A)  Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic  
GCCA  Graduate Careers Council of Australia  
GCHE  Graduate Certificate of Higher Education  
Go8  Group of Eight  
HERDSA  Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia  
ICT  Information and Communication Technologies  
ITL  Institute of Teaching and Learning, Deakin University  
LTPF  Learning and Teaching Performance Fund  
OLT  Office of Learning and Teaching, University of the Sunshine Coast  
PD  Professional Development  
PPR  Performance Planning and Review  
QA  Quality Assurance  
QC  Quality Control  
QI  Quality Improvement  
QMS  Quality Management Systems  
SET  Student Evaluation of Teaching  
SETS  Student Evaluation of Teaching and Subjects  
SETU  Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units  
T&L  Teaching and Learning  
TLC  Teaching and Learning Centre, University of New England  
VC  Vice-Chancellor

Please note that for ethical reasons, as well as for consistency, generic terms such as ‘centre’, ‘VC’ and ‘DVC(A)’ have been used throughout this Guide.
Setting the context

Teaching and learning centres in Australian higher education are undergoing profound change – the sector has been in flux and ‘volatility’ has been the catch word. We believe that substantial change will continue as universities continue to search for long-term strategic benefits from their centres. The purpose of this Guide is to assist teaching and learning centre leaders and staff members engage in a productive strategic leadership development program to enhance long-term performance. The Guide will support leadership in framing perspectives, activities and actions in relation to enhanced strategic leadership. It will be of interest to all staff in universities who carry teaching and learning leadership and management responsibilities. The program can be used as part of internal and external centre reviews, or as part of a centre’s commitment to ongoing quality assurance (QA) and continuous quality improvement (CQI).

In undertaking the project, the team used a number of evidence gathering methods to ascertain various stakeholders’ views on the role, functions and effectiveness of teaching and learning centres in Australian higher education. The objective has been to develop a strategic leadership framework and Guide for centres. The feedback on the research side of the project has been that the resources and activities used in collecting this evidence also represented valuable professional learning and development opportunities for those involved, an intention of the research design. Consequently, we have translated our research methods into an integrated and coherent set of perspectives, activities and resources that can be drawn upon flexibly in running a strategic leadership development program in any type of university environment. The flexibility enabled through the approach is consistent with our view that strategic leadership of centres is contingent on specific organisational factors and distributed through centres working in networked educational environments. Therefore, the Guide cannot provide definitive answers. It can, however, support informed thinking and collaborative action suited to particular organisational contexts. As Mintzberg (2004) observes:

> It would be nice if we could carry reality around in our heads and use it to make decisions. Unfortunately, no head is that big. So we carry around theories, or models, instead; conceptual frameworks that simplify reality to help us understand it. (p. 249)

> What managers need is descriptive insight to help them choose or develop prescriptions for their own particular needs. The fact is that better description in the mind of the intelligent practitioner is the most powerful prescriptive tool we have, for no manager can be better than the conceptual frameworks he or she uses. (p. 252)

The Guide is structured around five key aspects of undertaking the strategic leadership development program:

- conceptualising strategic leadership;
- framing staff capability development for teaching and learning;
- implementing strategies for enhancing performance;
- considering emerging and future developments of centres; and
- gathering evidence from relevant stakeholders on centres’ roles, functions and effectiveness.

These aspects are, in turn, supported by the specific questions asked and activities undertaken, and the findings that emerged through the project’s data collection methods. We wish to emphasise that the Guide was derived from the project’s processes and its evidence-based findings.
We hope that the sector will derive benefit from the adoption or adaptation of the strategic leadership development program. The project team welcomes feedback on the use of the program, or any of its specific activities and resources. The use of the program can help generate further insights into the factors that count in well-performed centres. Our intent is not to have the final word on all such matters. It is a starting point in developing new understandings of the effective strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres in the 21st century.
PART A
Conceptualising strategic leadership of centres

Introduction

The starting point for development we believe is for staff to consider the meanings of ‘leadership’, being ‘strategic’, and the ‘strategic leadership’ of teaching and learning centres. Part A is designed to stimulate thought about the meaning of these terms, how the dimensions of strategic leadership of centres might be conceived, and how they might relate to each other. We also include the external environmental analysis that was undertaken in the lead up to and during the initial phase of the project. This environmental analysis contributes to an understanding of the more recent demands placed on centres to help their institutions enhance their teaching and learning performance. These demands and institutional responses help to explain the volatility in the sector. Centres have been reviewed, restructured and repositioned to better assist their institutions deal with these imperatives. Part A, therefore, sets the scene for enhanced understanding of the strategic leadership challenge, and the ways of framing the evidence collection process covered in Part E. It situates strategic leadership within the context of developing mature centres able to play a central role in enhancing teaching and learning quality throughout the organisation.

The notion of strategic leadership

The Occasional Paper (Holt, Palmer & Challis, 2008) attempted to articulate what is meant by strategic leadership as follows:

‘Strategic leadership’ suggests that strategic leaders have the capacity to set directions, and identify, choose and implement activities which create compatibility between internal organisational strengths and the changing external environment within which the university operates.

As one of those interviewed immediately picked up, the use of the word ‘suggests’ indicated not only that this attempt to articulate what ‘strategic leadership’ means and entails was far from an absolute statement but also that the authors recognised there is often a disjuncture between the conceptualisation and the reality of its implementation. This also was recognised by participants in this project as with:

In theory it sounds fine. ... I suppose alignment is fine and external and internal perspectives assuredly but I wouldn’t want anyone to think that those are kind of concreted or somehow absolutely fixed and immutable.

Most of those interviewed indicated that this statement encapsulated the critical aspects of what is meant by strategic leadership and was an effective and useful summation. Several, while accepting the thrust of the statement, felt the omission of the ‘people’ dimension was significant stressing that such leadership in essence has three stages:

- Understanding where the higher education sector in general is headed and in particular where it’s headed in Australia, to know what it is you should be leading towards.
- Being able to turn that into some form of strategic direction that is appropriate for the university, so that you have a vision of where it is you should be trying to lead your university as a leader in teaching and learning.
• Trying to convince people that it is the right vision and winning people over to accepting that vision.

Understanding what strategic leadership entails and the attributes and circumstances conducive to its achievement is important for centres. To assist in this regard a workshop that includes material taken directly from the interviews for this project is provided in Part E. However, as one of those interviewed reminded us:

_Leadership is about one human being influencing another human being and you can catch aspects of it but you can’t get the totality of it._

### The notion of a mature centre

The Australian Oxford Dictionary (2004, p. 788) defines ‘mature’ as ‘with fully developed powers ... complete in natural development’. For a centre to be judged as ‘mature’ much will rely on perceptions based on tacit and demonstrable evidence and any perceived maturation is not, of itself, fixed and immutable. Rather, such maturation is part of an ongoing cycle of development (see Figure 1).

Probably the most important indicator of maturation and hence success for any centre is the extent to which it is seen as the obvious place to go for any matters pertaining to teaching and learning; where policies and initiatives show that the centre has been consulted and where centre staff are inevitably part of all relevant committees. The telling indicator of success is the extent to which the centre and its practices are integrated into the fabric of the university. A fuller discussion is provided in a published paper ‘Teaching and Learning Centres: Towards Maturation’ (Challis, Holt & Palmer, 2009).

The Guide attempts to raise awareness of the sorts of issues that are likely to have decisive impact on how centres are conceptualised, organised and deliver. How centres will be judged is highly contingent on the environment in which they are placed and the expectations of senior management and faculty staff. Centres will be, understandably, at different stages on the continuum from embryonic to mature and, while it is instructive to consider the likely elements of a mature centre, the overriding concern is for centres to maximise their value within their context.

### Towards maturation: framing strategic relationships

For a centre to be a valued and integral part of the university’s community and its teaching and learning is highly reliant on a myriad of factors working synergistically and productively (Taylor, 2005). Of these, four seem to be especially important:

1. The strategic leadership of the relevant members of the executive and the centre director in terms of setting an appropriate and realisable role and direction;
2. A shared understanding and appreciation of the role and purposes of the centre;
3. The capacity and capability of the centre to fulfil its role and achieve its purposes; and
4. The ability of the centre to demonstrate its value.

Each of these is, in itself, a complex interrelated point and, as the diagram following attempts to illustrate, each forms part of an ongoing cycle of development. It is the combination of factors within a specific environment and at a specific time that is decisive.

The environment can be seen as internal or external. The internal organisational environment is characterised by key factors like strategic directions, staff capabilities and capacities, organisational climate, and alignments. The external environment is characterised by forces within the higher education sector and beyond it. The project team undertook an external environmental analysis in the early stage of the project.
indicating the key demands and pressures impacting universities and their teaching and learning centres (see Appendix A).

We also refer you to the environmental analysis, emerging issues and challenges identified by Scott, Coates and Anderson in Chapter 2, ‘The new context of academic leadership’ in the ALTC report *Learning Leaders in Times of Change* (2008) and Ling in the ALTC report, *Development of Academics and Higher Education Futures* (2009).

Figure 1 The maturation cycle

As leaders change, as agendas are revised and funding models recast, a centre that could reasonably see itself as ‘mature’ can find that it is no longer pivotal to a university’s endeavours but increasingly marginalised.

Given the volatility of the sector, it is essential that leaders of centres are strategically aware and able to (re)position their centres in terms of often quite rapidly changing situations. To do this, they need to be able to:

- ascertain who is responsible (and accountable) for each area/deliverable and ensure this is understood and accepted;
- have systems and methods in place to ensure strong lines of communication across and between all relevant parties;
- ascertain the key questions that need to be answered and addressed by the appropriate people and identify and set in place the most effective and efficient ways of achieving this; and
- routinely monitor and report on the internal and external environments.

This project gave compelling indications that, in practice, the relationships between and among the various interested parties were at best incompletely understood and, at worst, ignored.
Part B: Framing staff capability development for teaching and learning in higher education

Introduction

Staff capability is an important element of the strategic leadership maturity framework for centres. It refers to the expertise of centre staff to contribute productively to teaching and learning enhancements in their institutions. Teaching and learning enhancements in turn depend on increasing the overall pool of teaching expertise in the organisation. Part B considers contemporary organisation and staff development needs for teaching and learning capacity building in higher education with an emphasis on emergent developments. It is based on an excerpt from Section 4 of the project’s literature review in the Occasional Paper (Holt, Palmer & Challis, 2008). It provides a useful way of framing staff development and capability building as the key purpose of building a teaching and learning network for the organisation (a topic we return to in Part D).

Organisation and staff development needs in higher education

The changing world of academic teaching work

Over the past 15 years, there has been rapid growth in the systems, tools and applications available to support teaching and learning in higher education. These include technologies such as learning management systems, virtual classrooms, automated lecture capture, plagiarism detection software, social software and simulations. An example of how the newer technologies have created new options for educational practice relates to the use of virtual classrooms involving formerly isolated off-campus students in a ‘classroom’ environment with their on-campus counterparts. Many educators are now seeing the potential of such systems in support of developing innovative ways to enhance the learning experience. These forms of innovative adoption include greater emphasis on enabling student directed learning, increased peer learning and workplace learning (real and virtual).

Moreover, it has been argued that newer generations of students entering higher education come with different approaches to learning being more holistic in their approach, tending to be less analytical, being more comfortable in multi-tasking, having shorter concentration spans, having greater computer expertise and being extensive users of electronic forms of peer communication. These claims are subject to critical scrutiny (see Kennedy et al., 2006). There is a sense though that the newer generations of higher education students are different from their predecessors and the diversity of learning needs, expectations, circumstances and styles discerned when the generations are mixed is creating challenges on the ground for academic teaching staff. This is further exacerbated by the increasing mix and magnitude of cultural diversity in the student cohorts where different cultures also have different learning styles. According to Hofstede (2001), cultural dimensions including individualism (versus collectivism) and power distance influence the way students learn and behave in the learning environment.

Added to this emerging picture is the changing nature of student expectations, needs and study circumstances, shaped in part by the increasing extent to which students are funding their own education in Australia. One impact of this increased cost to students is that they are spending far greater time in paid employment (Krause et al., 2005). As a result of this increased contribution to their education, students are demanding both higher quality and greater flexibility in their educational offerings. This is also true of the national agenda in Australian higher education where government policy is also placing...
greater emphasis on educational quality and flexibility. This can be seen through the establishment of the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) in 2000, the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF) in 2003, and the ALTC in 2004. This has led to greater scrutiny of teaching performance, with strong emphasis on the requirement to enhance the quality of the total student learning experience and on the importance of systematically gathering and responding to student feedback on their experiences in university study. These external imperatives have placed increasing demands on universities to professionalise teaching as a valued occupation in higher education. Most universities have introduced a Graduate Certificate of Higher Education (GCHE) for their new staff members. These are designed to improve teaching quality, enhance student learning and to help ease the transition for staff in switching between different e-learning technologies in use in different universities in the sector.

Over the last two decades the Australian higher education sector has changed significantly. This includes an increased massification of education ‘exemplified by a shift from semi-elite to semi-mass provision of education that has resulted in increased student numbers, and a more diverse student population, with varied and markedly different student expectations of the university experience’ (Kirkpatrick, 2007).

Towards new conceptions of quality teaching and learning

The platform for institutional aspirations in flexible education must be built on clear understandings of the meaning and indicators of quality teaching in contemporary higher education. The ALTC has set out five criteria for determining teaching excellence for national teaching award purposes: approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn; development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field; approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning; respect and support for the development of students as individuals; and scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced learning and teaching. The descriptors for the scholarship criterion harmonise with the five approaches to the scholarship of teaching enunciated by Trigwell et al. (2000, p. 159): knowing the literature; improving teaching based on literature; investigating teaching to improve learning; relating literature to discipline knowledge; and improving learning in a discipline by communicating expertise.

The ALTC has extended its investigation into teaching excellence through the national study examining rewards and recognition of quality teaching in higher education through systematic implementation of indicators and metrics on teaching and teacher effectiveness known as the Teaching Quality Indicators project. In this project, learning and teaching indicators have been identified for four dimensions of teaching practice: institutional climate and systems; diversity and inclusivity; assessment; and engagement and learning community (Chalmers, 2007). Moreover, work by Scott (2006) has provided a useful framework based on CEQuery for examining the domains of teaching and learning quality encompassing outcomes, staff, course design, assessment and support. He concludes that quality learning contexts recognise the importance of the total experience; that learning is a profoundly social experience; that teaching and information does not constitute learning; one size of learning context does not fit all; and assessment is a key focus for students (Scott, 2007). Scott argues that these considerations for student learning engagement and productive learning can, and should be, equally applied to the professional learning of academic teachers. That is, academic development and academic developers should consider the total teaching staff professional learning experience; the situated and socially constructed nature of effective professional learning; that the provision of professional learning resources is a necessary but not sufficient condition for effective professional learning; that one size of professional learning approach may not suit all teachers in their development; and evaluation of teaching and appraisal of academic performance is a key focus for teachers and their engagement with professional learning opportunities.

The ALTC criteria, and accompanying descriptors, along with the CEQuery and Dimensions of Teaching Practice frameworks, are generic and applicable to all forms of teaching and
learning in higher education, with the central focus being on the quality of student learning outcomes and experiences. All forms of education provision must ultimately meet the test to provide opportunities for accessible, productive and satisfying learning amongst the variety of student cohorts.

**Conceptualising academic career advancement in teaching and learning**

Once teaching and learning quality is framed there is a need to recognise its demonstration, provide various development opportunities for its cultivation, and enable the promotion and sharing of exemplary practices. Staff members who excel need a stronger sense of there being rewarding career advancement pathways, and leadership in learning enhancement needs to be seen as a critical capacity requiring institutional development. Teaching and learning centres have a key role to play in this process. In order to progress institutionally, equal weighting in career advancement needs to be given to academic staff members who adopt a scholarly, research-based approach to teaching in their discipline, when compared to those who conduct the more typical research into their disciplines. More focus needs to be placed on other constructive relationships between research and teaching, extending to research-led teaching and curriculum development and research-based learning. Trowler and Wareham (2007, pp. 3–5) identify the following ways of forging productive relationships between teaching and research:

- learners do research;
- teachers do research;
- teachers and learners research together;
- research embedded in curriculum (research influences the what and the how of curriculum design);
- research culture influences teaching and learning;
- the nexus, the university and its environment; and
- teaching and learning influences research.

Brew (2003) mounts the powerful argument about the need to forge robust communities of teachers and learners working collaboratively on seamless agendas of research, learning and teaching. With an overall increase in the knowledge and skill set required of tertiary educators, and the increased pressures on staff time, there also needs to be recognition of the ability of staff to specialise in one dimension of good teaching so as to become leaders in that aspect and to share their expertise with others in the institution. This includes appropriately designed e-supported learning and professional development environments that allow staff to develop as specialists and to share their expertise.

**Developing whom?**

Knight (2002) considers the needs and challenges of new teachers, part-time teachers and mid-career teachers in higher education. For each category, he outlines guides for action in helping particular teaching staff enhance their teaching practices.

The needs of casual teaching staff who may be teaching face-to-face on-campus or teaching online (from campus work location or home), or those who do both, are significant. Service delivery support for casual teaching staff is problematic given their work payment arrangements. Teaching and learning quality assurance and improvement can still be fostered through a systematic institutional and local coordinated approach to meeting their initial and ongoing professional development needs. New continuing academic staff may be new to teaching, new to teaching in tertiary education and/or new to teaching in a particular organisational context. Renewing established academic teaching staff is also a challenge, while developing academic educational leadership has been examined in a number of ALTC projects.
A major focus of professional development in recent times has been the development of new media/new technologies in higher education and this has spawned the formation of many non-APD positions and incumbents specialising in building staff capacities in key areas of sustainable value creation in online teaching and learning (see Segrave, Holt & Farmer, 2005).

Overlaying the professional needs of various categories of staff is a recognition of the changing nature of the academic teaching workforce, with emphasis on the diversification of its memberships, and the nature, location and timing of their contributions and needs for timely, effective development and ongoing support.

**Developing what?**

What can be generalised about effective teaching for quality learning in higher education? What needs to be considered about effective teaching in different disciplinary contexts? And what is changing in the environment which continually brings these questions to centre stage? Voluminous bodies of work across many inter-related fields of education (i.e. experience of learning and teaching, adult, open, distance, online, professional, experiential) have informed viewpoints on these questions. Their prominence has been fortified through the rise of international interest and work in the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education. Debates on them continue with the continuing diversification of the student population and apparent change in its learning needs, preferences and circumstances, the massification and internationalisation of higher education, the intensification of academic work, greater demands for new sets of teaching skills, and the ubiquitous use of information and communications technologies (ICT).

As we have identified, there are many stakeholders with various views on these questions. A selected list of perspectives on the nature of effective teaching in higher education can be found in:

- Ramsden’s (2003, pp. 93–9) principles of effective teaching in higher education and their embodiment in the CEQ and SETS (i.e. interest and explanation; concern and respect for students and student learning; appropriate assessment and feedback; clear goals and intellectual challenge; independence, control and engagement; learning from students);
- Knight’s (2002) conception of the backstage and front stage work activities defining teaching (i.e. planning, preparation, and other activities teachers do to help student learning);
- Toohey’s (1999) analysis of the way in which different values, beliefs and ideologies shape all aspects of teaching and learning (i.e. traditional or discipline-based approach; performance or systems-based approach; the cognitive approach; experiential or personal relevance approach; the socially critical approach);
- the criteria and descriptors of the ALTC’s national teaching award program (drawing no doubt on the work of Ramsden) which details the scope of teaching work that might be judged as excellent;
- the emotional along with the intellectual engagement required to be effective educators (see in relation to distance education Walker, 2003 and Walker, 2000); and
- various capabilities (mindsets, knowledge, skills and attitudes) that might be required to work effectively in particular teaching and learning environments; for example, online environments requiring designing for learning, communicating, collaborating and community development; assessing student learning; developing learning resources; experiential learning; and continuous quality improvement (Segrave, Holt & Farmer, 2005, p. 120).

There appear to be two useful lines of relationships in framing effective teaching and learning in higher education (see Figure 2).
Developing how?

Table 1 sets out the kinds of activities that can provide opportunities – both individually and collaboratively – for staff to develop their academic capabilities in teaching, learning and research. While we have aimed to be comprehensive, we recognise that the list is not exhaustive and there are likely to be instances where the same kind of opportunity exists, albeit to a different degree and level, across the designated functional areas.
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<td>Institution-wide communities of practice</td>
<td>ALTC Exchange</td>
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<td>Institutions</td>
<td>University teaching and learning conferences</td>
<td>External networks</td>
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<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Case exemplars</td>
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<td>Institutions</td>
<td>Induction/ foundation programs</td>
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Part C: Implementing strategies to enhance centre performance

Introduction

Our attention now turns to actions that can be undertaken to enhance your centre’s performance. Your centre’s set of actions need to be crafted to fit your staffing, resources and the needs of your organisation. To assist in this strategy crafting process, we have distilled a selection of strategic foci, and outlined the conditions under which the various strategies might be best enacted. These have been drawn from the evidence collected in the project. We also include a number of specific case studies of useful practice compiled directly by members of the project team.

Identified strategies to deal with areas in need of greatest improvement

The development of these resources was informed by data gathered during interviews with key stakeholders, meetings with partner institutions, focus groups discussions, a workshop and a review of the relevant literature. This section is intended to give insight into the conditions conducive to centres performing effectively in areas that were identified by directors of Australian teaching and learning centres as being in need of greatest improvement.

Based on the result of an online survey of directors of Australian institutional teaching and learning centres, conducted in 2008, the two areas identified as being in need of greatest improvement were:

1. The provision of Academic Professional Development (APD) for casual/sessional and ongoing faculty teaching staff.
2. The provision of APD for leaders in teaching and learning.

In addition to the above, the interviews, focus group discussions and workshop discussions highlighted the importance of ensuring that the work of centres will ultimately lead to improved student learning outcomes.

Conditions conducive to improving effectiveness in the identified areas

The following tables set out the conditions likely to be conducive to improving performance in the areas identified as being in need of greatest improvement. A set of key goals and strategies have been developed for centre leaders, supported by some examples of current practice and links to further information and resources.
Improving the provision of APD for casual/sessional and ongoing faculty teaching staff

Career advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| Improved teaching through engagement with the centre’s programs and services contributes to career advancement | ▪ Staff who possess qualifications in learning and teaching are rewarded  
▪ Provision of certificate following participation in APD  
▪ APD structured in a way that allows staff to develop publications/presentations as an outcome  
▪ University has mapped a pathway to promotion based on teaching supported by policy, practice and performance review process  
▪ The university has an equitable approach to awarding promotion on the basis of teaching excellence and research  
▪ The centre identifies postgraduate qualification pathways for staff seeking to develop expertise in learning and teaching beyond the minimum  
▪ The centre provides opportunities and support for staff engaged in advanced teaching practice to capture their practice and bring forward evidence of their expertise towards Award programs |

Communities of learning

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| Staff actively participate in communities of learning               | ▪ Centre creates opportunities for informal discussions about teaching – community builder  
▪ Sharing of practice is facilitated by establishment of T&L communities of practice (online and face-to-face)  
▪ APD sessions are interactive and discussion time is valued and factored into the program  
▪ Centre connects staff with existing communities of learning  
▪ Reflective practice is encouraged and supported  
▪ Centre encourages staff engagement with the ALTC Exchange and its various groups |

Resource

Promoting teaching and learning communities  
http://www.altc.edu.au/project-promoting-learning-teaching-anu-2005

Current practice example

Deakin University – College of Distinguished Deakin Educators (CDDE)  
The CDDE is a super community of practice (CoP) that was established in 2007. Since then, a growing number of outstanding educators have been appointed as Fellows. They have been drawn from among the University’s excellent teachers, teaching scholars and educational leaders.  
Through the College, Deakin aims to:  
▪ recognise and promote the achievements of outstanding educators;  
▪ enhance the student learning experience through leadership and scholarly activities in teaching and learning; and  
▪ embed the values underpinning the University’s Principles of Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience into Deakin’s culture.  
Members of the CDDE are referred to as Fellows of the College. Fellows work together to promote, support, disseminate and exemplify outstanding practice in teaching and learning within Deakin, through leadership and scholarly activities (see Part D, Leverage point 9). The College meets several times a year to share ideas about teaching and to provide high level input into teaching and learning matters at Deakin.
### Flexible delivery

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| Flexible delivery of programs and services results in increased accessibility and engagement |  - APD programs are structured to be flexible  
  - Staff are able to participate in the components of an APD event that are relevant to their developmental needs without attending the entire event/day  
  - Programs and resources are available online  
  - APD is delivered in a number of ways; e.g. presentations, workshops, guest speakers, mentoring sessions, peer review, online, face-to-face one-on-one delivery  
  - Programs delivered on a regular basis and on a needs basis  
  - Registering attendance at events is not always mandatory  
  - Videoconference equipment and other technologies used where possible/appropriate |

### Incentives for engagement

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| Incentives for staff to engage with the programs and services offered by the centre exist within the university |  - Personal satisfaction gained through improvement in own teaching practices leading to improved student learning outcomes and personal development  
  - The university promotes staff on the basis of excellent teaching  
  - Performance appraisals include APD requirements or goals  
  - Structured programs leading to a qualification, or credit towards a qualification  
  - Teaching qualifications are rewarded by enhanced salaries  
  - Casuals/sessionals are paid for attendance at APD  
  - Provision of interesting, innovative professional development; e.g. workshops conducted by visiting scholars  
  - Faculty staff are invited by centre to present APD sessions/workshops in their area of expertise  
  - Centre emphasis is on lifelong/professional learning and not remediation |

### Concrete outcomes

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| There are clear benefits to engaging with the operations of the centre to staff |  - Staff supported to link APD content to their own practice and enact change  
  - Programs build upon each other and articulate into award programs |
Centre embedded in the institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| The centre is integrated in the university and does not operate in isolation. There are strong and clear alignments in place between the centre, students, faculties and senior management. | - The centre is integrated in T&L activity  
- The centre is involved in key decisions about T&L  
- The centre has representation on key committees such as the academic board and T&L committees  
- T&L policy is developed in consultation with the centre  
- Reciprocal appointments exist  
- Shared projects – between faculty and centre staff  
- Faculty staff provide APD and services within centre  
- Secondment of academic staff from faculties to centre  
- The centre is physically visible  
- The centre has a strong web presence  
- The centre’s vision is shared throughout the institution  
- The DVC(A) provides support and direction to the centre  
- The work of centre is intrinsic to quality in T&L and aligns with university priorities |

Current practice example

Macquarie University – distributing leadership in academic professional development

The Learning and Teaching Centre, Macquarie University, has developed a number of collaborative strategies and relationships to maximise its influence and effectiveness. The Centre works closely with faculty Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) and learning and teaching committees.

- Each of the Centre’s academic developers, educational developers and online educational designers is assigned to work with a particular faculty, allowing them to become familiar with the faculty’s particular environment and develop strong relationships with faculty staff. An academic and an educational developer are assigned to each of the faculty’s learning and teaching committees.
- Active ongoing communication with each of the faculty Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) allows for a useful flow of information between the faculties and the Centre. Some of this is mediated through LTC and now, faculty wikis designed and developed for faculties and hosted by the LTC.
- At the request of faculties, the Centre’s Foundations in Learning and Teaching program has been ‘modularised’ so that it can be run by appropriate staff within faculties. This allows for a degree of faculty tailoring of the program so that it meets specific needs; it also allows for increased attendance and supplements the Centre’s own limited resources.
- ‘Emerging Technology Grants’ support the development of innovative teaching and use of new technologies. This shifts the locus of ownership to and fosters the development of teaching leadership within faculties and departments, in cooperation with Centre staff.
- Strategic collaborative relationships with faculties and other offices areas have allowed us to share resources and expertise when working on areas of common interest. For example, Macquarie’s Participation and Community Engagement (PACE) Initiative provides and pays for a research and development officer; however, this officer is located in and managed by the Learning and Teaching Centre enabling the Centre’s expertise in assessing graduate capability and learning portfolios to be closely integrated.

Conditions at Macquarie that underpin this approach:

- Explicit alignment with institutional imperatives and initiatives (e.g. the teaching index).
- A network of Foundation and PGCert ‘alumni’.
- Close links with other offices in the University (e.g. ITS, Provost’s Office).
- Better identification and provision of workshops and programs according to need, time in the year etc.

See:

http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/hods.htm
http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/programs/index.htm
### Support from faculties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculties support the work of the centre and recognise the positive</td>
<td>▪ Joint appointees act as conduit and deliver some of the professional development on behalf of the centre&lt;br&gt;▪ Strong links and relationships between centre and key faculty staff; e.g. T&amp;L coordinators, Associate Deans (T&amp;L) – collegiality&lt;br&gt;▪ Faculties identify to centre staff who require targeted support&lt;br&gt;▪ Positive relationships exist between deans, Associate Deans (T&amp;L), HoS and centre director&lt;br&gt;▪ Mentors within faculties assist with learning support&lt;br&gt;▪ Faculties are genuinely willing to engage with the centre</td>
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<td>contribution it makes to teaching and learning</td>
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### Increased engagement

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An increasing number of staff are engaging with the centre’s programs</td>
<td>▪ Expectations of staff APD requirements clear to staff; e.g. in policy, performance review&lt;br&gt;▪ DVC(A) or equivalent publicly supports the work of the centre&lt;br&gt;▪ Some mandatory APD programs&lt;br&gt;▪ Effective, early induction cements positive relationship between new staff and centre&lt;br&gt;▪ Flexible delivery of programs and services&lt;br&gt;▪ Inclusive programs&lt;br&gt;▪ Staff are aware of the benefits of engaging with the centre&lt;br&gt;▪ Centre programs, services and events are visionary and leading edge – informed by Scholarship of T&amp;L&lt;br&gt;▪ Obligatory qualifications in higher education; e.g. Grad. Cert.</td>
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<td>and services</td>
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### Inclusiveness

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centre programs and services are inclusive of all staff</td>
<td>▪ Casual/sessional staff receive payment for attending APD&lt;br&gt;▪ Programs and services are relevant to a broad range of staff&lt;br&gt;▪ Beginner and advanced training available&lt;br&gt;▪ Centre makes attempts to reach staff less likely to seek APD</td>
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### Relevant programs and services

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| The programs and services offered by the centre are considered to be relevant and appropriate to participants’ needs | - Needs analysis carried out by the centre to establish ‘real’ faculty academic development needs (survey, skills audit, student feedback etc.)  
- Centre responds to needs of staff  
- Some APD linked to disciplines  
- APD responsive to context of employment  
- APD innovative and grounded in the disciplinary knowledge of the faculties  
- Centre stays on target with priorities  
- APD planning done in consultation with faculties  
- Faculty staff run APD sessions  
- Regular benchmarking of programs and services  
- Centre has ability to adapt to new curriculum/pedagogy needs  
- Centre can respond to the different needs of different staff |

### Improving the provision of APD for leaders in teaching and learning

#### Opportunities for leadership

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| Increased opportunities for leadership in the area of teaching and learning | - Opportunities exist for cross-institutional exchanges: secondments – extended (=‘sabbatical’), scholarships/secondments into the centre  
- Joint appointees established (between faculties and centre)  
- The centre’s leadership model is appropriate to its circumstances; e.g. distributed leadership model, faculty scholars model |

#### Resource

- Academic leadership capacities for Australian higher education  

### Promotion of leaders

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</table>
| A clear link between T&L leadership roles and promotion exists and is visible to staff | - Performance review process includes annual process of personal T&L goal setting and review including expectations regarding leadership in T&L and how this aligns with strategic goals  
- Promotion statistics reveal that an appropriate number of staff are being promoted each year based on a strong teaching performance. Statistics are available to staff  
- Promotion policy sets out the requirements for promotion based on teaching  
- T&L leadership roles mapped out – hierarchy/diagram  
- Broader development and understanding of what increases the likelihood of being promoted  
- Staff at the university feel that teaching is valued by their institution |
### Appropriate PD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>A separate suite of APD programs designed for leaders in teaching and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Where appropriate the emphasis is on sharing practice rather than professional development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Benchmarking of role and purpose (of leaders) – cross-institutional</td>
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<tr>
<td>- APD program supports informal leadership in T&amp;L</td>
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<tr>
<td>- APD is informed by evidence and is transformational</td>
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### Resource

Caught between a rock and several hard places: cultivating the roles of the Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) and the Course Coordinator


### Strategic focus

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development for leaders in teaching and learning incorporates a strategic focus</td>
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<td>- APD plan should be aligned with the objectives of T&amp;L strategic plan</td>
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<td>- APD for leaders provides an opportunity for communication of the institution’s key T&amp;L objectives</td>
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<td>- APD for leaders is designed to give participants insight into where the institution wishes to take T&amp;L</td>
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<tr>
<td>- APD for leaders is designed to give staff an improved understanding of how strategic leadership is understood at their institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>- APD programs teach the importance of goal/position setting and leadership in setting purpose and strategic direction</td>
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### Informal and formal leadership in faculties

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>Faculties have defined informal and formal T&amp;L leadership roles that align with centre operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Institutional working group comprising staff from each faculty and centre staff to meet regularly regarding leadership issues in T&amp;L and to keep informed of developments in each other’s areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Joint appointees between centre and faculties</td>
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<tr>
<td>- T&amp;L communities of practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>- T&amp;L research group in departments/faculty supported by centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Centre T&amp;L plan matches with faculty plans – both align with university’s T&amp;L strategic plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Representative of centre attends faculty T&amp;L meetings</td>
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### Resources

Building academic leadership capability at the course level: developing course coordinators as academic leaders

Distributive leadership for learning and teaching: Developing the faculty scholars model

### Current practice example

**Deakin University – joint appointments between centre and faculty**

In 2008 a number of joint appointments between the Institute and the faculties were established. These positions were designed to improve the interaction between the Institute and their faculty as well as helping to drive the teaching and learning agenda of the University. The key responsibilities for these appointees and the processes for managing the appointments are set out below:

- In conjunction with the Institute, the Associate Dean (T&L) and Associate Heads of School (T&L), enhancing the quality of teaching both within their faculty and across the University.
- Conducting relevant research into teaching and learning in higher education.
¬ Enhancing the working relationship between the Institute and their faculty.
¬ In collaboration with the Associate Dean (T&L), promoting good practice, excellence and innovation in relation to teaching and learning in the faculty.
¬ Promoting the services offered by the Institute within their faculty.
¬ Ensuring that the teaching and learning professional development needs of the faculty members are well understood by the Institute.
¬ Where appropriate, taking the lead role on one major action item in the Institute’s Operational Plan each year.
¬ Assisting the Institute to achieve the targets in its Operational Plan, particularly where these targets require interaction with faculty staff.
¬ Promoting and participating in teaching and learning professional development activities both within their faculty and in the broader University, including facilitating peer review and mentoring within their faculty.
¬ Facilitating the effective and appropriate use of modern technology in teaching and learning.
¬ Liaising with the Director of the Institute of Teaching and Learning, relevant senior members of their faculty and other joint appointments in relation to teaching and learning matters.
¬ Contributing to the engagement of students in the learning process.
¬ Working with the Institute to identify examples of good teaching practice within their faculty.
¬ Promoting faculty staff participation in relevant communities of practice.
¬ Undertaking a limited amount of formal teaching within their faculty.

**Cooperation**

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leaders in learning and teaching embrace opportunities to familiarise themselves with developments in learning and teaching</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
- Clear APD expectations of staff in leadership roles included in performance review process  
- Changes in teaching and learning seen as positive/exciting  
- Staff supported to learn and trial new technologies/approaches  
- Staff given opportunities to share innovations with colleagues  
- Staff are supported to attend APD sessions (teaching relief etc.)  
- The rationale for delivering APD is linked to building professional capacity; e.g. rename professional development, professional learning  
- Staff participate in group APD collaborations between discipline groups and across faculties |

**Leadership skills**

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APD for leaders in learning and teaching equips participants with the skills they require in order to lead</td>
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</table>
- APD provides resources and skills that allow people to take action  
- APD for leaders allows staff to make the transition from a non-leadership role to an informal or formal leadership role |

**Targeted approach**

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<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>The centre seeks out potential leaders/leaders in T&amp;L and encourages them to attend APD events</td>
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</table>
- Leaders/potential leaders are approached by the centre and invited to attend APD sessions  
- One-on-one support is offered to potential leaders  
- Centre works with Deans/HoS to identify potential leaders |
Ensuring that the centre offers services that result in improved student learning outcomes

**Improved student learning**

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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<tr>
<td>The centre’s operations lead to improved outcomes for students including achievement of graduate attributes / capabilities; the learning outcomes of the Award; and the learning outcomes of the units of study that make up the Award</td>
<td>• Increased student consultation&lt;br&gt;• Design of APD programs and services informed by student feedback&lt;br&gt;• Improved methods of student data collection-- surveys, via tutors, interviews, panel discussions&lt;br&gt;• Centre an expert in the scholarship of enhancing student learning&lt;br&gt;• Centre programs and services are informed by this research&lt;br&gt;• Centre develops online resources for students&lt;br&gt;• Role and purpose of centre and its services are clear to students&lt;br&gt;• Centre identifies and implements strategies that will allow it to work more closely with students&lt;br&gt;• Centre encourages other areas of the university; e.g. faculties, student services, senior executive, library to share ownership of improving student learning outcomes&lt;br&gt;• Centre initiates student engagement projects that focus on student learning&lt;br&gt;• Increased student representation on the academic board, and teaching and learning committees etc.&lt;br&gt;• Centre to engage in the ongoing evaluation of programs and services in terms of measuring their effectiveness in enhancing student learning&lt;br&gt;• Centre assists staff in embedding into the first year curriculum exercises that raise their awareness of how they learn best and what approaches to teaching they consider to be most effective, with a view to encouraging students to give teachers/centres constructive feedback on teaching&lt;br&gt;• Method of student evaluation of teaching must be endorsed by academics in order for the data to be viewed as reliable, which in turn will lead to a greater willingness of individuals to address any issues identified with their teaching&lt;br&gt;• Centre has expertise in designing learning environments that are:&lt;br&gt;  – student-centred&lt;br&gt;  – attractive&lt;br&gt;  – flexible&lt;br&gt;  – accessible&lt;br&gt;  – useful</td>
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**Resource**


**Current practice example**

**University of New England – centre provision of student learning support**

The Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) at the University of New England (UNE) has responsibility for providing student learning support. In response to the needs of UNE’s large cohort of distance education students who are unable to access on-campus learning support offerings, the TLC has developed an effective online ‘triage’ system for students (both off- and on-campus) seeking assistance. The Academic Skills Office (ASO) web site ([www.une.edu.au/aso](http://www.une.edu.au/aso)) has a link called ‘Help for you’ which transfers students seeking assistance to the ASO help web page. This page steps students through several options to solve their study/learning problems: self help, the ASO online discussion area, email ASO help and ASO bookings. The first level of help is to alert the student to the resources that the ASO site has available to UNE students. Firstly, students have access to academic skills online where there are sets of online workshops for students to browse and gain the information or skills they may require concerning learning skills; academic writing;
writing rules; academic reading; referencing; speaking skills; research skills; computer skills; maths and statistics; and subject-specific writing that has sets of online workshops for law, education, health and the sciences. A second set of online resources is available in the Smart sites link that has 12 recommended sites – each site has been culled from the best available on the internet and offers students some alternative pathways for their learning needs. The ASO site also has a bank of more than 50 academic skills fact sheets that are available to all UNE students. The fact sheets cover topics such as study skills, referencing, essay writing, basic literacy skills and mathematics. These factsheets are used by both students and staff, with staff regularly using them for instant feedback to students when marking assessment tasks.

The second level of help available for students is to seek assistance from the ASO lecturers. The ASO discussion area is a place where students can ask a ‘quick question’. ASO lecturers respond to student questions daily, and other students join in to advise and to share their experiences. This discussion area has a bank of answers given to students in previous years where students can search for similar questions and answers to their own query. Quick questions may also be sent by email to ASO help. If students require further assistance, they can click on ASO bookings where they can use the online booking system to make a personal appointment to see an ASO lecturer on-campus in the Learning Commons or to arrange a phone consultation.

The introduction of this system has resulted in increased independent learning and use of self help strategies by students judging by the reduction in number of trivial and/or lazy questions being asked of ASO lecturers. It has also enabled students access to assistance on a 24/7 basis whilst also reducing pressure on human resources. An additional benefit to students has been the ability to form online relationships with each other at a distance and feel part of a learning community, thereby lessening feelings of isolation commonly experienced by distance students.

In 2006 the ASO Team was awarded a Carrick Citation in the Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning Category for ‘exemplary, innovative support of non-traditional students, which had effectively and respectfully enhanced their engagement with higher education and its academic literacies’.

tUNEup

UNE acknowledges that students who are beginning their tertiary studies may be from a diverse group with a wide range of academic preparedness. In response to this the Academic Skills Office (ASO) of the UNE Teaching and Learning Centre offers students a free, fully online university preparation course known as tUNEup from home. The course is offered to enrolling students twice a year between the semester breaks. The program runs over a period of three weeks and covers aspects of online learning tools, academic writing and study skills. Specific areas covered in the course include paraphrasing, academic paragraph writing, referencing, academic writing style, grammar and punctuation skills. The program is paced to engage the average student for 2–4 hours daily.

The program has a number of special features. It has been running now for five years and has been fine-tuned, so that it is a self-managed course that gives students a maximum of academic experiences with low management processes for academic support staff to implement. tUNEup from home is set in a Blackboard LMS and includes discussion board topics, online quizzes and self-marking tasks. A daily program of activities is set into the Blackboard calendar to direct progress and train students in time management. Also, students submit an academic paragraph writing task that is marked by our academic skills advisers so that they have formative feedback. By completion of the course, students are familiar with the resources and assistance provided by the ASO and are knowledgeable and competent in the basic skills required for academic study.

In 2009, the tUNEup from home team was awarded a UNE Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Learning and Teaching for ‘an innovative and practical approach to the provision of student learning support services’.
Identified strategies to deal with areas of greatest constraint

The development resources contained in this section has been informed by data gathered during interviews with key stakeholders, focus groups discussions, a workshop conducted by the project team and a review of the relevant literature. It is intended that these tables be used by centre directors and centre staff to assist them in determining key directions and priorities for their centre and to give insight into the conditions conducive to centres overcoming major constraints identified by directors of Australian teaching and learning centres in an online survey conducted in 2008.

The survey asked respondents to consider a range of potential constraints on allowing centres to achieve their objectives within the next two years, and to rank the significance of each constraint (using a response scale of N/A, low, medium, high, very high). Based on assigning an increasing ordinal value to each significance rating, Table 2 below gives the mean significance rating for each constraint, ranked in order of mean rating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient faculty staff time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient centre staff time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorrect perception of centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient centre resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority of research over teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only faculties improve teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency on other areas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate shared purpose</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term thinking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of teaching and learning data</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conditions conducive to overcoming greatest constraints

The following tables contain a set of goals, strategies and some current practice examples and resources developed to address the top four constraints identified by centre directors:

1. Insufficient staff time in faculties to engage with centre activities/initiatives.
2. Insufficient staff time in centre to be effective in all the required areas.
3. Incorrect or outdated general perceptions of the role and function of the centre.
4. Insufficient resources to have a significant impact.
Overcoming the key constraint of insufficient staff time in faculties to engage with centre activities/initiatives and insufficient staff time in centre to be effective in all the required areas

Needs analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Key stakeholders consulted regarding their needs to ensure that the programs and services offered by the centre are relevant and likely to have an impact on learning and teaching |  - APD plan developed taking into account institutional goals and staff-generated needs  
  - Needs analysis carried out by the centre to establish ‘real’ faculty academic development needs (survey, skills audit, student feedback etc.)  
  - APD sessions are evaluated by staff and an evaluation report is produced by the centre |

Current practice example

University of the Sunshine Coast – a structured approach to monitoring, reviewing and implementing professional development

The Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT), University of the Sunshine Coast endeavours to deliver a program of professional development activities that meets the needs of staff involved with learning and teaching at USC and aligns with the University’s strategic goals as set out in the Learning and Teaching Plan. In order to achieve this objective, a structured approach to monitoring, reviewing and implementing professional development has evolved.

Consultation: In late 2008, the OLT consulted faculties to determine their needs. These consultations were prefaced with a contextual depiction and involved consideration of: AUQA’s affirmations, commendations and recommendations with regards to learning and teaching; recently attained focus of ALTC Promoting Excellence Project; existing provision; elements of the University’s Strategic Plan; and the proposed goals for the 2009–2011 L&T Plan.

Planning: The Professional Development Plan for Learning and Teaching was then compiled and approved for delivery in 2009.

Monitoring: Monitoring of the delivery of the activities identified has occurred at two levels – evaluation of the actual event by participants and a biannual report monitoring delivery of the planned activities.

Evaluation: Participants are asked to complete evaluation forms at each PD activity. The evaluation considers the demographic of the individual (including their experience) and requires them to evaluate the session in terms of its appropriateness to the individual’s need, aspects of the delivery (which serves as feedback to the facilitator’s own practice) and asks them to identify any other training that they require (assisting us in planning future professional development activities). The evaluation data is collated in Excel, the results tabulated, and findings graphically represented in charts for easy interpretation.

Reporting: A biannual report is compiled in July and January and presented to the Learning and Teaching Management Committee. The report provides a snapshot of the PD activities undertaken and allows us to identify any factors that will need to be taken into consideration when developing the following year’s plan.
### Centre engagement – expectations of staff clear

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The institution’s expectations regarding staff participation in</td>
<td>▪ Allocated professional development – ‘built in’ (mandatory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>academic development programs and the importance of engaging with</td>
<td>▪ Ritualisation of events/opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the centre are clearly articulated to staff</td>
<td>▪ Engendering responsibilities (self/collective/managed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Development of effective reporting on strategy – key performance indicators / benchmarks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Increase investment in staff development (centre and distributed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ APD requirements included in performance appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Centre monitors APD attendance by faculty/school and develops strategies to ensure balanced participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ APD viewed as being part of core business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ DVC(A) advocates the good work of the centre and emphasises its importance to T&amp;L enhancement at the institution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Efficient programs and services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The design of centre programs and services takes into account the</td>
<td>▪ New and innovative approaches to delivering programs and services explored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limited amount of time available to staff</td>
<td>▪ Centre aims to develop initiatives that have several applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Programs structured to allow staff to attend relevant sessions of an event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Multi-campus systems adopted where possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Programs and services are outcome focused and have clear goals and objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Rationalisation of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Videoconference equipment and other technologies used where possible/appropriate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Current practice example

**Macquarie University – efficient and effective offering of programs and services**

In the move from ad hoc service orientation to more strategic and planned activity, the Learning and Teaching Centre has developed a range of strategies to ensure that programs and services are as streamlined and accessible as possible, given the limited amount of time available to staff and the Centre’s own constrained resources. A great deal of publicity and communication (both internal to the LTC and external to the rest of the Macquarie community) work has gone into changing the perception of the LTC from one-to-one service, to one-to-many capacity building.

- Programs focus on areas which staff, through their Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching), through faculty meetings or through individual contacts, have told us are critical current issues for them.
- The Centre’s web site has recently been redesigned to ensure easy and immediate access to services such as teaching evaluation and the creation of accounts for online teaching and online units. These services can be requested online through a ticket system and there are extensive resources about each service available through the web site. This maximises convenience for staff while limiting the demands on the Centre’s own staff time.
- Extensive resources in a range of formats (for instance written documents, podcasts) are available on the Centre’s web site for staff to access when they have the time/ as the need arises. New resources are regularly developed and added.
- Programs such as the Colloquium for Research Supervision and its three year re-registration (of research supervisors) offered in mixed or fully online modes.
- The Centre’s postgraduate program in higher education is offered in internal and external modes, with two entry pathways and a range of articulation options to meet the different needs of staff. Wherever possible, technology is used to support flexibility.
All programs are scheduled after consideration of the University calendar, to ensure that they are offered in a timely manner.

Programs are scheduled over lunch periods with lunch usually provided. Staff are more likely to be available at this time, and provision of lunch both saves them time and provides an additional incentive for attendance.

Some of the conditions existing at Macquarie conducive to achieving this goal include:

- internal and external marketing;
- a clear vision and plan for change;
- the engendering of individual and collective responsibility in the LTC (self-managed portfolio teams with discrete responsibilities and members who have a range of expertise);
- personalised contact with stakeholders (ADs, Executive Deans, etc.); and
- standing firm, sometimes in the face of opposition.

See:

http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/
http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/about/structure.htm
http://www.mq.edu.au/ltc/resources/index.htm

User-friendly programs and services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The programs and services offered by the centre have been designed with the end-user in mind | • Programs and services are delivered efficiently  
• Programs and services are flexible  
• Simple systems are used for registration (e.g. online)  
• There is clear information about programs and services available online  
• APD events and services are well publicised and an overview of the program is available, including key outcomes  
• Presentations and resources are made available online following sessions |
Overcoming the key constraint of incorrect or outdated general perceptions of the roles and functions of the centre

Clear centre purpose, role and functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose, roles and functions of the centre have been determined and published</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - The purpose, role and functions of the centre have been determined in conjunction with key stakeholders; e.g. DVC (A), T&L committees, centre director  
  - It is clear to staff how the centre fits into the rest of the T&L community  
  - When the role, purpose and functions of the centre change; e.g. due to new leadership, staff are informed of these changes immediately  
  - Staff within the centre are aware of their core business and focus on this  
  - All centre staff are involved in any review of the centre |

Current practice example

Victoria University – clear centre vision, purpose and focus (from the draft centre Vision statement)

The Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) seeks to promote and enhance a culture of innovation and excellence in student-centred learning and teaching at VU in support of the University’s strategic directions and commitments. CILT works collaboratively with the VU community on strategic teaching and learning initiatives to enable the development of innovative and effective practice in further education, vocational education, higher education and research.

CILT focuses on developing and leading the dissemination of: a pedagogical framework, educational development opportunities and resources that support and build capability.

CILT is a:
  - research centre with aspiration to be a research institute in its own right;  
  - resource centre supporting the VU community by providing or sourcing expertise for strategically important projects that promote the VU mission – in particular the review and redevelopment of courses of study, or other significant programs;  
  - Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) business owner; and  
  - educational development provider of opportunities in learning and teaching, including Award sequences.

CILT signals a shift from professional development to educational development. This represents a shift in emphasis from preparing people to do things to working with them to deliver outcomes. The educational development needs will be faculty driven and will focus on delivering outcomes that affect the student experience. CILT will also seek to engage with other universities over educational development activities that will be mutually beneficial. It will endeavour to ‘think smarter’ about educational development provision, mindful of the needs of different sectors and the immediacy of the support requirements of staff.

Consultation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The centre is consultative and works in harmony with other areas of the institution such as faculties, senior management and the student body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - The centre provides project updates to faculties  
  - Faculty T&L committees given the opportunity to consider APD plans  
  - Staff views are integrated into learning support  
  - Centre director and centre staff are approachable and willing to consult with stakeholders, including students |
## Effective communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The centre has an effective communication strategy in place | - Centre purpose, roles and functions communicated to stakeholders via the web site, portal, email, annual report, travelling road show, presentations, brochures, committees  
- Communication strategy designed to help people understand what the centre is doing, why it’s doing it and how it’s going to get there  
- The centre promotes the bigger picture of what it is trying to do  
- DVC(A) promotes centre programs, services and events  
- Centre regularly places items on key committee agendas  
- Centre representation on key committees  
- Centre produces T&L newsletter |

### Current practice example

Deakin University – Institute of Teaching and Learning brochure distributed to all academic staff  

## Positive centre image

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The centre has a positive image, is viewed as a leader in T&L and is respected by staff, students, senior management, faculties and administrative areas | - The work of the centre is valued and its program and services are viewed as being important by academics  
- Centre operates in a ‘can do’ culture  
- Centre staff are recognised for their expertise, projects, research, innovation, experience, qualifications etc.  
- The centre is referred to in policy where appropriate  
- The centre has its own branding  
- The offices of the centre are visible  
- Centre staff are open, welcoming and helpful  
- Staff within the centre are proud to be a part of the centre and are positive about its future  
- Centre coordinates successful large scale T&L events involving staff from faculties and DVC(A)  
- Centre achievements are publicised  
- Centre staff have positive relationships with other university staff  
- Centre viewed as the ‘problem solver’  
- Centre scans the environment and the research literature for developments in learning and teaching in post-secondary education that are relevant  
- Special projects staff play an important role in engaging with and promoting the centre, to the wider university community  
- Staff are empowered and have ownership of work/projects  
- The leadership style of the director facilitates desired outcomes  
- Centre publishes widely and is highly visible nationally and internationally as a focus of innovative research and practice in learning and teaching  
- Centre represents university on relevant state, national and international bodies |

### Current practice example

Deakin University – Institute of Teaching and Learning Yearbook  
### Centre has accountability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The centre is seen as being accountable for achieving set goals over a period of time | - The centre reports its achievements against goals to relevant parties biannually/annually  
- The centre director is included in the composition of T&L committees  
- DVC(A) or equivalent works closely with centre director and shares responsibility for achieving centre goals  
- Centre direction aligned with national objectives  
- Centre produces an annual report  
- Centre goals remain consistent for reasonable length of time  
- Centre staff have reasonably secure roles  
- Changes in senior management do not have a crippling effect on the centre’s ability to meet its goals  
- The centre shows strong leadership in the area of T&L  
- The difference to the quality of learning and teaching outcomes that the centre makes is measured and the results are accessible |

### Positive relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The centre seeks to establish and maintain positive relationships with key stakeholders | - Centre has a staff representative for each faculty  
- Centre works with faculty-partnership approach  
- Centre listens to staff at the coalface  
- The centre cultivates effective relationships at the highest academic levels of the university; e.g. Chair of the Academic Board, DVC (A)  
- Centre staff are visible in faculties  
- Centre staff engage with a broad range of academics  
- In addition to the DVC(A) or equivalent a good working relationship with the Chair of the Academic Board allows the centre to have a high profile in the broader academic life of the university  
- The centre consults the faculties and the faculties consult the centre on T&L matters |
Overcoming the key constraint of insufficient resources being available to the centre to allow it to have a significant impact

Collaborative approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The centre and faculties adopt a collaborative approach to the enhancement of teaching and learning, and program and service delivery</td>
<td>▪ The faculties and centre facilitate outside/ across the university, sector partnerships and connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Other people involved in setting T&amp;L agendas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Engage the community(ies) / spread the responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Peer review programs are in operation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ The work of the centre is supported by faculty-based mentors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Resources

Develop and implement a pilot program of ‘External peer review of teaching’ in four Australian universities

Peer review of teaching in Australian higher education

Current practice example

Victoria University – effective use of resources (from the draft centre vision statement)

The philosophy behind all Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) activities is that the most effective use of limited resources is to concentrate those resources on a select number of projects that have strategic importance to the organisation, and can provide a model of practice for other similar projects. Projects of strategic significance, such as the academic renewal of programs or courses, require a variety of expertise to be integrated. Hence such projects require a team that brings together (at a minimum):

▪ discipline knowledge of the program;
▪ expertise in designing student-centred learning environments;
▪ technology expertise relating to the use of physical and virtual spaces;
▪ understanding of administration structures and processes; and
▪ knowledge of the university’s long term strategic directions and commitments and the mechanisms to implement them.

Such projects require careful planning and project management to ensure all contributions are properly integrated and effectively and efficiently concluded, recorded and reported on. All CILT portfolio areas will contribute to each project as required. A single CILT member will coordinate each project internally, and liaise with the Project Leader in the faculty.

Each project is treated as action research, to ensure that success is captured and able to be shared, and any setbacks are thoroughly understood and more easily avoided in future.

Each project is ‘owned’ and led by the discipline area. They are faculty/school/discipline projects that CILT supports through direct injection of CILT expertise, and/or through appropriate secondment or input from relevant areas of expertise – either within VU or externally.

Staff educational development is an important by-product of the project, in that staff participating in a project team improve their understanding of the overall process, and broaden their capacity to contribute to future teams. However, the goal of all projects is to achieve the best possible outcome in terms of the learning opportunities and outcomes for students.

As part of its enabling role, CILT will facilitate links between people and groups interested and engaged in innovative and authentic learning and teaching practices. The TLS grants are one way of identifying VU’s innovators. In bringing together the innovators CILT will identify the sorts of forums that they consider will support their work. It may be that CILT sponsors more forums that are TAFE Development Centre, NCVER, HERDSA, ALTC inspired, with more low key events.

CILT will be limited in the number of CILT-funded projects it can commit to because of its limited resources. The intention is that the faculties will lead and drive projects and CILT will provide the expertise, so if requests are made that are outside the project approval cycle and CILT does not have funding to undertake the specific project, the faculty or other stakeholder will be asked to identify funding sources. If a specific project arises that has funding attached that will be treated as a separate issue. In circumstances where people ask CILT to undertake work for them rather than with them, then CILT will negotiate over its role and how the work will be funded.
As indicated above, CILT’s preferred mode of operation will be to work with people rather than for them. A key question in relation to CILT’s projects will be: Who do we work with?

For example, a faculty may request research into a specific issue in which case the faculty will be involved in the research and a faculty person’s name will be on the research output.

CILT will develop a process and timelines for prioritising the projects it undertakes, to decide the best use of its resources and where they will achieve the best outcomes. The Leadership Group will be the decision-making group about resource allocation and will meet fortnightly to discuss project priorities. It will set clear parameters for the projects CILT will undertake.

Each faculty will be asked to provide a representative who can act as a ‘broker’ for CILT/faculty projects and activities, and be part of the CILT Leadership Group when discussing priorities and project support. The broker will be a person intimately aware of the learning and teaching needs of the faculty area, with excellent networks. As broker the person would be expected to bring forward potential projects, help identify innovators and learning leaders within the faculty who may be interested in research or grant opportunities, and help find appropriate opportunities for CILT research initiatives to take root.

### Communities of learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The centre initiates communities of teaching and learning</td>
<td>- The centre facilitates/supports communities of learning; e.g. working parties, group training, communities of practice, online discussion forums, informal get-togethers to discuss teaching innovations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Resource

Promoting learning and teaching communities

http://www.altc.edu.au/project-promoting-learning-teaching-anu-2005

### Realistic goal-setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The goal-setting process takes into account the capability and capacity of the centre to deliver its programs and services | - Centre programs, activities and services appropriate to resources  
- Centre director / DVC(A) seeks advice from centre staff regarding centre capability/capacity and sets goals accordingly  
- Staff and senior executive / management aware of resourcing limitations and modify expectations accordingly |

### Appropriate staffing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Staff who deliver programs and services on behalf of the centre possess the appropriate skills and expertise | - The centre uses its human resources effectively and wisely  
- Centre staff possess the skills that are needed by the institution  
- Centre staff work in the areas of their expertise and are creative, committed, inspirational and passionate about what they do |

### Additional funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Conditions conducive to achieving this goal</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| The centre seeks out additional funding opportunities both internally and externally | - Centres analyse and adapt external grant project outcomes for the benefit of their institutional needs and directions  
- The centre situates ALTC developmental opportunities in ways appropriate to advancing academic teaching staff careers |
Part D: The changing nature of teaching and learning centres

Introduction

In working through the various developmental activities, our intent is that your centre will have a stronger view of its strategic leadership approach and areas of value to the institution. We recognise that teaching and learning centres sit as defined groups with defined budgets and planning objectives within their organisations. Senior management will make judgements on the ‘value’ of their centres based on some sense of the return on investment on the resources directly committed to a centre’s operations. Our project investigations indicate though that directors of centres perceive constraints in how their staffing resources can make a large-scale positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the entire organisation at any particular point – covering its various disciplines, courses, units and settings. We wish to return to the challenge of how centres can position themselves, as mature or maturing entities, at the very heart or operating ‘centre’ of the universities’ endeavours in teaching and learning. New ways of seeing the purpose of centres can be usefully framed around a sense of changing values and beliefs that should shape the work of centres in contemporary environments. Values and beliefs might be seen in relation to an older traditional paradigm of conceiving centre work compared to a newer, emerging paradigm of what centres might be, and how they might think and act with much greater and more pervasive effect.

The limitations of the traditional teaching and learning centre paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching and learning centres, and their organisational environments, characterised by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• disconnection with/from university senior executive;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• marginal involvement in university planning and policy making;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• separation and remoteness from faculties/equivalents;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• separate, self-contained staffing;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• marginal representation on faculty teaching and learning committees;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• primary reliance on inflexible institutional workshop and seminar program;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• running of graduate certificates or equivalent in isolation from faculty;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• inspirational academic developers working in vacuum;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• academic development capability limited to those in designated AD positions;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• disconnection from faculty-based academic development peers where appointed;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• confusion over purposes, functions and internal structures;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• closed organisational arrangements – closed to internal and external opportunities and productive partnerships;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lack of faculty teaching and learning leadership with which to connect;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• difficulty in accessing and using data and evidence to shape change and improvement;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• lack of capacity to mobilise resources and rewards;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• lack of focus on building and using staff capabilities and supporting productive career development over time; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• not seeing and exploiting synergies in various domains of activity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Illustrative interviewee comments from project

Probably if I look at it objectively it’s pretty fragmented and incidental and it relates directly to people rather than to the [centre]. It’s a matter of location, all outside groups suffer from this but they all seem to be peripheral, marginal and beating at the door if you like.

In the past both centres were involved in one on one and small unit development projects and some program wide developments. We can’t afford to do that anymore. We have to move to facilitation of groups, working parties, training in groups, developing resources, guidelines, that sort of thing. That’s what we have to focus on because we don’t have enough staff to actually do the one on one.

The potential of a new, emerging teaching and learning centre paradigm

Teaching and learning centres, and their organisational environments, characterised by:

- strong connections with the university executive, to the extent that relevant senior executive staff see themselves as part of and not remote from the work of the centre;
- central involvement in university-wide planning in teaching and learning;
- active involvement in supporting cascading teaching and learning plans;
- openness and active involvement with faculties/equivalents;
- strong representation on faculty teaching and learning committees;
- a multi-faceted conception and set of flexible and responsive approaches to professional development/learning;
- the running of graduate certificates or equivalent in higher education in partnership with faculty;
- inspirational academic developers working in tune with organisational vision and direction;
- a broader conception of academic development capacity as interwoven with faculty outstanding educators;
- strong connections with faculty academic peers;
- clarity of purpose, function and internal structure/decision making;
- well established levels and layers of faculty leadership with which to productively engage;
- openness to productive internal and external partnerships and opportunities;
- good access and mobilisation of data, evidence and scholarship;
- strong capacity to mobilise and use resources and rewards;
- overall focus on building and using staff capabilities and supporting productive career development over time; and
- seeing and exploiting synergies in various domains of activity.
Illustrative interviewee comments from project

So we are trying to move more towards this sort of model where we are providing teaching and learning leadership in knowledge to the rest of the University.

But I think strategy is where one is involved in a very close relationship with others in a team. Strategy is not just an individual thing and therefore one learns through interactions about organisational strategies that might be retooled in discussion and the ways in which, as I said before, a creative input could perhaps change that and refine it but I don’t believe it’s actually up to any individual on her own or his own to develop strategies solo.

I mean if I was talking about an idealised world, I’d say that the kind of federated system is the best one where’s a centre and the people in the faculties because one of the things I think a centre can do is open up cross-faculty conversations that people wouldn’t otherwise have if all their teaching and learning stuff was concentrated in faculties.

The challenge of moving from an older to a newer paradigm for guiding the work of centres requires a renewed sense of what leading strategically by and through a teaching and learning centre might mean, and how it might work. In setting this challenge, and a possible way forward, we draw upon the work of Peter Senge (1990) on the leadership of learning organisations. Senge identifies three leadership roles in building learning organisations, namely: leader as designer, leader as teacher and leader as steward. We are interested primarily in the first of these roles for the purposes of this discussion. Leader as designer is about building the organisation’s purpose and values, implementing policies, strategies and structures that translate intent into action, underpinned by effective learning processes institution-wide. Collective responsibility for thinking, acting and learning can be enabled through a networked and distributed leadership model. To what end then is a networked and distributed leadership model being applied?

The impulse to learn, at its heart, is an impulse to be generative, to expand our capability. This is why leading corporations are focusing on generative learning, which is about creating, as well as adaptive learning, which is about coping (Senge, 1990, p. 8).

In short, leaders in learning organizations are responsible for building organizations where people are continually expanding their capabilities to shape their future – that is, leaders are responsible for learning (Senge, 1990, p. 9).

Teaching and learning centres, through fostering networking and distributed leadership, can contribute to the growth of staff capabilities for teaching and learning development, innovation and advancement. This can be their truly strategic leadership learning role. What group, situated in a university, is better placed to play this role than teaching and learning centres? Over eras of centre contributions to teaching and learning emphases have moved across supporting staff through unit, technology and program development. Developing staff capabilities can encompass all three of these emphases, and can be done with major strategic impact throughout the organisation. The goal can be that all parties can see themselves as being within the ‘centre’ or conceptual and action-based networking space devoted to designing and implementing valued teaching and learning futures. Through the network, centres can demonstrate strategic leadership in contributing to the creation of vision and direction, in setting/settling upon the desired vision/direction, in realising the value of plans to achieve the vision in collective,
integrated action. Maximising strategic impact would come through all parties working in concert in different areas and at different levels of the organisation, or in different interacting nodes of the one coherently designed institutional network.

Mintzberg (1989), in studying the five key design factors that shape the structure of organisations, classifies universities as professional bureaucracies. Universities, he argues, are hierarchically organised by discipline specialisation. Hence, we see universities organised into faculty-based clusters of similarly related disciplines, with a further more specialised grouping of single disciplines or tightly related disciplines at the departmental level. Professional learning and development in education is, therefore, vertically driven and governed by discipline concerns. Networking, on the other hand, complements vertical learning through the provision of opportunities for educators and leaders to engage horizontally across departments, faculties and disciplines: not only to engage across areas of interest at a particular level but also to relate throughout various organisational levels and domains. This networked, informal and collegial environment, we argue, provides great potential to enhance teaching and learning throughout the organisation and to contribute to external networking opportunities as well.

Teaching and learning centre leadership, including a university senior executive charged with the responsibility of teaching and learning, are well placed to play a strategic leadership role in initiating and developing an organisational teaching and learning network supportive of, and complementary to, the formal structures and governance of the institution. In emphasising the ‘emergent’ nature of such a networking paradigm around informal organisational processes, we note that:

- whether acknowledged or not, informal, collegial processes are continually at work in large knowledge-based, professionally oriented organisations and these contribute to the effective day-to-day functioning of the work of such organisations; and
- leaders of teaching and learning centres themselves shared their views on the value of such approaches, along with examples of how aspects of such a networking approach might support enhancements in their own institutional settings as part of this project.

Through a more purposeful and systematic approach to designing and implementing teaching and learning networks, centres can magnify their impact through the many agents (people and resources) that can be productively drawn into their many and varied relationships. Centres, therefore, can orchestrate resources across, up and down the organisation to best support teaching and learning enhancements through such networking and the distributed leadership entailed in its operation. As organisational entities, a centre’s real strategic purpose would be to act as a key node or even the ‘central’ hub of the organisation’s teaching and learning network.

**Illustrative comments on the value of network thinking and action drawn from project interviewees**

So I’m saying that on many different levels, any organisation would distinguish itself by its commitment in that field and if it only requires its senior management to lead, it’s in trouble. It has to be permeating the whole organisation as a culture. So to put simply I think just to re-emphasise that, if we can get to the stage where everyone feels they’re part of that leadership enterprise then the Argonauts will be seen as only an example of a prelude in history, you know.

But the other part of it though is, especially in our structure, is the need to get those devolved groups also doing it. So in a sense it’s become more like a learning and teaching network which every university is but there’s going to be activities in the academic development groups that in other universities reside within the learning and teaching centre. So it’s probably about facilitating a community and then trying to where there’s
synergies work together on things or where there’s things that are emerging out of the portfolios that the learning and teaching centre may help disseminate that and make more readily accessible to other areas, that kind of thing.

(There is the) increasing ambiguity of our world as we get further and further away from a Newtonian conceptual basis. I am much more interested in exploring, not the cause and effect, but the cause of the causes, so the causal effect is causing the causal. Because ambiguity is a fact, trying to manage it is ridiculous, seeking to live within it, is what one has to do I think, and I think that’s what this university is. And I think that’s where we’ve made a big change, where this university was totally restructured, we’ll cause and effect, we’ll concentrate on that and restructure. I think the current process is trying to allow for more living with ambiguity. However, with the problem is that then it has to stick to externally and internally imposed measurements of that. And you can’t measure something if you are not looking straight at cause and effect, so if you are living with ambiguity it is very hard unless you are prepared to measure how well are people living with the ambiguity that is surrounding them.

So in other words I guess its main job is to embody the strategic direction and the support of that direction in learning and teaching for the university but it doesn’t necessarily have to do all the work or have all the resources and that’s what we’re grappling with at the moment, how we’re going to articulate our corporate memory in the direction and assist the faculties which we call the hub, sorry, the spokes of the wheel and we’re trying to work out how to do this hub and spoke model but because there’s so few people in that centre we have to also have resources and people both physical resources and human resources in the faculties that also have the corporate memory of where we’re going and what we’re doing and where we’ve been. It can’t just be the centre that holds that corporate memory and strategic direction but we have to challenge and lead, be the people that are up there with the latest developments in learning and teaching.

So we’re trying to do two things here, move the focus away from a focus on developing teaching to a focus on enhancing student engagement, experience and learning outcomes. The way in which we’re trying to do that is by building the capacity of the institution to be able to address issues related to and that affect that engagement experience and learning outcomes and building the capability of staff to work within the system in a way that supports the development of engaging students and helping them to have a good learning experience and develop good learning outcomes.

Points of leverage in the teaching and learning network

Senge (1990) identifies systems thinking, and the associated notion of leverage, as a key skill for leaders building learning organisations:

Systems thinking also shows that small, well-focused actions can produce significant, enduring improvements, if they are in the right place. Systems thinkers refer to this idea as the principle of ‘leverage’. Tackling a difficult
problem is often a matter of seeing where the high leverage lies, where a change— with a minimum of effort— would lead to lasting, significant improvement (Senge, 1990, p. 15).

Below is a list of points of leverage for the strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres and the organisations in which they exist. Some of these 12 points of strategic leadership leverage have been touched on in Part C of the Guide on implementing strategies. To maximise strategic impact, teaching and learning centres can and should be actively contributing in all these areas of leverage for positive organisational change. They provide a useful summary of advice and guidance gleaned from the project.

Leverage point 1: New visions/new plans/new times

Given the intensely competitive national environment, universities are developing more ambitious visions and plans. Clear and ambitious visions and goals proceed naturally from universities' historical commitments and strengths. They lead directly into their ambitions for special positioning and recognition in the sector. Visions and plans can provide the key point of differentiation and attraction for universities in the minds of their various stakeholders. They address the questions of who we are, what we stand for and how we go about our business. It seems that many universities continue to develop, review, clarify or change their vision as articulated with the directions they wish to take in teaching and learning. Vision seems essential given the changing nature of teaching and learning environments in higher education. For example, Bates (2000) argues for the centrality of educationally well grounded and articulated visions to shape the best uses of technology in higher education. Choice, possibilities and pitfalls loom large in charting desired future directions. A university's vision for guiding desired directions in teaching and learning needs to be widely recognised, understood and enacted throughout the organisation. Lack of clear vision can be reflected in misguided, fragmented and localised teaching and learning initiatives. It can be reflected also in the haphazard proliferation of unrelated teaching and learning policies that can often be found in universities. The range of specialised policies on many different facets of teaching and learning can lack overall focus and force in the absence of a well articulated, widely accepted and enacted vision. Action can be determined through reference to policy procedure, to the extent it exists, and not to more holistic views on what might really count in advancing the quality of teaching and learning. University vision statements can often appear bland, lacking theoretical rigour, evidential grounding and inspirational tone. As a consequence, strategic actions can attempt to cover too many bases and be pre-occupied with short-term concerns. A limited sense of vision can suggest a lack of confidence on the part of academic leadership as to the direction the organisation should take in teaching and learning, and this may permeate through to all levels of staff as well as students.

Students are less likely to develop a strong sense of allegiance to an organisation that is uncertain about the values and principles underlying its approaches to teaching and learning. Similarly, it is less likely that teaching staff will engage effectively with students if the relationship between their goals and objectives and the mission and vision of the university is ambiguous or even contradictory. Nor is it likely that administrative and support staff can convey a clear and unified sense of purpose with respect to the services they provide. The vital concepts of the student experience and of engaging learners need to permeate university plans and policies and draw upon national and international research and trends in good practices. In developing contemporary visions and plans universities can benefit from developing formal connections with other universities with similar aspirations for the purpose of sharing practices, innovations and insights emanating from strategic direction. Given that the scholarship of teaching and learning emphasises the centrality of the student learning experience, universities are taking their own distinctive approaches to enhancing their students' learning experiences and making these prominent in their teaching and learning plans. It is suggested that such plans are
more likely to gain broad acceptance among academic and administrative staff through wide consultation led by the university’s strategic leadership.

Universities are developing visions for learning, teaching and research in times of major change. Visions of desired states of organisational growth and development should be crafted for and by the key stakeholders affected and charged with their implementation. They should be informed by national and international bodies of theory and practice in higher education, and based on an analysis of particular university’s student profile as related to significant changes in the nature of the student experience. Effective strategic leadership requires university teaching and learning plans to have appropriate goals and objectives accompanied with achievable targets, timeframes and accountabilities. The cornerstone of a teaching and learning plan should be a succinct and potent statement of theoretically well grounded principles to which a university is committed in relation to teaching, learning and the student experience.

The observations presented in Table 3 have been made on the key components of strategic planning and implementation in relation to teaching and learning in higher education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key components of plan</th>
<th>Missing element results in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear shared vision</td>
<td>A quick start but early fade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity for change</td>
<td>Anxiety and frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actionable first steps</td>
<td>Haphazard efforts and false starts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model the way</td>
<td>Cynicism and distrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinforce and embed change</td>
<td>Drift back to old ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate and improve</td>
<td>Scepticism and stagnation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Leverage point 2: Preparation of new continuing academic staff

The appropriate induction and preparation of academic teaching staff is a national priority area of investigation in Australian higher education. Universities have introduced compulsory GCHE (or equivalent) to develop the teaching knowledge and skills of new continuing teaching staff. Some of these courses have been very rigid in their course structures, although anecdotal evidence suggests that some have been reviewed and restructured to make them more suited (i.e. relevant and flexible) to the changing world of academic work. Rather than having rigid structures that develop the same basic set of teaching knowledge and skills in all new academics, courses are being revamped to allow each new staff member to develop the knowledge and skills most appropriate to their own professional and personal circumstances. This has been a consequence of recognising the enormous diversity of staff teaching capabilities undertaking such courses on entering their university. This diversity is multi-dimensional covering not only existing teaching experience, that can range from first time teaching to twenty years’ existing experience, but also dimensions such as the different pedagogies that are the norm across disciplines, the commitment to completing such courses, career stage, and expertise in specific areas of teaching, knowledge of technology, existing teaching qualifications and research skills.
The aims of GCHE or equivalents, as part of the deliberations of the National Foundations Colloquium, are being recast to better recognise more relevant and flexible approaches informed by the scholarship on academic preparation to teach in higher education, and which appropriately consider existing expertise of participants and allows for depth of study as well as breadth of study as valid pathways through the courses. By way of illustration, this process has, for example, been undertaken with Deakin’s GCHE, the structure of which allows for a diversity of staff background by:

- having only one compulsory unit and a choice of pathways;
- the development of ‘experts’ and ‘leaders’ through a research project pathway working with recognised ‘experts’ as supervisors; and
- the inclusion of any combination of the large range of existing online professional development modules combined into a unit that allows for staff to include development of knowledge and skills in new teaching approaches, practices and tools into their compulsory program (rather than in competition with the compulsory program).

A compulsory one day induction program has also been introduced for all staff with a teaching role that includes the essential information about Deakin’s academic processes and teaching support processes. The vast majority of the program is offered in an online format taking appropriate advantage of the technologies available. It aims to be a model of the University’s commitment to flexible education underpinned by appropriate research and scholarship in all its facets. Other universities seem to be reshaping their courses in ways consistent with their own teaching and learning strengths, commitments and directions.

**Leverage point 3:**
**Compulsory casual teaching development program**

As with continuing academic teaching staff, the recognition of the special developmental needs of casual staff is also a national area of priority investigation in Australian higher education. Again, as one example, in response to this national agenda, Deakin University reviewed its casual staff induction and support program in 2006 and introduced a revamped program in 2007 coordinated by a person who, himself, is an experienced casual teacher in the Deakin context. The program has been developed with an emphasis on a student-centred/learning-centred approach to teaching – an approach that will lead to deep (rather than surface) learning. It is premised on current educational theory, but is designed to be practical in nature. The program has been developed by staff within Deakin’s Institute of Teaching and Learning, in association with staff from Human Resources, the Division of Student Life and the faculties. The program also incorporates ideas and feedback from sessions run with casual academic staff over the last three years. It also draws on materials available in similar programs at other Australian universities. The program is intended to be completed in the first trimester of employment as a casual academic – tutor, demonstrator or marker – at Deakin and is a condition of continuing employment in this role. Casual staff members are reimbursed for their participation in the program. A newer addition to the program has been the introduction of a compulsory module online, *Teaching with DSO (Deakin Studies Online)*. This module gives casual staff a broad introduction to e-learning technologies being used at the University and is beneficial whether the staff member concerned is directly involved in online teaching or not.

**Leverage point 4:**
**Just-in-time/just-sufficient/just-for-me professional development**

Peters (1992, p. 383) observes in relation to developing knowledge management structures in dispersed organisations that ‘Wise application of information technology is a necessary, but far from sufficient, condition for knowledge management success’. Professional development (PD) online should be available in geographically dispersed
organisations just-in-time/just-sufficient for the individual staff member's immediate needs, and just-for-them. Many universities are spread geographically over different campuses, different cities, and through different regions locally, nationally and internationally. Many academics are highly mobile in their research, teaching, management and consultancy work. It would be fair to say that the contemporary academic enterprise, work and work patterns are now highly dependent on ICTs. Flexibility of provision of professional learning opportunities seems imperative in most institutions, irrespective of the degree of their formal commitment to online or flexible education for their students.

Online-supported professional development environments should be viewable by key domains and skill areas related to excellence in tertiary teaching and learning. Moreover, they could be viewable by a staff member's level of tertiary teaching competence and experience. For example, the environment could be viewed by those new to tertiary teaching, new to teaching at the university, and by more experienced, competent teachers for their ongoing professional development. To achieve this, such environments are best driven by searchable databases. Such environments should be problem and issue centred therefore allowing staff to quickly locate resources and use communication channels to improve their teaching in both virtual and physical settings. They should contain generic advice and support on tertiary teaching and learning principles and practices along with connections into discipline-based educational concerns. The sites should be open to a broad range of parties who can contribute to enhancing the quality of teaching and student learning, including visitors who may wish to understand how quality tertiary teaching is conceived, and how its quality can be enhanced in an e-supported, dynamic action oriented environment. In many institutions, online-supported professional development environments need to promote a sense of community involvement across faculties, departments, programs and disciplines. The resources within these environments should be rich in multimedia and such material should be able to be manipulated by teacher-users for different purposes. Overall, these environments should showcase the integration of the best of a range of e-learning technologies from learning management systems to multimedia content repositories to social software tools like blogs, wikis and podcasting.

**Leverage point 5: Communities of practice in teaching and learning**

The career advancement view above is designed to develop educators with specialist expertise relevant to teaching in their fields of interest and their possible contribution is discussed above. They can also act within communities of practice (CoPs) to support excellent teaching within the institution through activities such as recognition of new outstanding educators within the institution, and dissemination of outstanding teaching practice.

Communities of teaching/teacher and learning/learners practice can be fundamental in enabling the realisation of an institution's teaching and learning vision. However, as Viskovic (2006) notes, not all teacher’s local communities are ‘warm, friendly and cooperative’, and this may hinder the operation of CoPs. A further factor that may explain the slow emergence of successful CoP activity in Australian higher education is that industry-focused management/corporation CoPs may not translate readily into the academic environment. Given that research into and practical applications of CoP have primarily been industry-focused, a new paradigm for CoP in academe called CoP-iA can be argued. Table 4, following, summarises the salient points of difference between CoP in the commercial world and CoP-iA.

The range of CoPs that could be fostered organisationally is outlined in Table 5.
Table 4  Points of difference between corporate CoP and CoP-iA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differences relevant to CoPs</th>
<th>Corporations</th>
<th>Academe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power relationships</td>
<td>▪ Power structures well defined</td>
<td>▪ Power structures poorly defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Power is vested in department, division, company to meet organisational objectives</td>
<td>▪ Power is diversely spread over a wide mix of teaching, research, and funding objectives, where the individual has power to influence that mix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Governments have little power over specific organisational objectives over the short term</td>
<td>▪ Governments have significant power, short- and long-term, over policy decisions and funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Organisational objectives are usually well understood by employees</td>
<td>▪ Organisational objectives are usually poorly understood by employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Individual employee objectives are suborned and compliant to organisational objectives</td>
<td>▪ Individual employee objectives are often influenced by personal objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Organisation is more likely to support CoP that have a close fit to organisational objectives</td>
<td>▪ The institution, as a sector, has little experience in how CoP-iA should be encouraged, supported, or managed and has difficulties matching organisational and personal objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Employees have little freedom to individualise their personal objectives within the organisation</td>
<td>▪ Employees have significant freedom to individualise their personal objectives within and beyond the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incentives/ rewards</td>
<td>▪ Employee incentives are organisationally controlled in that incentives are matched to and measured by organisational strategies and individual employee contribution to strategy success</td>
<td>▪ Incentive is dispersed between the institution and the individual rewards for effort fragmented and often external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
<td>▪ These are usually directly suborned within relatively cohesive organisational structures built to meet organisational strategy and objectives</td>
<td>▪ Although academe has structure such as discipline, school and faculty, there are often over-arching teaching-focused , research-focused and funding-focused structures, within which individuals can have diverse or indirect responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource control</td>
<td>▪ Negotiated to meet organisational objectives; usually unit controlled</td>
<td>▪ Where power structures are poorly defined, employee objectives are influenced by personal objectives; where responsibilities and resourcing is poorly aligned control is likely to be diverse and poorly focused</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5  Range of communities of practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of CoP-iA</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Staff focus</th>
<th>Support/ involvement of institution</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organic</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>Self-determination and interest but a private involvement with others</td>
<td>CoP-iA is unknown to the institution</td>
<td>Discipline related</td>
<td>Self-determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurtured (Recognised)</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>Self-determination but a desire for the CoP-iA to be recognised by the institution</td>
<td>CoP-iA and members are registered by the institution and some minor support provided</td>
<td>Discipline related</td>
<td>Self-determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentional (Supported)</td>
<td>Voluntary + Mentored + Performance appraisal related</td>
<td>A desire to work with the institution on issues of personal interest</td>
<td>A significant level of institutional support both financial, technical and work-load recognition and some minor support provided</td>
<td>Cross discipline Guided</td>
<td>Guided Self-determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic (Intentional)</td>
<td>Voluntary + Invited + Mentored + Performance</td>
<td>By institutional invitation Career choice appraisal related</td>
<td>Institutional imperative</td>
<td>Cross discipline Guided</td>
<td>Guided Strategically important themes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While, conventionally CoPs meet face-to-face Spratt, Palmer and Coldwell (2000) showed that virtual CoPs can be effective. Online environments are crucial as a key focus of investigation relating to good practice, policy development, research and scholarship in flexible education and as a key means in a distributed organisation to enable virtual communication and collaboration. Fostering a range of CoPs at different levels, on different topics of interest and in relation to different faculties, schools, disciplines and campuses will require the new forms of social software tools and networking underpinning an online-supported social learning architecture.

**Leverage point 6:**

**Strategic funding for teaching and learning development**

The delicate balancing act in higher education relates to emphasis on the conservation of resources often associated with QA, and risky investments in innovation associated with quality improvement (QI), indeed, major quality break-throughs. Encouraging innovation is an important aspect of demonstrating major strengths in teaching and learning. It has been seen as particularly important in demonstrating leadership in new technologies related to on- and off-campus education. Over time many universities have attempted to stimulate innovation through substantial strategic institutional funding devoted to projects directed towards advancing teaching and learning within disciplines, within and across faculties, and for the entire organisation. A significant proportion of this funding has been directed to projects related to the use of technology in teaching and learning, an area of continuing ongoing importance.
Leverage point 7: 
Supporting teaching excellence through awards and fellowships

Teaching awards and fellowships are powerful ways of recognising excellent teachers, and providing them and their colleagues with development opportunities. The ALTC has developed a strong framework of criteria and descriptors for assessing teaching excellence and programs that enhance learning. The ALTC has also been concerned with recognising and rewarding a broader range of staff and teams who directly or indirectly contribute to the quality of the student learning experience. Universities have been aligning their own teaching excellence award schemes with the ALTC framework. Various motivations can lead staff to apply for national and institutional awards. Some staff members seek alone, or with colleagues, recognition and reward for their accomplishments which in turn might support their own career development and advancement. They may not wish to feel obliged to share formally their special educational expertise with colleagues in the organisation. Others may be motivated to apply for both individual recognition and reward, and to use it as a vehicle for demonstrating their educational expertise and leadership in the organisation through various formal roles and mechanisms.

Moreover, the secondment of academic staff in faculties to work on fellowship projects with staff from teaching and learning centres can contribute significantly to strengthening connections between both parties. There may be different categories of teaching and learning fellows. For example, those academic staff members who are project leaders of strategic teaching and learning development projects could be deemed Teaching and Learning Innovation Fellows. Faculty staff members could be seconded to teaching and learning centres, as Teaching and Learning Professional Development Fellows, to develop new approaches to professional development on key teaching topics of interest to the institution. Faculty staff might focus on developing and disseminating expertise relating to new media/new technologies in the role of Online Teaching and Learning Fellows. In addition, joint appointments might be made over a period of time between centres and faculties, where the Teaching and Learning Fellow might work on both a strategic institution-wide project, and on disseminating good teaching and learning practices through their faculty in ways grounded in particular disciplinary concerns. Fellows often apply for teaching awards both institutionally and nationally. Their recognition, in turn, can see them in leadership roles and as active contributors to the formation of communities of practice, local mentoring, and so on. It is another example of where various initiatives can cohere to build the broad ranging teaching expertise required by the institution in advancement of their teaching and learning commitments and directions.

Leverage point 8: 
Disseminating exemplary practices online

In the corporate world, Peters (1992) highlights the importance of computer-based knowledge management structures to enable the acquisition, storage and deployment of organisational learning outcomes for future business value. As related to higher education, the value of cases of good practice as an integral resource in e-supported professional development environments has been argued by Segrave, Holt and Farmer (2005). Jonassen, Peck and Wilson (1999), drawing upon the ecological metaphor of learning environments as spaces, identify cases as a key resource in supporting individual and collaborative exploration and problem solving. Cases in such environments provide ‘on-demand advice. They supplant the experience that the novice teacher has not had’ (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999, p. 198). Holt, Borland, Farmer, Rice and Mulready (2005) have completed an online case resource to support the professional development of staff particularly in the area of digital and online-based teaching and learning.
Leverage point 9:
Recognition, use and expansion of education ‘experts’

By building up a pool of ‘experts’ in different areas of teaching, as universities do with researchers in different areas of research, institutions can create a resource bank of potential mentors who can help others wanting to build up their own specialist teaching expertise. Such a pool of experts could also be called upon to oversee or drive innovative teaching developments across the institution. Universities need to increasingly draw upon the knowledge and experience of their best educators, wherever they might be located in the organisation, to enhance significantly the student learning experience through leadership in teaching and learning. In response to the challenge to give greater recognition and developmental opportunities to a much broader range of talented and committed staff, these teaching leaders may occupy formal or informal leadership roles across the institution.

In doing this, it is important for universities to recognise publicly the achievements of their most outstanding educators in a way that creates parity of esteem with conventional research activity for the scholarly practice of teaching and learning. In Deakin’s case, it has created the CDDE whose members are recognised as experts and leaders in teaching and learning in the institution and who will contribute to developing the next generation of teaching and learning experts. Staff judged by their peers or their students to be leading educators are invited to apply for membership. Successful applicants are expected to contribute to the leadership and development of teaching and learning at the University through activities such as:

- supervision of a GCHE candidate undertaking the research project option;
- contribution to the Deakin teaching and learning conference;
- contribution to the seminar program of the Institute of Teaching and Learning;
- mentoring of other academic staff;
- conducting research in teaching and learning;
- leadership of a Strategic Teaching and Learning Grant Scheme project;
- contribution to an ALTC-funded project;
- an existing formal teaching and learning leadership role, including Program Leader, Associate Head of School (Teaching and Learning) and Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning);
- leadership of strategic course development activities;
- a leadership role in a teaching and learning related CoP;
- significant contribution to an initiative to enhance the student learning experience; and/or
- contribution to an APD initiative for Deakin staff.

In addition to creating the CDDE two other initiatives have also been introduced to recognise outstanding educators: Teaching Scholars and Professional Development Fellows. Teaching Scholars are staff who are given special appointments as teaching leaders with an expectation that their scholarship and research be in teaching and learning rather than their normal discipline area and Professional Development Fellows are co-opted to the Institute of Teaching and Learning to develop material to extend the teaching and learning knowledge and skills of their fellow staff. The development of Teaching Scholar or Fellowship positions is also occurring at other universities.

Leverage point 10:
Establishing reliable ICT infrastructure

Encouraging adoption of educationally sound use of technology requires reliable and effective ICT infrastructure. Most universities have invested considerable funding into
developing such infrastructure for both production and development systems. This is a key to the acceptance of technology in teaching and learning by both staff and students.

**Leverage point 11: Enhancing the use of student evaluation to improve teaching and learning**

Evaluating the quality of teachers and the teaching program is important as a means of recognising those with expertise. Recognition is a major incentive to improvement and development. Institution-wide student evaluation surveying is a prominent feature of universities’ approaches to assuring and improving the quality of teaching and learning in Australian higher education, and such surveys currently form one aspect of ALTC’s Teaching Quality Indicators project. At Deakin, for example, the student evaluation system was upgraded in 2006. Two major changes of relevance were the introduction of evaluations of named individual teachers that are available to both the individuals evaluated and those with line management responsibility for their performance, and the separation of the question about online resources into two with one question about the systems that support online learning, and a separate question about the teaching and learning resources used through those systems. While student feedback is only one dimension of measuring the quality of the teaching program these changes focus considerable attention on key aspects of adapting to the changed world as it relates to the online learning experience.

**Leverage point 12: Renewing leadership in teaching and learning**

Ramsden (1998, p. 3) observed ‘These are sharp and stimulating times. These are times when leadership comes into its own. It is the task of academic leaders to revitalise and energise their colleagues to meet the challenges of tough times with eagerness and with passion. We have seriously underestimated the power of leadership in higher education.’ A decade on the observation still holds true. Jameson (2006, p. 36) argues for a new ‘connected transformational leadership field’ in post-compulsory education encompassing distributed and shared leadership in educational organisations, and which is a major focus of this project.

The ALTC has funded a number of leadership capacity building grants projects, *inter alia*, examining the roles of various academic leaders from deans, heads of departments, associate deans (teaching and learning) and course coordinators. There are universities who have reviewed or are reviewing the roles of associate deans and associate heads of school (teaching and learning), with the view to refocusing their contributions around QI, development and innovation in realising scholarship-driven visions for teaching and learning. Coupled with refocusing the roles of those in formal leadership positions is the expansion of scholarly teaching leaders as above and their mobilisation within communities of practice. The aim of such initiatives it appears is to develop a more inclusive distributed leadership capability in teaching and learning across the institution by recognising the important relationships between those:

- in both formal and informal leadership roles;
- in different areas; and
- operating at different levels of responsibility within the organisation.

With the adoption of corporate-wide e-learning technologies by universities aimed at adding value to on-campus and off-campus education, an ongoing challenge appears to be the effective leadership and management of technology-enabled, distributed learning environments (Coates, 2006). This, in turn suggests the need for robust forms of distributed educational leadership to ensure that such distributed learning environments generate maximum teaching and learning value for all parties, with a strong focus on enhancing student engagement and productive learning in a broad range of contexts.
Universities are implementing special leadership development programs for associate deans (teaching and learning), associate heads of school (teaching and learning) and course coordinators, and strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres is well placed to help conceive and deliver these initiatives.
Part E: Conducting an evidence-driven approach to strategic leadership development

Introduction

Individuals acquire professional wisdom through building on the reported experiences of others and from their own experiences. Integrating this with the best available empirical evidence allows decisions to be made based on informed understanding that is supported by critical thinking. In the context of teaching and learning centres seeking to understand and implement strategic leadership, the approaches described below provide exemplars of how useful evidence can be gathered and cumulative understanding and knowledge gained.

Five different methods of gaining information are described. These are in the order in which they were used in this project:

- Literature review.
- Interviews.
- Survey.
- Focus group discussions.
- Workshops.

These data collection methods can help develop understandings of key factors at each stage of the teaching and learning centre life-cycle. For example, as indicated, interviews and focus groups can elicit views from stakeholders on the purpose, functions and performance of centres. Workshops can help generate strategies, and assess a centre's capacity and capability to achieve its goals. National survey data can be drawn upon in informing university senior executive on the expectations and performance of other centres in the sector. Drawing on the reported experience of others and the insights they have gained is an integral part of a scholarly approach.

The material for each method is drawn from the research undertaken for this project with the intention of illustrating how cycles of evidence can be drawn upon to enrich later stages of data collection and professional development (see Figure 3 – Key areas of data collection in the maturation cycle). This stimulus material is authentic and valid, being drawn from the direct experience and perceptions of leaders within the Australian higher education sector who are directly concerned with centres and with teaching and learning. With one exception (Workshop 1 – Strategic Leadership) each approach described and explained here has been implemented with very positive feedback regarding its efficacy.

It is not envisaged that any of the exemplars would be adopted in its entirety, but each should provide some generative ideas for any centre (or group) seeking information in this way. They should assist leaders in their understanding of what it means to be ‘strategic’ and also how this understanding can be applied in facilitating the ongoing development – the move towards maturation – of their centres.
Literature review

It is recommended that a review of relevant literature should form the basis of any review and improvement process for a centre. The literature review should be framed by the specific aims of the improvement project, and would sensibly draw on the final project reports of any relevant prior ALTC work. The key issues and themes identified in the literature review provide guidance for the broad direction(s) of subsequent project research stages, theoretical and empirical perspectives for the detailed project analysis, and potential case study exemplars of specific practical actions that might be taken by the centre as part of its improvement process.

The first stage of this project involved a review of the related literature to provide the theoretical base for following project stages. The literature review was framed by the aims of the project; broadly:

1. To investigate the forms of leadership that are present and emerging in organisational centres for teaching and learning.
2. To develop a Teaching and Learning Strategic Leadership Guide for professional development purposes for capacity building of leadership personnel of institutional centres for teaching and learning.
The literature review included two principal agendas of investigation:

1. The literature relating to central teaching and learning capabilities, leadership, the learning organisation, professional development and quality assurance and quality improvement in higher education.


Key themes that emerged from the literature review, and that are likely to be relevant to any centre improvement process, included:

- strategic leadership agendas and agencies in higher education;
- quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement;
- recognising, promoting and enhancing quality;
- the targeted stakeholders;
- strategic leadership contributions to quality in higher education;
- the organisational landscape in higher education;
- organisation and staff development needs in higher education;
- the changing world of academic teaching work;
- conceptualising academic career advancement in teaching and learning;
- purposes and models of organisation for academic development;
- purposes of teaching and learning centres;
- teaching and learning centre models of organisation;
- theoretical perspectives on leadership, change and improvement in higher education; and
- leveraging the strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres.

The complete findings of the initial review of the related literature are contained in the project Occasional Paper (Holt, Palmer & Challis, 2008), from which key extracts are presented in Appendix A. This literature review was used to inform the design of the subsequent project research phases, as well as the ongoing analysis of the project data thus collected.

**Interviews**

While it is often more convenient to conduct interviews by telephone or videoconference, most would agree that face-to-face contact, as happened in this project, is likely to make communication easier. This is mainly because it is likely that rapport between interviewer and interviewee will be more readily established and non-linguistic features and cues are more evident.

Interviewing is a dynamic, complex process. In an interview, two complex people operate with imperfect verbal and nonverbal symbols in a situation that is rarely neutral. A common approach to interviewing implies a simple confrontationist model: the respondent having information that the interviewer wants and the interviewer seeking to release that information. Where, however, as in this project, the interview is seen as a mutual process of interaction, albeit led and framed by the interviewer, both parties can explore the meaning of the questions and answers involved and these answers continually inform the evolving conversation. Further, the interviewee can contribute new directions to the topic(s) being explored, allowing for unintended but still valuable outcomes.

In this way, an interview can provide informative insights for both the interviewer and the person interviewed. For a centre seeking perceptions from key people, representing key
cohorts, the interview can, itself, play an important part in the development process as well as providing valuable information to guide that development.

Centres which decide to seek information using individual face-to-face interviews need to be aware of the resources they will consume. As well as making decisions about the interview itself, how the data will be collected and then analysed and reported/disseminated (see point 6, below) should be established at the outset with at least indicative costing in place.

The material below is drawn from the experience of the 37 one-to-one face-to-face interviews conducted as part of this project. As research interviews across several institutions, and undertaken for an externally funded project, some of what is described may be judged as unnecessary for a centre seeking information for internal use only. It should, however, be useful to consider each of these points as a start for an interview process tailored to suit a centre’s needs.

Stage 1: Preparation (see also Appendix B)

1 Determine the purpose of the interview, who should conduct the interviews and who should be interviewed

   The purpose was set by the grant submission and the consultant to the project (as the senior researcher) was chosen to conduct all the interviews. The consultant is an experienced interviewer with considerable experience in the higher education sector and is not affiliated with any one institution. Where the interviewer is known to the person being interviewed, rapport may be more readily established but there is a risk that the person being interviewed may be more guarded in their responses, or give what they perceive is the desired ‘right’ answer, especially if interviewed by someone in a position of authority. Those interviewed were selected on the basis that they were in the appropriate positions to provide informed comment and, where representative of a group, they could speak with sound knowledge and experience.

2 Clarify any ethical issues and deal with them appropriately

   Key ethical considerations are confidentiality and how the data will be collected and dealt with. It is essential, also, to gain ethics approval prior to the commencement of any research that will be reported externally.

3 Be very clear about what issues you wish the interview to cover

   The issues were derived from the scholarly literature and the experience of the team members. An initial lengthy list was refined to a set of themes and, from these, eight issues were selected (see Appendix C). Five of these (those asterisked) were regarded as high priority issues that would be common to all interviews with the others to be included depending on how the interviewee chose to respond and if they chose to contribute their own agendas.

4 Determine the length of the interview

   The number of issues covered and their complexity bears a direct relationship to the time allocated. Usually, 45–60 minutes is a standard time for a face-to-face interview. Here, 90 minutes was the agreed maximum time with few interviews being shorter than 80 minutes.

5 Determine the style of the interview

   In this project, the interview style was conversational. This meant that, while in practice each person covered all the core issues at some time, the interviewer sought to privilege the respondent’s voice and to make links between their comments and
the next issue to be discussed. A structured linear interview – closer to an oral questionnaire – is likely to be more straightforward, especially for the interviewer.

6 Determine how the data will be collected, analysed and stored

Many interviewers make notes during interviews to highlight key points to return to and those who use a more structured approach tend to use notes as an aide-memoire. Where the focus is on the idea, rather than the words, such notes may suffice as the interview record. In this project the interviewer did not use notes, choosing to concentrate attention on the finer nuances on the conversation and maintain eye contact with the person being interviewed. While there may be some concern about an interview being recorded, experience indicates that the recording device tends to become taken for granted and does not appear to detract from candour. Recording is advantageous where there is a rapid flow of complex information and there is significance in the precise words being used and the order in which ideas are expressed. It allows opportunities for multiple listening and close analysis and means that the actual words of the person being interviewed are captured, rather than a quick impression or interpretation at the time by the interviewer. Digital recording technology assists data retrieval and storage and, where the analysis is done using computer software, the data are immediately in digital format. Listening to recordings of interviews is very time-consuming. For this project the interviews were transcribed by a transcription agent. Interviewees were then sent these transcriptions and were free to amend in any way they chose. They were then analysed by the interviewer within the methodological framework already agreed to, and the data responses encoded prior to access to the data beyond the immediate project team (in one instance, and by request, access was restricted to the interviewer). The original data files are securely stored in the university office of a project team member.

7 Determine where, and when, the interview(s) will be held

The number of interviews and also who is interviewed will depend on the availability and flexibility of both parties. Wherever possible, the space should be selected by the interviewee so they have ownership of the space and, presumably, will feel comfortable within it.

Stage 2: Communication

8 Communicate these decisions to those being interviewed

There is a fine balance between providing the necessary information to allow those invited to participate to make an informed decision and providing so much information that it becomes off-putting.

While issues were flagged to allow interviewees the opportunity to reflect on these and/or gather information beforehand, and to assist them to feel confident, they were not given the actual questions for two main reasons: (1) this would have made the interview heavily pre-structured and mitigated against the conversational tone and (2) this would possibly have led to studied responses with the risk of forfeiting the immediacy and candour that emerged in the interviews.

In this project, information was sent by email to coordinators at the university concerned at least 10 days prior to the interviews being conducted. Those contacted were given the opportunity to decline the interview and also to seek further information.
Stage 3: Conduct of the interview

9 Ensure that there is appropriate proximal space between the interviewer and the interviewee and that any recorder is obvious and reachable

The interviewer asked the interviewee where they would prefer to sit and, whenever possible, the two sat at right angles to a low(ish) table where the tape recorder was placed. Interviewees were told that they could stop the recording at any time and speak ‘off the record’ and several took advantage of this. Having the tape recorder so accessible and obvious was a reminder that this was an ‘on the record’ conversation.

10 Cover the agreed issues within the agreed time

Each interview commenced with confirmation of how the interview would be conducted and how ethical issues would be handled. At this time interviewees were given the opportunity to seek any further clarifications and/or assurances. The interviewer used her judgement when necessary to balance greater depth of responses to some issues against the need to cover everything comprehensively. The respondent chose which issues to explore in detail and also had the opportunity to add issues. If the interviewee wishes to continue past the agreed time, this can, of course, be negotiated.

Stage 4: Follow up from the interview

11 Monitor that the data have been used in the ways intended and as notified and agreed to

In this project, all those with direct access to the data were fully aware of the ethical requirements and individually and collectively monitored data use.

12 Communicate outcomes from the interviews to those who participated

Those interviewed were fully aware they were being interviewed as part of an ALTC funded project. Where their data have been used very explicitly each has been informed of this and their agreement received. On an institutional level, all universities that sought this as a condition of participation have received material for their approval prior to publication.

Survey

Following an extensive literature review that framed the research project, interviews with a large group of teaching and learning leaders produced a rich qualitative data pool, from which key issues were identified for further exploration, both more broadly and in more detail. This further exploration incorporated a broadening of the data collection base by targeting all directors of teaching and learning centres in Australian universities as the potential respondent group, as well increasing the level of depth of the data collected by seeking detailed quantitative responses to the identified key issues. This section identifies the key survey phases and considerations, and illustrates these with a summary of the issues relating to this project. Additional project-specific details relating to the development and delivery of the survey can be found in Appendix C of the final project report.
Stage 1: Development of survey instrument (see Appendix D)

1 Instrument scope

The survey question items should address the key research questions arising from the project aims and from the prior project phases. The inclusion of demographic items permits both the testing of response sample representativeness and the identification of systematic differences in responses between demographic groups. There is often a decision/trade-off to be made between the length/comprehensiveness of the instrument and the subsequent call on respondent time required to complete the survey.

The survey of directors of centres sought a range of information, including:

- university classification (Go8, ATN, etc.) to permit testing of the representativeness of the respondent sample group;
- time since last centre restructure;
- information about the status and incumbency of the centre director;
- information about the staffing of the centre;
- based on an inventory of 36 centre functions (grouped into 10 broad areas), respondents were asked to rate the importance of each function for their centre and to rate their satisfaction with the performance of their centre in that function;
- respondents were asked to rate the capacity (resources and opportunities) and capability (staff expertise) of their centre to achieve success for each of the broad function areas;
- respondents were asked to rate a list of 10 identified centre constraints;
- respondents were asked to rate the importance of the relationship that their centre had with nine key teaching and learning leadership positions, and to rate their satisfaction with the effectiveness of those relationships;
- respondents were asked to indicate on a continuum of one to 20, the degree to which centre staff were included in relevant university activities related to teaching and learning; and
- finally, respondents were invited to optionally include any other information, as open-ended text, that they considered relevant to the survey.

2 Response schema

The survey instrument should employ response scales that are appropriate to the data being collected by each item and the intended method of subsequent data analysis. Response scales should include options that avoid contrived responses to questions that are not applicable to particular respondents. Where respondents are asked to respond to a set of fixed/closed items, an opportunity for respondents to identify extra items should be provided.

For all survey items requiring a rating response, a four-point scale was used without a mid-point, requiring respondents to select something other than a default middle rating. For all survey items requiring a rating response, a ‘not applicable’ (N/A) rating point was included to avoid contrived responses where that item did not apply to a particular centre. For all survey sections based on lists (functions, constraints and relationships) derived from prior project research, a section was included where respondents could identify up to four additional items and provide ratings for them. For all survey items requiring a rating response (except for centre constraints, which were simply ranked), two dimensional ratings scales were used (importance-satisfaction, capacity-capability). This allows what would otherwise be uni-dimensional response data to plotted as a two dimensional grid, permitting a richer analysis and classification of respondent data.
3 Instrument validation

Prior to full-scale use of the instrument, some form of validation should be undertaken. The options for validation are closely related to the nature of the instrument and its intended purpose.

Following initial drafting of the survey instrument, the wider project team and the project reference group were employed as a pilot expert group to assess both the content and the format of delivery of the survey instrument. Based on feedback from the pilot group, refinements were made to the survey instrument, with the intent of improving its content and face validity.

Stage 2: Ethics approval and management

4 Administering institution

Ethics approval for projects involving human research can be time consuming. Multi-institution projects undertaking human research need to determine whether the project requires approval from a single or from multiple institutional research ethics committees. Projects incorporating multiple data collection phases need to determine whether a single application or multiple applications for ethics approval will be made.

In this project, human research ethics approval for all stages of data collection was administered by the lead institution. Separate applications for ethics approval for each of the three project data collection phases were prepared. While this required three applications for ethics approval, it meant that each one was comparatively simple and straightforward.

5 Consent process

Human research approval processes require that respondent participation is made on the basis of informed consent. This requires a procedure for informing potential respondents about the project and a procedure for indicating consent to participate in the project.

As is usual for human research projects, a plain language statement was employed to provide the necessary information to potential participants. For the purposes of simplicity of participant consent, and to encourage the maximum number of respondents, the survey was anonymous. Respondent consent to participate in the survey was indicated by their completion of the survey. No specific record of consent was required.

Stage 3: Delivery of survey

6 Delivery

There are a range of options for survey delivery. The method chosen should be appropriate to the survey instrument and to the characteristics of the potential respondent group.

An online survey process was hosted by the lead institution ensuring integrity of the survey data, simple and fast response, automatic management of survey release and reminders, and automatic collection of survey data in electronic form.

Stage 4: Analysis of survey data

7 Analysis

The appropriate methods of data analysis depend on the data themselves, and should have been largely determined during the instrument development phase.
At the completion of the survey period, the respondent data was exported from the online survey system as a comma separated variable (CSV) formatted data file. This data file was then imported into the SPSS statistical software package for detailed analysis. The data collected were quantitatively analysed using a range of descriptive, parametric and non-parametric techniques.

**Stage 5: Follow-up actions**

8 **Follow-up**

The survey project should include a strategy for the dissemination and use of the research findings.

The full survey report was circulated to all directors of Australian teaching and learning centres via CADAD and has been a valuable comparison data set for benchmarking between centres in Australian universities, and internationally. Some of the key findings of the report are reproduced in Part C. The executive summary of the Report is reproduced in Appendix E. This provides a profile of a mythical ‘average’ teaching and learning centre in Australia, and some of the major concerns of centre directors in undertaking strategic leadership. You could use the report in your strategic leadership development program to:

- compare the functions and services of your centre with others in the sector;
- compare the areas most in need of improvement at your institution with others in the sector;
- compare the areas of greatest constraint in your institution with others in the sector;
- assess your own point of maturity against others; and
- modify the survey for collection of internal stakeholder views on the importance and satisfaction of services you provide in order to enhance performance.

You can also refer to survey findings of directors of academic development in Australian universities and of academic developers and others engaged in the development of academics as teachers in Australian universities in undertaking benchmarking work (see Ling, 2009, vol. 2).

**Focus group discussions**

Focus group discussions allow issues to be explored collaboratively. Once the key issues to be explored had been determined following analysis of the data derived to this point, the facilitator provided an approach that was confirmed by the project team. Importantly, this approach specifically intended to foster development for participants as they discussed issues that were perceived as being of common interest and concern. The research nature of the discussion and time constraints did not allow feedback from one substantive group activity (see point 4, below) as would happen in a workshop, but this was provided later to participants who requested this information.

The material below is drawn from the experience of the 10 focus group discussions conducted as part of this project. They were designed and facilitated by the same person who had conducted the interviews, with continuity of experience being a perceived and real advantage.

In designing the focus group discussions similar key considerations to those outlined above in the section on Interviews were taken into account.

The most significant aspects associated with this particular method of data collection were as follows:
1 **Determining the number and composition of the group**

In this project, it was agreed that six to eight people would be the desired number and these would be drawn from specified cohorts (university executive, centre staff, associate deans of teaching and learning, and students). As individual universities nominated staff and made internal arrangements the final number and composition were at their discretion. The letter of invitation and response template are provided in Appendix F.

2 **Determining the time**

90 minutes was the time allocated, and 120 minutes would incorporate access to refreshments and increase flexibility.

3 **Determining how data would be collected**

Plenary discussion was digitally recorded for later audio checks as deemed necessary. A perceived strength of the design was that it allowed written data provided by individual and group activities as outlined below to be readily available for later use. This proved to be a major saving in time for those responsible for analysing and reporting the data.

4 **Determining the structure**

In this project, it was decided that it was important to build on the first stages of data collection (i.e. interviews and the online survey) and to seek information where there were identified gaps. Activities of varying complexity and challenge were incorporated and these were undertaken either individually or in sub-groups.

Once the themes were identified, it was intended that participants would have times when they could comment on their centre or university then and also on centres nationally/internationally. An integrating thread was the comparison between the perceived reality and the ideal.

The facilitator chose to privilege the voices of participants and, while the time allocation was monitored and controlled, there was no overt judgement in terms of how participants chose to respond to the stimulus questions/activities.

As part of the preparation for the focus group discussions, a running sheet was prepared and this is provided below with some additional information regarding the approach used and the objectives each activity was designed to achieve.
Focus group running sheet

Themes
1. What makes teaching and learning centres successful in today's climate?
2. What role does strategic leadership play in making centres successful?

[Written on whiteboard and circulated prior.]

Time: 90 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Context and introduction</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Describe your centre now in one word or phrase. [Responses shared and written on whiteboard without discussion.] Use one word or phrase to describe your ideal centre. [Responses shared and written on whiteboard without discussion.] This should be written up as a table with each person's responses side by side. It is helpful to asterisk those from staff within the centre. DISCUSSION – around congruence of responses in terms of the centre now and then the reality/ideal and among attendees paying special attention to what the group perceives as outliers and seeking explanations where there are apparent strong differences. Written responses recorded on whiteboard and retained throughout the session as a reminder/prompt. Recorded for future reference.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Diagram [see Appendix G] Introductory explanation drawing on prior data and analysis. DISCUSSION Who is responsible? Annotate your diagram incorporating your own ideas and those from the discussion you concur with. Process A What happens here now? 1. Use your RED pen to draw arrows to show the connections between the various boxes. You may prefer to use dots or dashes to indicate partial links and/or add question marks to indicate uncertainty. B What ideally should happen here? 2. Use your BLUE pen to draw arrows to show the connections between the various boxes. DISCUSSION What do you conclude from this activity? Responses collected.</td>
<td>Plenary Individual or small group (no more than three)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objectives
1. To gain an immediate sense of where the group is at in terms of a key indicator.
2. To focus discussion on something that is relevant and where it is reasonable everyone will have an informed view.
3. To give an opportunity for everyone to contribute from the outset (an ice-breaker).

1. To give the project team and participants a better understanding of how identified major stages in the development of centres were played out in practice.
2. To provide a challenging but concrete activity that would also be informative in terms of the data generated and the level of participation/engagement.
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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Strategies in response to</td>
<td>Lack of time for both centre and faculty staff.</td>
<td>Two groups: each Discusses one and writes strategies in response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>survey data</td>
<td>Incorrect or outdated perceptions of the centre’s roles.</td>
<td>Oral recorded</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Retain group or group on interest in the topic</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Written recorded</td>
</tr>
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<td>Areas of desired improvement</td>
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<td>Oral recorded</td>
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<td>Areas of desired improvement</td>
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<td>Oral recorded</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Written recorded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DISCUSSION**

**Areas of desired improvement**

**1. A better job at PD for casual and continuing staff.**

**2. A better job at development for T&L leaders.**

**Objectives**

1. To give participants useful information from the project.
2. To provide the project team (and through them the broader higher education community) with specific strategies to deal with perceived critical areas.

[Note: As this was a research activity, as distinct from a professional development workshop, the strategies were not shared in a plenary but, when requested, the typed sheets were sent to centre directors for their information and possible further use.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What would you wish for if you could be guaranteed of being granted one wish for your centre within the next 12 months?</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wish game</td>
<td>Starting with one person (nominated or volunteer) others respond when they feel appropriate (e.g. they make a similar or very different point or seek clarification). The opportunity to pass is given.</td>
<td>Written and collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oral recorded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives**

1. To give participants the opportunity to think about what they wanted for their centre, then select the most important and share this.
2. To give participants the opportunity to see the extent of commonality of what is desired for their centre.
3. To give the project team a snapshot of what is considered really desirable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What do you wish to contribute to this discussion that hasn’t been mentioned so far or you feel needs to be stressed?</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>Starting with one person (nominated or volunteer) others respond when they feel appropriate (e.g. they make a similar or very different point or seek clarification). The opportunity to pass is given.</td>
<td>Written and collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Note: Where time allows it, it is useful to ask the group what was the ‘stand out’/‘take home’ message from the discussion. This can bridge well into a conclusion that charts future activities and tends to end the session on a positive note. In this case, more time needs to be allocated to the Conclusion.]</td>
<td>Oral recorded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objectives**

1. To give participants the opportunity to add anything they feel is important.
2. To give the project team further feedback on what participants consider important and the extent to which the session has achieved its intended outcomes for all concerned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Workshops

Workshops have the advantage of bringing people together to explore issues and possibly work towards shared understanding and informed decisions. For anyone interested in the notion of strategic leadership, a workshop that explores this is provided below. In contrast to the other exemplars described, this workshop did not contribute to the data collection for this project. Rather, it is included as an exemplar of how interview data generated from the project can be used to stimulate understanding in a local context. This section concludes with a workshop conducted at the HERDSA international conference in July 2009. This workshop was seen as an important part of the dissemination of the project’s findings as well as providing further opportunity for a critical issue (the role of centres in relation to students) to be explored. As with the exemplars above, each workshop is intended to offer ideas, approaches and stimulus material as a starting point.

Workshop 1: Strategic leadership

Themes

1. What constitutes strategic leadership?
2. What is likely to be conducive to strategic leadership?

[Written on whiteboard and circulated prior.]

Time: 120 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Context and introduction</td>
<td>Oral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Describe your leadership style in two words. [Responses shared and written on whiteboard without discussion]</td>
<td>Written responses recorded on whiteboard and retained throughout the session as a reminder/promt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Note: It is helpful for identical/similar responses to be listed together.</td>
<td>See Table 1 below Provided as hard copies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DISCUSSION – paying special attention to what the group perceives as outliers and seeking explanations where there are apparent strong differences. How does this compare with others’ perceptions of their leadership? DISCUSSION – including the extent to which leadership is dependent on the role/position held.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. To gain an immediate sense of where the group is at in terms of a key indicator.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. To focus discussion on something that is relevant and where it is reasonable everyone will have an informed view.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. To give an opportunity for everyone to contribute from the outset (an ice-breaker).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. To provide some data to assist with benchmarking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Notions of strategic leadership</td>
<td>Groups of between three and five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitators should select from the comments provided in Table 2 below and/or use their own material. DISCUSSION – What do these comments tell us about strategic leadership in general and about strategic leadership here? How do you/we define strategic leadership?</td>
<td>Provided as a handout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Written on butchers’ paper and displayed</td>
<td>Responses collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong> &lt;br&gt; 1 To understand that people have different conceptions about what strategic leadership entails. &lt;br&gt; 2 To articulate a personal definition of the term as a context for further discussion.</td>
<td>Individually or in pairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Attributes and circumstances conducive to strategic leadership</strong> &lt;br&gt; From the list provided in Table 3 below the facilitator should select a number suited to the group’s size. &lt;br&gt; Each individual/pair should be given ONE of these (a blind draw is suggested but they could be allocated) and asked to consider: &lt;br&gt; a How important this is to being/becoming a strategic leader. &lt;br&gt; b How relevant this is to their situation(s).</td>
<td>Provided as a handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Note: If the group size is small, it would probably be necessary to give individuals at least two.] &lt;br&gt; Having had time for reflection/discussion (suggest no more than five minutes) each presents their ideas to the whole group. &lt;br&gt; The entire list (use all that have been included plus any others that seem especially relevant) is then shown on a whiteboard (or computer projector) and participants are asked to asterisk their top THREE [One or two if the group is large.] &lt;br&gt; Going around the room these asterisks are recorded and displayed.</td>
<td>Provided as a handout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>DISCUSSION</strong> – including the question ‘Is there anything missing from this list?’ [If so, these should be added to the list shown.] &lt;br&gt; Then circulate the comment reproduced in Table 4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong> &lt;br&gt; 1 To increase understanding of what is conducive to strategic leadership. &lt;br&gt; 2 To assist participants to situate themselves within their own context but also within a broader environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Strategies to assist strategic leadership</strong> &lt;br&gt; From the list generated at Activity 3, select as many as there are groups. [Note: If two or three are clearly dominant and there are more than three groups then more than one group can discuss the same issue.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective</strong> &lt;br&gt; 1 To provide concrete ideas to assist the development of strategic leaders.</td>
<td>Groups of three to five (Retain groups from Activity 1 or regroup perhaps based on interest) Responses collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2–3</td>
<td><strong>How did you become the leader you are today?</strong> &lt;br&gt; <strong>How would you rate yourself as a strategic leader?</strong></td>
<td>Individual reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Objective</strong> &lt;br&gt; 1 To give participants a quiet space to think about their own leadership in relation to what has been covered in the session.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Time | Topic | Approach
--- | --- | ---
6 10 | Objectives |
| 1 To end the session on a forward looking / development note. | Written and then shared by those who choose to do so |
| 2 To provide useful information to those organising the session. |  |
2–3 | Conclusion | Oral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DVC/PVC</th>
<th>Assoc. deans</th>
<th>Directors</th>
<th>Centre staff</th>
<th>Other heads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic Committed</td>
<td>Consultative (3) Approachable</td>
<td>Enabling Facilitative (4)</td>
<td>Facilitative (5) Encouraging</td>
<td>Consultative (6) Collaborative (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instilling vision</td>
<td>Listening Facilitating (2)</td>
<td>Informed Inspiring (2)</td>
<td>Consultative (5) Integrate</td>
<td>Participatory Devolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Collaborative</td>
<td>Inspirational Positive/ encouraging</td>
<td>Big picture</td>
<td>Enabler STRATEGIC (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative Decisive</td>
<td>Relentless Challenging</td>
<td>STRATEGIC Collaborative (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative (2) Democratic</td>
<td>Persuasion Credibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>Advisors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive Facilitative</td>
<td>Challenging (2) Reform</td>
<td></td>
<td>Consultative (7) Example (2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part participatory Consultative (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collegiality Facilitation (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leading from the front</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Notions of strategic leadership

1. ‘Strategic leadership’ suggests that strategic leaders have the capacity to set directions, and identify, choose and implement activities which create compatibility between internal organisational strengths and the changing external environment within which the university operates [Occasional Paper].

2. ‘Strategy’ and ‘strategic’ are two of the most overused and misunderstood words around the sector. I see myself as a leader generally. If one makes a distinction between strategic and operational leadership and then wants to make a distinction between operational leadership and management, I think they’re largely false distinctions. If by ‘strategic’ one means do we generate ideas then I see myself as a strategic leader.

3. … I tend to be up in the big picture end of the spectrum rather than bogged down in detail, which I try to get other people to do at times. … Management is more operational I guess, just organising who is doing what and when and so on. Whereas leadership is really taking people in a slightly different direction because of what you have assessed both internally and externally was what you think is a sensible new way of doing things.

4. I think there’s strategic leadership in regard to the plan in action or realising the value…. I think it’s realising the possibilities of the plan, underpinned by the funding which is really my world of strategic leadership. Now people can say simply that’s implementation, that’s operationalisation and the real strategists, they plan and you implement. But I think that’s sort of a limited view of strategic leadership because I think to realise the value of the plan in action to help generate the value to make the possibilities a reality, can in turn inform the overall design of the plan of action so it’s really an iterative relationship between conception, design and implementation. That’s really my world and I think it’s been primarily my world in any leadership position I’ve had over a long period of time. It’s the strategic leadership or the value of making the things happen, that’s my world.

5. I think strategy is where one is involved in a very close relationship with others in a team. Strategy is not just an individual thing and therefore one learns through interactions about organisational strategies that might be retooled in discussion and the ways in which, as I said before, a creative input could perhaps change that and refine it but I don’t believe it’s actually up to any individual on her own or his own to develop strategies solo. I think that’s a very big mistake to make and I’ve seen that bounce back in other people’s disfavour on a lot of occasions. So I suppose what I’m implying is that I am very collegial. I would hope to say in leadership that the way I believe is you lead by example but you lead ‘with’ people. I hate that term when people say, ‘my staff’ or ‘my area’ as if it’s owned.

6. So it [strategic leadership] would imply therefore that it’s a pivotal role in terms of interpreting whatever imperatives are being, that the university or team or whatever has to respond to, I think at a team level, internally yes, I think I could do that. I don’t think I am that. I think I’m more tactical. I think I’m more about dealing with more day to day kind of events.

7. I deliberately operate from a particular position in relation to being a strategic leader and manager. My role is to help develop the direction, the vision, the goal, the purpose, the mission of an organisation in relation to the bigger entity in which we operate. But from a strategic point of view my role is then to work out how we will go about achieving that. What are the critical things that we need to do to achieve that goal for a sustainable outcome? So it’s not operational in the sense that it’s task driven, but it’s operational in the sense of what is it that we need to build from a capacity point of view, or how do we need to change a system or a culture or how do we need to build capability. What sort of capability we need to develop amongst a group of staff in order to achieve the sorts of goals and outcomes that we want and then within that context people can work out their strategies.
| Enjoying being a leader | So I enjoy leadership though and I enjoy a challenge and I do I suppose set a direction in that sense that I’m always looking for a challenge and I’m not happy to come into work each day and do the same thing every day and make progress. I want to do something that’s going to challenge me and I may not get there and that’s why I come in every day. If I couldn’t find a new challenge, I’d leave and go and do something else. … It’s one of the things that I really like about working in universities. Some people don’t like it, that there’s continual change. I love continual change because it’s a challenge. |
| Being given appropriate opportunities | We [previously] weren’t able to participate. We were never invited. In fact we were deliberately excluded from central committees and various committees related to learning and teaching. So while we might be working on something to do with graduate capabilities and policy was being made elsewhere or thought about elsewhere, we were never invited to be part of that. Associate Deans are very much operational. They’re not part of the strategic areas within the university. We do sit on, for example, the Teaching and Learning Committee. As Associate Deans, we’re not part of academic board unless we are professors and none of the Associate Deans are. We’re not involved in the senior manager’s planning conference yet Associate Deans carry almost all of the operational targets of a faculty. Very few operational targets are placed in the hands of heads of school, surprisingly, but heads of school are members of the strategic or the planning conference but Associate Deans are not. |
| Having clear direction and ongoing feedback | It’s being clear from the VC and the DVC about the strategic direction and priorities for development that relate to our particular function and maintaining an ongoing conversation with them as to what it is that we’re doing and how it is meeting those objectives and addressing those priorities and what sort of progress we’re making towards the achievement of that. That’s the really critical part of the role. |
| Having stability | Centres for teaching and learning have – seem to have – in the way that universities are being run over the years, an inbuilt instability so that they have been dissolved, reconstituted, set to different purposes, aligned with various other parts of the university or not aligned with other parts of the university and I think that builds into them, that kind of instability. |
| Having authority in terms of staff reports | I suppose in a way it’s kind of trying to lead by example because I don’t have line management responsibility for what’s happening in the faculties, so it’s really a matter of trying to tell people what quality mechanisms we’ve got and demonstrate to them how those can help in the faculty’s work, which is a kind of persuasive negotiation kind of role rather than a line management role which is you know when you are in charge of a centre like this it’s much clearer because you’ve got people reporting to you and you can kind of do things a bit more easily that way. |
| Having authority in terms of budget and appropriate resources | Three months into the Associate Dean role I thought it was a bit of a ‘Mickey Mouse’ job because it had responsibility but no authority in budget. I didn’t think it was a particularly appreciated or professional job. As the funding was reduced, staff were put in and expected to do the same and no funding mechanism has yet been put in that recognises the growth that happens every year on the demands on the services. … It really constrains what you can envision for the centre doing because you’ve only got this ridiculously small core of ongoing resources. |
| Having appropriate support from those above | What you can do, the extent to which you’ll be resourced, the extent to which you are able to influence within an institution, the extent to which you are able to build what I would call robust connections to the faculties, to the academic units themselves, very much depends on the conception and understanding and support that you get from that central executive management structure. To be effective strategically at my level, I need the institutional support and their support. I’ve found that actually very helpful and very productive in effecting the work, not just because they dictate where things go in the University in many ways but also in a sort of more productive way as well. With their support others listen a bit more and if they are prepared to listen they will actually see the value. |
### Table 3: Attributes and circumstances conducive to strategic leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute/Behavior</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acting in such a way that people will follow you</td>
<td>Listen, trust, consult in a way, yes support and build communities, reward and recognise, they are the absolutely fundamental parts of it and recognition can be so simple but if you don’t do it you won’t be a true leader in that you will have people following you to achieve whatever that common goal is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having the ability to generate ideas and persuade others of their value</td>
<td>So the way I derive my influence is through the capacity to craft strategy that is convincing. So that means that I put a lot of my effort into the back room work of developing other, coming up with ideas, developing them, getting to a point, arguing for them and getting to a point where they can convince others to go and do things. Now to me that’s all about strategy and actually relatively little about authority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being pragmatic and political</td>
<td>If you’re a good leader you have to be a politician as well as a strategic thinker. You can’t work outside the constraints of the contemporary political environment, inside and outside the university. So strategy for me means the art of the doable and what is going to happen in terms of the pragmatics of those moral imperatives. And highly political? Highly political. Probably those skills are honed the higher up you go in terms of academic leadership or should be for accountable and responsible leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing your place</td>
<td>You’ve got to understand your place, know your place so while you may provide the senior executives with the suggestions and they may glean the kudos you live with that. Those who don’t and overreach bomb out badly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the culture</td>
<td>The key for me would be the inclusion of the word ‘academic’. So somehow a good leader has to be somebody who not only understands what universities are about in terms of academic knowledge and teaching but also [is] a person who leads through that knowledge, transmits, inspires, is a catalyst but somehow embodies that word being ‘academic’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being aware of the ‘big picture’</td>
<td>I think the really obvious ones are to see the big picture and to see the reality of your faculty or your group and to have some really successful ways of moving both the group and the people in the big picture forward. ... It isn’t just somebody else’s big picture – it’s also finding the big picture within those people and within the faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to see others as resources</td>
<td>But at the same time to listen to those people because they often have very useful ideas on how to change the vision, to make it more appropriate to the university. They often have been people who are at the coalface doing teaching or managing those doing teaching, they often have very useful contributions in how to change the vision to make it more appropriate. So part of the role of being a leader is to be able to listen to those that are in positions to actually better understand what is going on within the university and often they know a lot about what’s going on and at other universities as well because they have staff moving in and out all the time as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing how to engage with people</td>
<td>...The most successful approach is very often to spend a lot of time learning, exploring and meeting those in an institution in their own offices or in laboratories even in their own staff rooms and kitchens and that forms a far better basis for dealing with people than just in a global email announcing your arrival. ... Interactions are supreme on that basis and I certainly would always be of the view that one cannot respond to a matter involving conflict or finance or a major decision just via email, it would never happen effectively. People will often be very upset with the result. I think leadership is as much about people skills and communication skills and then getting the best out of people through – well my style of working in that sense tends to be appealing to people’s best nature. That might be through academic argument but I’d like to think it’s as much through building up good relationships with them as well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Are leaders born and not made? ‘You’ve got it or you haven’t.’

The only thing I would say, and I’m not pretending this applies to me, but what has struck me in this position is that there’s a certain thing about leadership that is simply innate. Like people, first of all, people want leadership, it doesn’t matter how smart they are. That’s kind of surprised me that people who are totally brilliant, certainly much more brilliant than I am, still look for leadership. I mean that’s one thing; it seems to be a human, and you might say why am I surprised about that. I guess I just am because of having been in universities I’ve always put people who are brilliant on a pedestal but even people who are brilliant look for leadership. That’s been one revelation to me. The other thing is that there is something about leaders that is intangible and cannot be taught. It’s just you’ve got it or you haven’t. Now I’m not pretending it applies to me, I’m just saying it’s a lesson I’ve learnt. And it almost defies putting all the attributes. You can go to a whiteboard and try and put them all up but it won’t do it, because you can put down all the characteristics and you say, ‘This person possesses them’, but still nobody follows them. There’s something that is intangible and elusive about good leaders, I don’t know what it is, I don’t pretend to be able to name it, but I would say you can study it all you like, we can have all these tapes and you can write books about it, but the person who reads it is still not necessarily going to be able to do it.

Workshop 2: How can teaching and learning centres effectively contribute to enhancing the student learning experience and outcomes?

Design brief

To provide a balance between giving attendees useful knowledge/information about and from the project and providing time for sharing and discussion.

Time: 120 minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop phase</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of project findings, as related to centres’ contributing to student learning</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Oral with PowerPoint slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Activity 1: How can centres know what students need and assist in these needs being met?</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Overview (from the perspective of a centre director)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 1: How can centres know what students need and assist in these needs being met?</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Small groups (around seven) determined by numbering around the whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing of discussions with whole group</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oral reports with conclusions on butchers’ paper displayed and collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies that work [Relating to centres enhancing the student learning experience and outcomes.]</td>
<td>3 × 10</td>
<td>Three illustrative exemplars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 2: What are the key constraints that prevent centres from assisting student learning and what strategies can overcome these?</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Three groups determined by interest in strategy Link with the illustrative exemplars and other ideas from participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing of discussions with whole group</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oral reports with conclusions on butchers’ paper displayed and collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summing up</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postscript

The strategic leadership development program can assist centres in moving towards a mature state of operation and positioning in their organisations. Based on an organisational life-cycle model, this assistance might occur before or on establishment of the centre, during its development and through to maturity. However, any such model indicates that organisations and their various groupings may decline and ultimately cease to exist in their current configuration. Achieving a mature state may, then, actually signal the beginning of a process of terminal demise. Centre demise may be tied to the political life-cycle of its most senior leadership sponsor(s) – when the political sponsor moves on and regime change occurs, centres can be rapidly reviewed, restructured and reborn in a quite different configurations with a quite different purpose and set of functions. This project has seen plenty of evidence of such politically driven recreations. We would hope that even in such dramatic circumstances, and even perhaps regrettably when centres have reached a desired level of maturity, that the strategic leadership development program outlined in this Guide can still be used to allow for the most productive engagement with new political realities.
References


Appendices

Appendix A
External environmental appraisal (related to timing of project)

Appendix B
Notes on describing participants in interviews, survey and focus groups

Appendix C
Interview issues

Appendix D
Australian Teaching and Learning Centre Directors’ Survey

Appendix E
Executive summary from survey report

Appendix F
Focus group invitation and response template

Appendix G
Dimensions of strategic leadership maturity framework
Appendix A:
External environmental appraisal
(related to timing of project)

This is an excerpt from the project’s literature review, ‘Occasional Paper: Strategic Leadership and its Contribution to Improvements in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education’, Dale Holt and Stuart Palmer, Institute of Teaching and Learning, Deakin University with Di Challis, Challis Consultancy, Senior Researcher, February, 2008.

It provides a useful overview of higher education external environment during the period of the conduct of the project (2007–2009). It illustrates the environmental challenges within which strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres in Australian higher education was investigated. It also exemplifies a useful approach to scanning the external environment for major developments impacting on the positioning and work of centres and, therefore, a resource that can support a strategic leadership development program.

Please note that at the time of writing the ALTC was the Carrick Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

1 Strategic leadership agendas and agencies in higher education

1.1 Overview

As we have argued above, the organisational environment in which strategic leadership occurs is a critical and crucial consideration. Through the lens of quality, we examine national policy initiatives and other significant developments in Australian higher education that are setting common agendas of action for universities and their teaching and learning centres across the sector.

Australian universities engage with a common set of QA, quality excellence and quality enhancement agendas:

- Assuring quality as fostered through AUQA.
- Assessing excellence in quality through the DEST LTPF.
- Recognising, promoting and enhancing quality through the Carrick Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.
- Responding to the ongoing debate on the purposes and value of higher education, particularly as manifested in broad institutional commitment to the development of graduate attributes and enhanced employability of graduates.

It is reasonable to conclude that newly created teaching and learning centres have been established to make a significant strategic contribution to engaging with these agendas at the institutional level, and in ways consistent with their own university’s mission, vision, current commitments and future directions in teaching and learning.

The final section identifies the stakeholders that will be targeted for this study, with the section concluding with a diagrammatic summation of the strategic leadership contributions to higher education.

1.2 Assuring quality

To assure quality we need to appreciate its dimensions and acknowledge that, even within a specific context, notions of quality will remain a contested domain.
1.2.1 The dimensions of ‘quality’

‘Quality’ is the term we use to describe and assess an array of characteristics of a diverse range of physical goods and intangible services. According to Garvin (1988) there are five common definitions of, or approaches to, quality:

- **Transcendent** – quality can’t be precisely defined, but we know it when we see it, or are aware of its absence when it is missing. This is not a particularly useful approach to quality if we hope to make an objective assessment of quality.
- **Product (or attribute)-based** – differences in quality relate to differences in the quantity of some attribute.
- **Manufacturing (or process)-based** – quality is measured by the degree to which a product or service conforms to its intended design or specification; quality arises from the process(es) used.
- **Value-based** – quality is defined by price: a quality product or service is one that provides desired performance at an acceptable cost.
- **User (or customer)-based** – quality is the capacity to satisfy needs, wants and desires of the user(s). A product or service that doesn’t fulfil user needs is unlikely to find any users. This is a context-dependent, contingent approach to quality.

In the context of tangible goods, it has been suggested that we assess quality in terms of the following eight factors/dimensions: performance; features; reliability; conformance; durability; serviceability; aesthetics; and perceived quality (Garvin, 1991). In the context of intangible services, some authors have attempted to apply Garvin’s eight dimensions of product quality to service quality, but the analogy becomes tenuous in places. Others have attempted to identify how we assess the quality of services, including time, timeliness, completeness, courtesy, consistency, accessibility and convenience, accuracy, and responsiveness (Evans & Lindsay, 2005).

The contemporary view of quality places the user (often the ‘customer’) in a central role (Crosby, 1995) and we discuss this aspect more fully below: see 1.4.1. We need to understand the needs of the user if we are to successfully deliver services and/or products that will fulfil their needs as the ultimate measure of quality resides in their perceptions. This is a much more sophisticated view of quality than appealing to elegant designs or devising reliable systems for production and/or delivery. However, it forces the supplier to confront questions that are often difficult. Who is/are the customer(s)? What are their needs, wants and desires? These are difficult enough questions of themselves, but are further complicated by the fact that the user group is generally not homogeneous, and may have a wide range of potentially conflicting requirements and, over time, these needs are likely to change. Think of personal computers – what would have been seen as desirable processing speed, size, and so on five years ago would today be viewed as inadequate. Further, if, in the context of higher education, we take the ‘user’ to be the student, then we need to appreciate that the ‘customer’ is also the raw material as well as the product and, turning it around, the service provider (the university) is the ‘customer’ of the fee-paying student – a truly complex, iterative relationship.

Another important idea from the contemporary conceptualisation of product quality is that all areas of an organisation contribute to the final quality of the services and products produced (Juran, 1988). Poor market research may lead us to offer products/services that no one wants, regardless of how well we deliver them. A flawed design cannot be turned into quality regardless of how repeatable our delivery processes. An excellent design will appear highly variable in quality if our process tolerances are too wide, or our raw materials are of a low standard. A high quality product can be ruined during transport to the customer. There is a system-wide ‘quality function’ that exists and impacts on quality. In a manufacturing context, it is recognised that up to 85 percent of quality issues are the result of systemic factors beyond the control of individual workers (Deming, 2000). The general concept that arises here is that quality is primarily a management responsibility, and the operation of the entire organisation needs to be considered when seeking to
improve quality. In a university context, this implies that the student perception of quality is likely to be influenced just as much by the timetable clashes, late delivery of materials, the amount of network downtime, the temperature of the classroom and the size of the tutorial class, as it is to be influenced by currency of course material.

Any listing of quality dimensions that we might select as applicable in a particular context is dependent on the product and/or service in question and the purpose(s) for which we wish to assess quality. For us, that context is higher education.

1.2.2 Quality in the context of higher education

To many, the idea of applying quality concepts (particularly some of the terminology rooted in the manufacture of commercial products) to education is anathema (Anderson, 2006). For some, in the context of education, it does not seem possible to move beyond transcendent conceptions of quality. Others (see, for example, Perry, 1981) are concerned with education as a developmental process and, for them, quality is neither a product nor a service. On the basis that development occurs from scaffolding critical thinking and transforming character and, as such, the task for both administrators and educators is to commit to developing students holistically (Thompson, 1999) it becomes increasingly difficult to move beyond transcendent conceptions of quality. Further, while there appears to be increasing academic acceptance of the vocational nature of much tertiary study and increased tolerance of quality interpreted as a commodity, there is also awareness that, throughout their histories, higher education institutions have been regarded not only as having educational and research responsibilities but also as being promoters of the ethical and moral values of modern society (Bucharest declaration, 2004).

There is also a propensity to confuse ‘quality’ with QA and/or quality control (QA/QC) processes, discussed briefly at 1.3 below. However, these processes don’t define or necessarily even improve quality; they only seek to ensure that a previously specified level of quality (however that is defined) is actually achieved. An inability to articulate and/or agree what constitutes quality in education does not, of itself, constitute a limitation of QA/QC processes as applied to education. This is not to say that the move from a transcendent to a more concrete definition of quality in education, or that reconciling the needs of the large education stakeholder group is necessarily straightforward or without conflict. Like all matters of educational policy and practice, the devil is in the detail, and no less so than in defining/agreeing what we mean by ‘quality’ in higher education, and then devising objective measures for it. As previously noted, quality is a system-wide function, and a comprehensive model of quality in higher education should encompass both teaching (organisation-related aspects) and learning (student-related aspects), and include input, process and output factors for both areas (Oliver, 2003).

Significantly, and very much aligned with this study, the major changes to Australian Standard MB-007 were motivated by ‘a recognition that organisations are knowledge ecosystems – a complex set of relationships existing between people, process, technology and content’. Hence a critical element of implementing a standard is the organisation’s environment for ‘The implementation of knowledge management is context dependent and the field is continuing to evolve’ (Standards Australia, 2005, p. ii).

Quality in higher education will remain a contested domain. Modern developments in the field of quality bring a semantic legacy that reveals their recent history in the production of tangible products (typically for commerce), and that automatically makes many of the associated concepts unpalatable to some in higher education. In addition to this, the wide range of stakeholders in higher education leads naturally to a multiplicity of (often competing) interpretations of quality. Regardless of this, and even if only at a very pragmatic level, student learning outcomes must be a key measure of quality in higher education. Research indicates that student learning is related to their perceptions of their teaching and learning environment. This is why student evaluation (see 1.4.3 below) of their teaching and learning environment is one key measure that can be used as part of a continuous, action research-based approach to QI in higher education.
1.3 Quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement

There are a number of standard quality management systems (QMSs), the most widely used of which is the International Organization for Standardization standard ISO 9001:2000 QMSs – Requirements. Many national standards bodies (including Standards Australia) have adopted ISO 9001 as their equivalent national standard. ISO 9001 specifies the requirements for a QMS under five main categories:

- **QMS** – what it must contain and how it must be documented.
- **Management responsibility** – confirming that quality is a management issue.
- **Resource management** – to achieve quality we must have appropriately trained people, appropriate processes, equipment capable of producing quality, and raw materials of an appropriate level of quality.
- **Product realisation** – how all the steps from design through to manufacturing and/or service delivery contribute to quality.
- **Measurement, analysis and improvement** – how quality will be measured, how products/services that do not meet quality standards will be rectified, and what QI processes will be used.

The question is often asked, ‘How can a single standard specify the requirements of a quality system for all types of organisations?’ The answer is that ISO 9001 is not concerned with the details of what is done by an organisation, but only how it is managed. It identifies those generic processes in an organisation that must be controlled to achieve quality, without prescribing the details of the controls. The details of the quality system actually implemented need to be determined by each organisation, taking into account the expectations of their users, their range of products and/or services, their processes, their quality goals, and their own unique circumstances. The use of terms such as ‘product’ and ‘customer’ reveal the development of approaches to quality that are rooted in the manufacturing of physical goods. However, there is an extensive literature on the application of these same quality principles to the development and delivery of services. ISO 9001 employs the term ‘product’ to mean both service and product.

A QMS can be viewed as an unwanted administrative burden but the basic requirements for even an ISO 9001 QMS do not have to be onerous. It requires an organisation to articulate a quality philosophy that defines quality and identifies what aspects of the operation will be covered by the QMS, formalise existing operating procedures, implement a small number of mandatory procedures, provide any necessary staff training and keep records to demonstrate the operation of the QMS. Of course, like other management functions, such as planning and budgeting, quality management can appear to take on a life of its own, creating busywork for its own sake, but this is not an inevitable by-product of having a QMS. A QMS system can be viewed as a barrier to innovation that will lead to homogeneity, the lowest common denominator and stagnation. However there are a range of well known innovative organisations (including Apple, 3M and Hewlett-Packard) that have ISO 9001 QMSs in operation. An organisation with a QMS that is suffering from an inability to innovate would do better to look for policies that penalise, neglect or do not provide the resources required to innovate. A QMS, itself, is no barrier to innovation.

An idea arising from the existence of QMSs is ‘certification’. If we have a QMS and believe that it is functioning well, we can declare this fact – this is referred to as first-party certification. If we have an important customer, they may wish to audit our QMS – a successful audit of this type is referred to as second-party certification. If we wish to demonstrate to a wider audience that we have an effective QMS, we may seek an appropriately qualified/accredited independent organisation to conduct the audit of our QMS – this is referred to as third-party certification.

A range of universities have adopted ISO 9001 as the basis for their QMS, with many being certified by external accrediting bodies. In Australia, it is common to see separate
academic and administrative units and/or commercial subsidiaries with a certified QMS, rather than entire universities (Baird, 2006).

1.3.1 The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)

In Australia, AUQA plays an important role in quality in higher education. AUQA is a national body that audits and reports on QA in Australian higher education. Audits are conducted on a five-yearly cycle, and require institutions to prepare a self-report around a series of structured criterion, which is then followed up by an on-site audit of the institution. Audits are primarily norm-referenced, taking into consideration the individual aims of the institution, as well as commonly accepted practice in the sector. AUQA’s principal function is in the assurance of quality, though it does incorporate elements of QI/enhancement through:

- the inclusion of recommendations for improvement in its audit reports;
- the hosting of a ‘good practice database’ to disseminate good practice; and
- hosting the Australian Universities Quality Forum to facilitate sharing of good practice in higher education in Australia.

AUQA’s audit process evaluates the institution’s QA processes on four dimensions: approach, deployment, results and improvement (ADRI) (Australian Universities Quality Agency, 2007a). While not performing a third-party QA certification role per se, AUQA’s audit reports, including ‘Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations’, are publicly available.

In higher education, just as in industry, QA processes can be seen as resource sapping busy work or an administrative tool to micro-manage the affairs of staff (Marginson & Considine, 2000), but this has more to do with the implementation of the QA system, rather than any inherent feature of QA. These perceptions are perhaps amplified in higher education due to the wide range of ‘customers’, the intangible nature of the ‘product’ and the bureaucratic nature of higher education institutions and accounting for the use of public funds.

The primary role of a QMS in general, and the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) in higher education is the assurance of quality. But, for both its own sake and in response to a competitive environment, we should also be concerned with the improvement of quality. The higher education literature notes that QA and QI (or quality enhancement) are not the same thing (Avdijieva & Wilson, 2002; Knight, 2006). A short-term ‘tactical’ response to quality in higher education may be adequate to satisfy external QA auditing bodies, but a ‘strategic’ approach to quality is needed for the development of an organisation-wide culture of QA and QI (Gordon, 2002). While there is no specific international standard to provide a framework for QI that is analogous to that provided by ISO 9001 for QA/QMS, there is no shortage of available QI techniques.

1.4 Assessing excellence in quality

1.4.1 A user-centred view of quality

The starting point for quality is the user, or, to use the unfortunately more ‘charged’ quality terminology, the ‘customer’. It is worth noting that the International Organization for Standardization’s ISO 9001:2000 QMS standard simply defines ‘customer’ as any person or organisation that receives a product or service; there is no inherent implication of a purchase being involved. Then, who are the ‘customers’ in higher education? Who receives the outputs/benefits of the higher education system? The Standards Australia handbook HB 90.7–2000 Education and Training Guide to ISO 9001:2000 suggests that it can be any or all of the following as appropriate to the particular context:

- A student.
- A student’s parents or employer.
- A company or organisation with whom a research contract, a consultancy agreement or a training contract is entered into.
- An industry.
- An internal customer (i.e. within the education and training provider's own organisation).
- A government, regulatory body, accreditation body and similar.
- A relevant society group, such as a parents and citizens group, members of staff, and society as a whole.

(Standards Australia International, 2000)

Such a diverse stakeholder/user group indicates the complexity of the task of identifying the range of needs that we might include in a definition of quality in higher education. We also need to consider what service/product we are providing to the user(s). HB 90.7–2000 includes the following suggestions:

- An educational environment.
- A curriculum and other resources.
- A community service.
- Research outputs for the enhancement of skills/knowledge/understanding/attitude/values.

(Standards Australia International, 2000)

The many stakeholders in higher education lead to a multitude of measurements (or performance indicators) for various purposes, including factors such as retention rates, research outputs, completion rates, student evaluations, staff-student ratios, and graduate employment data.

Defining who the user is, and what we are offering to them, provides a framework for identifying what aspects of quality we would seek to control and/or improve and which areas of the organisation contribute to/impact on that quality as perceived by the user. In any conception of quality in higher education, students must be viewed as a principal user group. One survey of academic staff actively publishing in the literature related to quality in higher education from a range of disciplines and countries found that the most favour ed definition of quality related to satisfying customers' needs, students were considered the most important customer group (followed by employers) and nearly all agreed that some form of quality measurement was important (Owlia & Aspinwall, 1996).

Some may argue that many undergraduate students are comparatively naive 'customers' with a limited conception of the knowledge and skills necessary in their field of study. However, ignoring the needs and expectations of any important customer group is a recipe for organisational failure, and the modern university undergraduate student is just as likely to turn out to be a mature age student (with significant experience of their field of study and/or prior experience in higher education) rather than an 18 year old directly from secondary school. Over the course of their studies, students will experience a wide range of teaching and learning, and be well placed to make comparative judgements of quality, and, as novices in their discipline, will also be qualified to judge whether their involvement in education is assisting them to learn (Ramsden, 1991).

If students are key users of higher education, what are the factors in their learning that they consider important? In Australia, a large analysis of open-ended comments made by university graduates on their studies as part of the course experience questionnaire (CEQ) has recently been completed (Scott, 2006). While confirming the complex and multi-faceted nature of quality that arises from such a diverse group of users, and that it is the total university experience that counts, a key finding from the investigation was that students highly value learning methods that engage them. Student engagement has long
been identified as a key qualitative measure of quality of student learning (along with assessed student results as a quantitative measure) (Trigwell & Prosser, 1991). There also exists a literature that confirms a link between student evaluation of their ‘quality of teaching’ (perhaps better expressed as ‘experience of teaching’ to avoid apparently circular, but common definitions of quality based on quality) and their approach to and engagement with their learning (Ramsden & Entwistle, 1981). This is one of the reasons why student evaluation of teaching (SET) is used as an important measure of quality in higher education.

1.4.2 The Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)

Work by Ramsden and Entwistle in Britain in the early 1980s with a Course Perception Questionnaire established a link between students’ perception of their learning environment and their quality of learning (Ramsden & Entwistle, 1981). Subsequent work in Australia during the 1980s on a CEQ commencing with an initial 80 item inventory that was consolidated via trials to a 30 item inventory, led to a 1990 national survey of students that confirmed the reliability and validity of the 30 item inventory (CEQ30) (Ramsden, 1991). A shortened (23 item-CEQ23) version of the CEQ (including the addition of a ‘Generic Skills’ scale) was developed in consultation with the then Department of Employment, Education and Training. Work that confirms the value of the CEQ23 instrument has also been done (Byrne & Flood, 2003; Wilson, Lissio & Ramsden, 1997). A version of this instrument has been included in the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA) national survey of graduates from 1993 onward. Clearly, there is a need to be sure about which version of the CEQ is being referred to.

One of the criteria for the initial development of the CEQ was that it be generally applicable to all students, hence discipline-specific questions (for example questions about lab work) were not included (Ramsden, 1991). Since its initial development and use in the GCCA national student survey, the number of CEQ-related items has increased to 49 to cater for discipline-specific course aspects, though individual institutions are only required to report results for 13 ‘core’ items:

- GT01 The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work
- GT03 The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was doing
- GT10 The teaching staff of this course motivated me to do my best work
- GT15 My lecturers are extremely good at explaining things
- GT16 The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting
- GT27 The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having
- GS06 The course helped me develop my ability to work as a team member
- GS14 The course sharpened my analytic skills
- GS23 The course developed my problem solving skills
- GS32 The course improved my skills in written communication
- GS42 As a result of my course, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems
- GS43 The course helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work
- OSI49 Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this course

For all CEQ items, respondents are asked to express their degree of agreement or disagreement on a five-point scale. On the national standard form only the ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘strongly agree’ points are labelled, however the instruments used at some institutions label all five points. The five-point response categories are generally interpreted as ‘strongly disagree’, ‘disagree’, ‘undecided’, ‘agree’ and ‘strongly agree’.

The theoretical construction and the practical application of the CEQ are not without their critics. Some argue that the focus of the CEQ is too narrow as measure of the entirety of the student experience. Since its original development as a proxy measure of quality of student learning, the CEQ has been used for a range of purposes, some very different than for what it was intended, i.e. for determining institutional funding and use by third parties to construct league tables (Niland, 1999). The originally validated CEQ30 was reduced to the CEQ23, of which only 12 items are retained in the current 13 item core of the GCCA CEQ instrument. Some of the optional CEQ items relate to resource-dependent aspects of
the university experience, potentially advantaging well resourced institutions. There is some evidence that aspects of the CEQ may not be well suited to ‘unconventional’ teaching and learning environments, such as problem-based learning (Lyon & Hendry, 2002). Nevertheless, the CEQ (in particular the GCCA version) remains a widely used measure of student quality of learning.

The developer of the CEQ suggests that the use of mean CEQ scores to rank organisational units is problematic, as they are normative data (the highest ranked unit may still be unsatisfactory). It is more useful to consider the proportions of students agreeing with scale items. It is also valuable to consider the changes in results over time. The validity of all inferences from respondent data depends on how representative the sample is (Ramsden, 1991). It is also noted that systemic differences have been observed in CEQ ratings based on size of institution, field of study, age, gender and other demographic characteristics, and interpretation of CEQ results needs to be done with knowledge of local conditions (Graduate Careers Australia, 2006).

In addition to the ‘quantitative’ response items noted above, the CEQ instrument employed by the GCCA also includes an invitation to respondents to write open-ended comments on the best aspects (BA) of their university course experience and those most needing improvement (NI). These responses provide additional information that can help in understanding what students had in mind when agreeing or disagreeing with the CEQ response items. As noted above, a large analysis of open-ended comments made by university graduates on their studies as part of the CEQ has recently been completed (Scott, 2006). More than 160,000 comments from students graduating from 14 Australian universities over the period 2001–2004 were analysed to identify common themes that were reported by students. Key findings include:

- The total university experience counts – not just what happens in the classroom.
- Students desire learning methods that engage them.
- The preferred learning methods varied by discipline.
- Key areas needing improvement are assessment, student administration and support, and course structure and expectations.
- Computers and information technology don’t figure highly in student ratings.
- Staff make a principal difference in almost all aspects of the course.

1.4.3 Student evaluation of teaching and units

While it has been shown that the original course CEQ was a useful summative measure of student experience at the level of aggregation of whole-of-program and broad field of study, it was not intended as an instrument to examine the quality of individual units of study or performance of staff repeatedly within a program (Ramsden, 1991). So, in addition to participating in the national CEQ survey and perhaps administering their own CEQ-style graduate course experience survey(s), many universities also administer student questionnaires relating to individual units of study (Barrie, Ginns & Symons, 2007). These questionnaires have a range of names – Units of Study Evaluation (USE) (Institute for Teaching & Learning, 2006), Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) (Emery, Kramer & Tian, 2003), Student Opinion Survey (SOS) (Bedggood & Pollard, 1999), Student Evaluation of Teaching and Subjects (SETS) (Neumann, 2000), Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) (Hicks, 1999), or in the case of Deakin, Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units (SETU). Collectively, they are referred to as student evaluation of teaching (SET) (Millea & Grimes, 2002). It should be noted that, while the data from SET surveys can inform the teaching evaluation process, of itself, administering questionnaires to students is not evaluation; evaluation of teaching is the ongoing process of discovering the strengths and weaknesses of your professional work with students and acting upon this information (Ramsden & Dodds, 1989).

As the array of names suggest, these instruments have a range of stated purposes, including measurement of perceived worth/value of units of study, measurement of
perceived performance of the teacher, to assist in the disaggregation of course experience-type survey data, and so on, or a combination of these reasons. In the case of Deakin, the SETU instrument aims to collect student perceptions about both the delivery and content in units of study. The inclusion of items evaluating teacher performance in some SET instruments is premised on research that showed that effectiveness of student learning was influenced by teacher behaviours – teacher enthusiasm, preparation and organisation, presentation skills, clarity of objectives etc (Sheehan & DuPrey, 1999). The frequency of application of SET instruments varies. The frequency of application of SET instruments varies. Some institutions administer them bi- or triennially. At Deakin, SETU is currently administered to every undergraduate and postgraduate unit in every semester of offer (Deakin University, 2003).

Unlike the CEQ, the evidence that unit-based SET instruments are valid and reliable measures of teaching quality is more equivocal. There is evidence that well designed SET questionnaires can be made reliable – the same instrument administered under the same conditions yields the same results (Langbein, 1994). Validity refers to the ability of the instrument to accurately measure what it purports to measure without being influenced by factors that are expected to be irrelevant to teaching quality (Langbein, 1994). For many simple SET questionnaires it is not possible to establish reliability (Bedggood & Pollard, 1999), and many external factors beyond the control of academic staff have been found to influence SET results (and hence validity), including discipline, course level and whether the unit is mandatory or not (Emery, Kramer & Tian, 2003). In addition, while some SET ratings have been shown to exhibit a positive correlation with student outcomes, the correlation is modest (Miller, 1998).

To have confidence in making important judgements based on survey data, we must first be confident that the respondent group is a representative sample of the population under consideration. The range of recommendations for what is a valid minimum number of respondents and/or valid minimum response rate in SET surveys varies dramatically in the literature. Another concern is that many studies have shown that students who respond to voluntary SET instruments are different in their study habits and academic achievement to non-responders (Richardson, 2005). It is important that any SET results reported are statistically justifiable (Miller, 1998).

All of these limitations of typical SET instruments mean that the results must be interpreted with caution. The literature describes a range of formats for reporting SET results, from simple presentation of the raw data through to sophisticated schemes such as indicating performance range (within one of lower 25%, mid 50% or top 25%) for each scale item against results from comparable study units based on grouping according to the known influence factors of discipline, class size and year level (Neumann, 2000). Where a SET instrument contains a range of items, there is an opportunity to examine comparative strengths and weaknesses, as well as overall student satisfaction. It is important to consider the range of external factors that may have influenced SET results, including class size, available resources, whether the unit was elective or compulsory etc (Institute for Teaching and Learning, 2006).

In the same way that the CEQ contains both quantitative and qualitative measures of student course experience, it is recognised that SET instruments containing only a fixed set of items that produce strictly quantitative results provide a very limited picture of unit teaching. It is desirable that students have the opportunity to also provide open-ended written feedback, commonly this takes the form of asking students to comment on the ‘best’ and ‘worst/most in need of improvement’ aspects of the unit (Miller, 1998). This qualitative feedback can be extremely valuable in understanding the reasons why students have given a particular quantitative SET rating.

Reflecting the modern understanding of the multi-faceted nature of ‘quality’ and the finding that it is the entirety of the university experience that contributes to the student ‘course experience’, virtually all authors examining the value of the SET process recognise that SET data are only one of many sources of information that should be called upon when assessing the quality of teaching in units. Other equally valuable sources include
objective measures of student learning (such as unit marks), reflective self-assessment of teaching performance, peer assessment of teaching and student focus groups. In summary, although remaining contentious, SET instruments are in wide use and for a range of purposes. With thoughtful questionnaire design, valid response rates, and careful interpretation of the results, SET data can be one useful input of the teaching and learning QI process (Richardson, 2005).

1.4.4 Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF)

Another reason the CEQ is important in Australian higher education is its relationship with the LTPF. The LTPF aims to reward those Australian universities that best demonstrate excellence in undergraduate learning and teaching in four major discipline clusters:

- Business, Law and Economics.
- Humanities, Arts and Education.
- Health.

Eligibility to participate in LTPF funding is currently determined by a combination of performance indicators, including the core 'student satisfaction' indicators from the CEQ, 'outcome indicators' from the Graduate Destination Survey, an Australian national survey of employment or further education status of graduates, and 'success indicators' (student progression and retention rates) from federal government student statistical information. The quantum of funding that is contingent upon the results of the LTPF (over $AU82 million was available for allocation in 2007) means that it, and by implication the CEQ, will remain an important concern for Australian universities.

1.5 Recognising, promoting and enhancing quality

1.5.1 Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Launched in 2004 and succeeding a sequence of predecessor institutions, the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education provides a national focus for the enhancement of teaching and learning in Australian higher education providers. Included in its published objectives are that it will:

1. Promote and support strategic change in higher education institutions for the enhancement of learning and teaching, including curriculum development and assessment (through a scheme of competitive national teaching grants up to $AU220,000 each).
2. Foster and acknowledge excellent teaching in higher education (through a scheme of national teaching awards of up to $AU75,000 each and Fellowships valued up to $AU330,000 each).
3. Identify learning and teaching issues that impact on the Australian higher education system and facilitate national approaches to address these and other emerging issues (by funding a range of ‘discipline-based initiatives’ investigations in the range $AU100,000–$AU200,000 each).

This funding is highly prized, and Australian universities compete and collaborate to win it by demonstrating the quality of their teaching, teachers and teaching enhancement project ideas. The Carrick Institute has funded over 100 projects under its Fellowship, Grants and Discipline-based Initiatives Programs. Outcomes will need to be mobilised for the particular benefits of the range of universities in the sector. Carrick is providing major stimulus for educators to pursue the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education by undertaking cross-institutional research and development projects of national and international significance.
1.6 Responding to the ongoing debate on the purposes and value of higher education

1.6.1 Development of graduate attributes

Arising from the push in higher education for QA, accountability for outcomes and capability of graduates (Leathwood & Phillips, 2000) specifying a list of qualities or capabilities that graduates will attain, provides a benchmark against which the performance of a higher education institution can be measured. Required by DEST since 1998 in response to the West Review, most higher education institutions identify a list of expected graduate attributes or outcomes. In addition, many program accrediting professional bodies also specify a list of graduate attributes that accredited undergraduate programs must incorporate. An inventory of desired/intended graduate attributes may be expressed in a range of forms, including:

- a simple list in terms of generic attributes that are common to all or most graduates, and discipline specific attributes that relate to the particular program(s) the student is studying;
- knowledge or understandings, attitudes or qualities, and skills or abilities, representing theoretical knowledge, beliefs and practical abilities (and related to Bloom’s taxonomy of educational objectives, including the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains) developed during the program; and
- some combination of the above categories.

It has been suggested that it is the generic attributes that are the most important (Hager, Holland & Beckett, 2002), perhaps because the discipline specific body of knowledge is prone to obsolescence and will require continual renewal, and, in the longer term, as graduates progress in their careers, they may become less involved in the details of their discipline, and more reliant on their generic skills. A large consultation project with Australian industry and business in 2001 identified the following generic ‘employability’ skills that enterprises sought in their staff, in addition to job-specific and/or relevant technical skills:

- Communication that contributes to productive and harmonious relations between employees and customers.
- Teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes.
- Problem-solving that contributes to productive outcomes.
- Initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes.
- Planning and organising that contribute to long-term and short-term strategic planning.
- Self-management that contributes to employee satisfaction and growth.
- Learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes.
- Technology that contributes to effective execution of tasks
- A list of personal attributes that contribute to overall employability (e.g. loyalty, honesty and integrity, adaptability).

(DEST, 2002)

In the discussion surrounding graduate attributes, it is important to make the (perhaps subtle) distinction between a program of study that has been designed to provide opportunities for students to be exposed to activities intended to develop, exercise and assess certain graduate attributes, and those attributes that students have actually developed by the time they graduate from their program of study. It is the former ‘certification of programs’ that is still most commonly required in internal and external program accreditation exercises; while it is the latter that really determines the
competency/capacity of the graduate. We can imagine the possibility of a ‘pass student’ carefully negotiating through their accredited program curriculum and assessment, to the point of graduation, having consciously avoided one or more perceived desirable attributes that they are uncomfortable with.

In the literature related to graduate attributes, there can be observed varying levels of ‘sophistication’ in approach. The range includes:

- identifying and prioritising desirable graduate attributes (Scott & Yates, 2002);
- identifying where and at what level in the curriculum attributes will be covered (Atrens et al., 2004; Teaching and Learning Centre, 2007);
- designing assessment to explicitly measure graduate attributes (Yeo, 2004);
- evaluation of the effectiveness of delivery of graduate attributes (Bullen et al., 2004); and
- evidence-based certification of attainment of graduate attributes (Williams & Sher, 2004).

Though the topic of graduate attributes has been around for some time, for some universities, statements of graduate attributes have historically been more rhetorical than real (Lister & Nouwens, 2004). Having a list of graduate attributes published on a web site or in a program handbook does not automatically mean that:

- their existence and importance has been well communicated to students, staff and other stakeholders;
- students appreciate the importance and relevance of the various attributes in their studies; and
- exposure to the theory, practise and assessment of attributes has been coherently integrated across the program curriculum.

It is important to acknowledge that the concept of graduate attributes in higher education is not uncontested or universally accepted. Academic staff may suggest that specifying required graduate attributes is just another step in the vocationalisation of higher education, or just another mechanism for the administrators of higher education to micro-manage the activities of staff and students.

Beyond the development of what might be described as generic personal work-related skills lies the more ambitious agenda of developing generic attributes related to good citizenship. These can cover areas relating to ethics, social responsibility and cultural sensitivity; international perspectives and competence in a global environment; and the principles and applications of sustainable development.

1.6.2 Employability of graduates

A greater focus on the relationship between education and employment outcomes is one of the three major factors seen to have an influence on the value placed on graduate attributes (Cummings, 1998). There is a definite link between the development and publication of graduate attributes and employability of students as most, if not all, university web sites attest. Further testimony to its importance is the Government’s commissioning through the Business, Industry and Higher Education Collaboration Council of a research study to investigate and report on:

- how universities currently develop and integrate employability skills into their programs of study;
- how universities teach employability skills;
- how universities currently assess students’ employability skills; and
- how graduate employability skills might be assessed and reported upon.

(Precision Consulting, Commonwealth of Australia, 2007)
Over the last two decades the higher education sector has been characterised by a greater emphasis on professional and vocational programs driven more strongly by employer needs and expectations. This has had a substantial effect on the nature of the programs that are offered and the nature of outcomes for students (Kirkpatrick, 2007). As a consequence, to a greater or lesser extent, professional bodies in Australia have influence in shaping university curricula through the specification of both discipline-specific content and generic attributes. AUQA includes ‘the role of professional bodies and associations in accrediting professional courses such as health and medicine, law, accounting, engineering and architecture’ as one of the significant dimensions of QA processes involving universities (Australian Universities Quality Agency, 2007b).

Key professional bodies are acutely aware of their importance and have looked to extend their influence. For example, in its submission to Higher Education at the Crossroads (2002) the CPA Australia claimed that, with over 97,000 members, as it accredits university courses for admission of graduates as associate members it has a detailed knowledge of the higher education sector, particularly with regards to accounting and business courses and that, since 1966, ‘CPA Australia has worked assiduously with the universities in the development of the high level educational programs in accounting appropriate for a graduate profession’. (CPA Australia, 2002).

Ramsden (2003, pp. 29–30) points out that, while it is popularly supposed that employers are highly critical of their graduate recruits and the ‘irrelevance’ of higher education to the world of work, research does not support such conclusions and there appears to be many variations in employers’ views of the quality of graduates, with the majority believing higher education did improve employees’ generic skills.

1.7 The targeted stakeholders

Given that the key interest of the research lies in investigating the nature of leadership in central organisational groups, potential participants in the project are those strategically responsible for creating and directing these groups, such as Pro-Vice Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic and/or Teaching and Learning), those responsible for managing the groups, for example centre directors and heads, those who contribute to their development on advisory boards, senior academic and general staff who work within these groups responsible for operational actions and those senior faculty teaching and learning leaders who interact most directly with these groups in representing their faculties’ interests, for example Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning. The needs of this collective leadership group are significant given the rapid change affecting their roles and operations both internally and externally.

1.8 Strategic leadership contributions to quality in higher education

In summation, strategic leadership of teaching and learning centres can contribute to teaching and learning at three levels: Assuring the base-line level of quality of teaching and learning; Improving the quality of teaching and learning to achieve excellence; Advancing the quality of teaching and learning through national and international leadership in areas of strength and based on appropriate theory and scholarship (see Figure 4).
The pyramid of strategic contributions to quality in higher education

References


Appendix B:  
Notes on describing participants in interviews, surveys & focus groups

Project background
The project, supported by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, seeks to identify common factors that need to be considered in the effective strategic leadership of central organisational structures (centres) to enhance long-term learning and teaching performance and illustrate how these factors are dealt with contextually in a selection of contemporary university settings in Australian higher education.

Interviews
The first phase of project data collection was interviewing a range of key stakeholders. This involved conducting structured, audio-recorded interviews with five groups of staff providing strategic leadership perspectives in a representative range of Australian tertiary institutions:

1 University senior executive member with strategic leadership responsibility across institution (DVC(A)/PVC equivalent).
2 Directors of centres.
3 A representative sample by discipline of faculty Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning or equivalent.
4 Senior operational leadership/managers in academic or general staff positions in central centres.
5 Members of either external or internally composed centre advisory boards or equivalent.

Interviews were conducted at six institutions, yielding 37 interviews of 60–90 minutes duration, with good representation of all five identified target staff groups.

Survey of directors
The second phase of project data collection involved the development of an online survey, which the directors/heads of centres at all of Australia’s 38 centres were invited to complete. The survey was focused on the key issues emerging from interviews conducted in stage one of the project. Respondents were asked to consider the importance of key developments relating to centres in their respective organisations. The respondent group included 31 out of the 38 centres invited to participate, and was a highly representative sample of the generally recognised institutional groupings in Australian higher education.

Focus groups
The third phase of project data collection involved conducting facilitated and audio-recorded focus groups with a range of key stakeholders, including:

1 University senior executive member with strategic leadership responsibility across institution (DVC(A)/PVC or equivalent).
2 Directors of centres.
3 A representative sample by discipline of faculty Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning or equivalent.
4 Senior operational leadership/managers in academic or general staff positions in central centres.
5  Members of either external or internally composed centre advisory boards or equivalent.
6  A student representative.
7  An additional institutional representative nominated by the university.

The focus groups further explored the key issues arising from interviews conducted in stage one of the project and from the survey conducted in phase two of the project.

In addition to five of the original university sites that participated in the interviews, five additional university sites were included in the focus group phase to expand the representativeness of the data collection sample. A total of 66 respondents participated in the focus group stage, providing a diverse range of positional and institutional perspectives to illuminate and enrich the project data collection.
Appendix C:
Interview issues

*1: Your leadership role
How do you see yourself as a leader?
What do you understand by the term ‘strategic leadership’?
How would you illustrate your ‘strategic’ leadership?

[‘Strategic leadership’ suggests that strategic leaders have the capacity to set directions, identify, choose and implement activities which create compatibility between internal organisational strengths and the changing external environment within which the university operates.]

2: Key stakeholders and key relationships
Who are the key stakeholders?
How do you know what they want and what do you do to satisfy them?

[Prompt if no mention of students or professional bodies.]
What are the key relationships of your role and how do you see your leadership role in managing these relationships?
What makes these relationships useful for your university?
How do you know if these relationships are working as intended?

3: Organisational redesign/(re)structuring
Do you agree with Marginson (2000) that the sector required organisational redesign?
What is your view of how this has been played out in your university?
What, if any changes, would you have made in hindsight or would wish to have seen made?

While the restructuring of centres is a common response to organisational or environmental changes, it may not be the most appropriate response when the issues to be addressed are cultural as much as structural (Hart et al., 2005).

*4: How you believe long-term learning and teaching performance is best enhanced

[Prompt if: no mention of the role of AUQA and the awards and LTPF; no mention of APD and existence of a centre.]

*5: Purposes of a teaching and learning institute/centre

The purposes of a teaching and learning centre suited to the contemporary context of higher education challenge:

- Maintaining a corporate memory of, and sustained engagement in, the issues and innovations in teaching in higher education.
- Engaging in comprehensive and systematic implementation of teaching and learning initiatives.
• Creating and facilitating communities of learning involved in the iterative and dynamic top-down/bottom-up engagement and management of educational initiatives.

• Investigating, articulating and disseminating scholarship in (and on) teaching, learning and education development.

(Chalmers & O'Brien, 2005, p. 51)

What do you see as the role of your centre and how representative do you think this is of the role others (e.g. the executive and academic staff) would give it?

6: How you see your Institute/centre responding to national and international developments in higher education. What are these?

(Prompt if no mention made of ICT, globalisation, massification, workload issues, funding changes.)

*7: How you will judge the effectiveness of your teaching and learning centre over time

*8: What, if anything, constrains you achieving your vision? How do you respond to this?

The effectiveness of centres is constrained by assumptions about their role – what they are and what they do?

(Occasional Paper)

Do you agree?

—

* These were regarded as high priority issues.

References


Appendix D:
Australian Teaching and Learning Centre Directors’ Survey
4. How long have you been Director (or equivalent, including interim or acting appointments) of your Centre as presently configured?
   - Less than one year
   - More than 1 year but less than 3 years
   - More than 3 years but less than 5 years
   - More than 5 years

5. If you have previously been a Director (or equivalent, including interim or acting appointments at any university) please indicate your total period of time in that role.
   - Not applicable
   - Less than one year
   - More than 1 year but less than 3 years
   - More than 3 years but less than 5 years
   - More than 5 years

6. As of today, how many staff are part of your Centre in each of the following categories? (Please include all Centre staff; please count them only once and please enter 0 where the Centre has no staff in a particular category.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff category</th>
<th>No. of staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time academic staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time academic staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time general staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time general staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff appointed for special projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff jointly appointed with Faculties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Any other Centre staff</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Centre functions
7. Please rank the importance of each function to your Centre AND how satisfied you are with your Centre's performance on each function AS OF TODAY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation and external drivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Australian Universities Quality Assurance (AUQA) audit and supporting implementation of recommendations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Learning and Teaching Performance Funding (LTPF) performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Course Experience Questionnaire (CEO) performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting staff engagement with ALTC (formerly Camro) award, grant and fellowship opportunities</td>
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<td>Research into teaching and learning management/policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plans and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing teaching and learning plans and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Implementing teaching and learning plans and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development of staff</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not important</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing professional learning for casual teaching staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing professional learning for new continuing teaching staff</td>
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<td>Providing professional learning for ongoing teaching staff</td>
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<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing professional learning for Faculty (or equivalent) teaching/learning leadership</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving courses and units</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaging in curriculum renewal</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the quality of individual units</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving student evaluation of courses, units and teaching</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting students’ learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivering academic skills services to students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing bridging/transition/orientation programs for students</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting student peer learning/mentoring schemes</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Innovation, evidence and scholarship in teaching and learning</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Not important</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobilising data and evidence to improve teaching and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undertaking the scholarship of teaching and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting productive relationships between research and teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with special institution-wide issues, e.g. the first year experience, work-integrated learning, wholly online units, group assignments, internationalising the curriculum, graduate attributes, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting innovation in curriculum and pedagogy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing pilot greenhouse for new technology/innovation</td>
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</table>

**Dissemination**

| Bringing in good practices from across the sector             | c   | c             | c                 | c        | c             | c   | c            | c                    | c        | c             |
| Sharing internal good practices across the University         | c   | c             | c                 | c        | c             | c   | c            | c                    | c        | c             |
| Developing communities of learning amongst staff             | c   | c             | c                 | c        | c             | c   | c            | c                    | c        | c             |
| Supporting staff peer evaluation and mentoring to improve teaching | c   | c             | c                 | c        | c             | c   | c            | c                    | c        | c             |
### Technology leadership and management

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Partially satisfied</th>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrating leadership in implementing educational technologies</td>
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<td>Implementing and supporting educational technologies</td>
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<td>Ensuring reliable operation of e-learning technology systems and applications</td>
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<td>Ensuring reliable operation of lecture theatre technologies</td>
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<td>Ensuring reliable delivery of learning resources either online and/or offline</td>
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<td>Recognition and reward</td>
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<td>Supporting schemes which recognise and reward excellent teaching within the institution</td>
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<td>Human resource management of staff</td>
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<td>Developing academic workload models supportive of teaching and learning commitments and directions</td>
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<td>Contributing to recruiting and selecting capable academic teachers to the organisation</td>
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### Assessment of capacity and capability as indicators of success

For each of the broad areas of Centre function below, AS OF TODAY, please rank:

- the resources- and opportunities-based Capacity of your Centre to achieve success (from low to very high capacity); and,
- the staffing expertise-based Capability of your Centre to achieve success (from low to very high capability).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function area</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Capability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation and external drivers (AQQA, LTPF, GEG, GDS, ALTQ/Carrick, management/policy research)</td>
<td>N/A Low</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans and policies (Developing and implementing plans and policies)</td>
<td>N/A Low</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development of staff (For casual, new, continuing and T&amp;L leadership staff)</td>
<td>N/A Low</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving courses and units (Quality of courses and units; internal evaluations)</td>
<td>N/A Low</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
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</table>
### Supporting student learning
(Academic skills services, bridging/transition/orientation, student peer learning/mentoring)

| | | | | | | | | |
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### Innovation, evidence and scholarship
(Data and evidence, scholarship of T&L, teaching/research nexus, institution-wide issues, innovation in curriculum, pedagogy and technology)

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### Dissemination
(Internal and external good practice, communities of learning, peer evaluation and mentoring)

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

### Technology leadership and management
(Leading, supporting, ensuring reliable operation and delivery)

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

### Recognition and reward
(For excellent teaching)

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

### Human Resource management of staff
(Workload models that support T&L, role in recruiting T&L staff)

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

#### Please specify any further indicators of success not listed (optional, up to 4)

- Please name indicator in 20 words or less, and, rate Capacity and Capability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Capability</th>
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### Constraints

9. Please rank the significance of each Constraint in allowing your Centre to achieve its objectives WITHIN THE NEXT TWO YEARS.

#### Significance

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

8 of 11
The Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraint</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Very high</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short-term thinking on achieving lasting and significant outcomes/changes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient resources to have a significant impact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient staff time in Centre to be effective in all the required areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insufficient staff time in faculties to engage with Centre activities/initiatives</td>
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<td>Incorrect or outdated general perceptions of the role and function of the Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional priority given to research over teaching and learning activities</td>
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<td>Inadequate sense of a shared direction/purpose for the Centre</td>
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<td>Lack of availability of teaching and learning data required for effective Centre operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependency of support on other institutional areas to achieve outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perception that only Faculty (or equivalent) staff can improve teaching and learning</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please specify any further constraints not listed (optional, up to 4)
Please name constraint in 20 words or less, and, rate Significance

N/A | Low | Medium | High | Very high |

Key relationships

10. AS OF TODAY, for your Centre, please rank the importance of your relationship with positions listed for achieving the objectives of the Centre AND how satisfied you are with the current effectiveness of those relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVC/PVC (Academic) (or equivalent)</td>
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<td>Chair of Academic Board (or equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Deans (or equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) (or equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heads of School (or equivalent)</td>
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<td>Faculty (or equivalent) academic development staff</td>
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<td>Faculty (or equivalent) educational IT support staff</td>
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*Please specify any further relationships not listed (optional, up to 4)*

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<tr>
<th>Please rate Importance and Satisfaction</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Not satisfied</th>
<th>Somewhat satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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**Centre recognition and inclusion**

11. Please indicate on the following continuum the degree to which you, as Director and/or staff of your Centre, are routinely included in all relevant committees and activities concerned with teaching and learning in your University.

![Rating Scale Image](http://www.deakin.edu.au/deakin surveys/s)
Optional - Any additional information

12. If you were uncertain about any element of the survey and you had to make assumptions in your responses that you would like to inform us of, if you would like to add any further explanation regarding any of your responses, or if you wish to make any other comments related to this survey, please use the box below.

100%
Appendix E:
Executive summary from survey report

This document reports on the results and findings of a national survey of directors (or equivalent) of teaching and learning centres at Australian universities. The respondent group included 31 out of the 38 centres invited to participate, and was a highly representative sample of the generally recognised institutional groupings in Australian higher education. While there is wide variation in the characteristics of individual centres, the richness of which can only be appreciated by exploring the results and findings in detail, a summary of the results is provided here in the form of a description of a mythical ‘average’ Australian university teaching and learning centre. This average centre would have the following characteristics:

- It would have been restructured at some time in the previous one to three years.
- The duration of the incumbency of the director of the centre in its current configuration would be somewhere between one and three years.
- The total directorship experience of the current centre director would be somewhere between one and three years.
- It would employ about five-and-a-third full-time and one-and-a-half part-time academic staff.
- It would employ about fifteen-and-a-third full-time and three-and-a-third part-time general staff.
- It would employ slightly more than three ‘special projects’ staff.
- It would share the employment of one staff member jointly with an academic faculty.
- It would employ one other staff member not identified above.
- All up it would employ nearly 31 staff.
- It would consider it is doing a good job in supporting staff to engage with internal and external opportunities for awards and grants.
- It would like to do better in the function of staff professional development.
- It would consider involvement in human resource management issues as a low priority.
- It would be happy with its contribution to student support, but wouldn’t view this as important work for the centre.
- It would consider its work in the areas of ‘recognition and reward’ and ‘professional development of staff’ as high impact functions.
- It would consider its work in the area of ‘human resource management of staff’ as a low impact function.
- It would consider lack of staff time, both in the faculties and in the centre, to engage in teaching and learning improvement activities to be a major constraint on the centre achieving its objectives.
- It would also consider incorrect or outdated perceptions of the role and function of the centre to be another significant constraint.
- It would consider the relationship between the centre and the DVC(A), followed by the Associate Deans (T&L) to be the key ones in achieving centre objectives.
- It would view faculty educational technology staff as having relatively little connection/relevance to the centre.
- It would feel generally well included in relevant university committees and other activities.
Appendix F:
Focus group invitation and response template

Dear <insert name>

I am writing as Project Manager for the ALTC funded project ‘Strategic Leadership for Institutional Teaching and Learning Centres: Developing a Model for the 21st Century’ which is being led by Dr Dale Holt. The project is being undertaken in partnership with UNE, Monash, RMIT University, Newcastle and Macquarie. So far we have undertaken interviews with the strategic leadership of Australian Teaching and Learning Centres and completed a survey of Centre Directors. Our final stage of data collection involves undertaking focus group discussions with our partners and four additional universities.

We are hoping to conduct a focus group at <insert institution> in February/March 2009. The list of staff who should be invited to participate in the focus group is as follows:

- Director of the Academic Development Centre; two other senior staff connected with your area; the DVC or equivalent; two faculty-based staff in leadership positions (e.g. Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning / Academic Development, HoS); a student representative (e.g. the President of the Student Association) and another person you consider would be in a position to provide a constructive additional perspective (e.g. faculty-based Academic Developer or Head, Planning Unit).

It would also be very helpful if you please indicate a few dates which would be suitable for us to conduct the focus group at your University. We are hoping to have the focus groups completed before <insert date>. It is envisaged that the focus group would run for up to 90 minutes and the whole exercise would be completed within a day at your institution.

The focus group discussion will have a dual focus:

- What makes centres successful in today’s climate?
- What role in making centres successful does strategic leadership play?

I would be very grateful if you could confirm that you would like to take part in the focus group.

I am attaching a one page summary of the project and a copy of our First Year Report to the ATLC for your information but should you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact <insert name> by telephone on <insert number> or email <insert email address>.

Could you please complete and return the attached template by <insert date>.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Kind regards

<Insert name>
Project Manager
**Strategic Leadership for Institutional Teaching and Learning Centres: Developing a Model for the 21st Century**

**Focus Group Information**

1. **Contact details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of person(s) responsible for organising focus group at your institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Preferred timing of focus group (focus group will run 90 mins)**

Preferred timing of focus group.*

Please indicate what would be your preferred timing of the focus group. Please do not select any dates after the 15 May 2009 as we wish to have the focus groups concluded by then.

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<th>3rd preference</th>
<th>4th preference</th>
<th>5th preference</th>
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Additional notes

3. **Membership of focus group**

Please list in the table below, the names and titles of staff participating in the focus group at your institution based on the following composition:

- Director, Academic Development Group; two other senior staff of the Academic Development Centre; your DVC/PVC (Teaching and Learning); two faculty-based staff in leadership positions (e.g. Associate Deans, Teaching and Learning / Academic Development); a student representative (e.g. the President of the Student Association); another person you consider would be in a position to provide a constructive additional perspective (e.g. faculty-based Academic Developer or Head, Planning Unit).

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<th>Name</th>
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Please return this form to <insert email>. Thank you kindly for your support.
Appendix G: Dimensions of strategic leadership maturity framework

- **Development of purpose**
  (with University Senior Executive)

- **Shared understanding of purpose**
  (with senior academic leadership and management, heads of divisions and academic teaching staff)

- **Capacity and capability to achieve purpose**

- **Ability to demonstrate purpose achieved**
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP FOR INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRES:
DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

A Guide to Support Australian University Teaching and Learning Centres in Strategic Leadership for Teaching and Learning Enhancement

March 2010

Lead institution
Deakin University

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, Monash University, RMIT University
The University of Newcastle, University of New England

Project leader
Dr Dale Holt – Deakin University

Project team members
Dr Lorraine Bennett – Monash University
Dr Di Challis – Challis Consultancy
Merryn Falk – Merryn Falk Consultancy
Professor Gail Huon – The University of New England
Associate Professor Sandra Jones – RMIT University
Mr Amgad Louka – RMIT University
Professor Ian Macdonald – Victoria University
(both previously University of New England) and
Professor Stephen Marshall – Macquarie University
Dr Robyn Muldoon – University of New England
Dr Stuart Palmer – Deakin University
Associate Professor Ian Solomonides – Macquarie University

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.