Report on Survey of Directors (or equivalent) of Australian University Teaching and Learning Centres

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for the project team

Strategic Leadership for Institutional Teaching and Learning Centres: Developing a Model for the 21st century

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Summary
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 sometime 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 in total;
- 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; and
- it would feel generally well included in relevant university committees and other activities.
Introduction
The purpose of this project, supported by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (formerly the Carrick Institute), is 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 to illustrate how these factors are dealt with in contemporary university settings in Australian higher education. The second phase of the research for this project involved an online survey of Directors (or equivalent) of Teaching and Learning Centres at Australian universities conducted during September 2008. A copy of the survey instrument that was employed is included as Appendix 1. The survey included items addressing:

- background/demographic information;
- Centre functions, including importance and satisfaction;
- indicators of Centre success, including capacity and capability;
- constraints on achievement of Centre objectives;
- key Centre relationships, including importance and satisfaction; and
- an assessment of Centre recognition and inclusion.

A total of 38 identifiable Centres of Teaching and Learning were found in Australian universities, and their Directors were invited to participate in the online survey. This report presents the results and findings of the survey.
**Background information**

Survey responses were received from 31 out of the 38 Centres invited to participate; an effective response rate of **81.6%**.

Appendix 2 provides a table of the 38 Australian universities with identified Centres of Teaching and Learning, classified according to the generally understood institutional groupings of:

- Group of Eight (Go8);
- Australian Technology Network (ATN);
- Innovative Research Universities (IRU);
- New Generation Universities (NGU); and
- Non-aligned / No grouping.

It was possible to anonymously allocate respondents to membership of this grouping/classification, so as to compare the proportions of respondents in groupings with the overall sector institutional proportions present in Appendix 2. The respondent allocation was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional grouping</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group of Eight (Go8)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Technology Network (ATN)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative Research Universities (IRU)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Generation Universities (NGU)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-aligned / No grouping</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one grouping had an expected count less than 5, permitting on a chi-square test of proportions ($\chi^2 = 0.459, p > 0.97$). This result suggests that there is no significant difference between the proportions of respondents in groupings compared to the overall sector institutional proportions present in Appendix 2. This finding, combined with the high response rate, gives good confidence that the respondent sample is representative of the wider sector in Australia.

In Question 1 respondents were asked to indicate their institutional grouping/classification according to the options:

- Member of the group of Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU);
- Member of the Group of Eight (Go8) research intensive universities;
- Member of the Australian Technology Network (ATN);
- Strongly allied with Open and Distance Education;
- Unaligned and belonging to no particular grouping of universities; and
- Other, please specify.

It is noted that this classification does not correspond exactly with that provided in Appendix 2. For completeness, we report the frequency of responses here; both ‘Other’ respondents indicated NGU as their institutional grouping:
In Question 2 respondents were asked to indicate when their Centre had last been restructured according to the options:

- Within the last 12 months (from September 2007);
- Within the last 1-3 years (from September 2005);
- Within the last 3-5 years (from September 2003);
- It is 5 years or longer since the last restructure; and
- Other, please specify.

Five respondents chose the category ‘Other’. An inspection of the additional notes provided by these respondents indicated that one was ‘Within the last 12 months’, and that the remaining four all referred to Centres currently undergoing, or about to undergo, a restructure. Based on these adjustments to the data, the ‘age’ of the current incarnation of the Centre is:
It is observed that approximately 70% of respondent Centres are less than three years old, with another 13% about to be restructured imminently. Using the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2 and giving an increasing ordinal value to duration of the Centre in its current configuration (including a value of ‘0’ for Centres imminently undergoing a restructure), the table below indicates the mean ‘age’ (not literally in years) of Centres for each institutional grouping:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1atext</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATN</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go8</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.095</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRU</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.894</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.069</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGU</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.089</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed that the mean Centre age is somewhere between 12 months and three years. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) comparison of means suggests that the overall difference between the means is significant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>14.691</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.673</td>
<td>4.578</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>20.857</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35.548</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A post-hoc least significant difference (LSD) test suggests that the significant pair-wise differences in mean Centre age were between the Go8 and IRU ($p < 0.003$), and the Go8 and NGU ($p < 0.0011$) pairs.

In Question 3 respondents were asked to indicate the status of their Directorship (or equivalent) according to the options:
- Continuing;
- Interim;
- Acting
- Other, please specify.

More than a quarter of all Centres have an Acting/Interim Director. All ‘Other’ items refer to a contract appointment.

In Question 4 respondents were asked to indicate the duration of their Directorship of the Centre in its current configuration according to the options:
- Less than one year;
- More than 1 year but less than 3 years;
- More than 3 years but less than 5 years; and
- More than 5 years.
Nearly one half of respondents have been in their position for less than one year, and three quarters for less than three years – the later result closely mirroring the reported Centre restructuring in Question 2. Using the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2 and giving an increasing ordinal value to duration of Directorship, the table below indicates the mean duration (not literally in years) of Directorships for each institutional grouping:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Grouping</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATN</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go8</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.789</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iRU</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.753</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.832</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGU</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.464</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.329</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed that the mean duration of Directorship of the Centre is somewhere between one and three years. An ANOVA comparison of means suggests that there is no significant differences between the means ($F_{30} = 0.122, p > 0.97$).

In Question 5 respondents were asked to indicate the total duration of their experiences in a Centre Directorship role according to the options:
- Not applicable;
- Less than one year;
- More than 1 year but less than 3 years;
- More than 3 years but less than 5 years; and
More than one third of respondents chose N/A, presumably meaning that they have not had any prior experience in a Directorship role. Combining the first two items suggests that half of all Centre Directors have had less than one years experience. More than one quarter report more than five years experience. Using the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2 and giving an increasing ordinal value to Directorship experience, the table below indicates the mean total experience (not literally in years) in a Centre Director role for each institutional grouping:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1atext</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATN</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.732</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go8</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.789</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRU</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.506</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.581</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGU</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.618</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.661</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is observed that the mean duration of experience in a Directorship role is somewhere between one and three years. An ANOVA comparison of means suggests that there is no significant differences between the means ($F_{30} = 1.258, p > 0.31$).

In Question 6 respondents were asked to indicate the total number of Centre staff in different categories of employment according to the options:
• Full-time academic staff;
• Part-time academic staff;
• Full-time general staff;
• Part-time general staff;
• Staff appointed for special projects;
• Staff jointly appointed with Faculties; and
• Any other Centre staff.

A value for ‘total Centre staff’ was inferred by summing all staff numbers reported. The table below reports basic descriptive statistics for each Centre staff category for all respondents combined:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q6FTA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>4.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6PTA</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6FTG</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>15.35</td>
<td>18.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6PTG</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6SP</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6JAF</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>2.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6Oth</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>2.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6Tot</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>30.81</td>
<td>22.234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least one respondent indicated ‘zero’ for each category of Centre staff. The mean response for full time academic staff was five and a third. For full-time staff, general staff outnumber academic staff nearly three-to-one. ‘Special projects’ staff account for ten percent of all Centre staff. An ANOVA test revealed no significant difference in the mean number of any survey category of Centre staff, including total Centre staff, between any of the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2:
• FTA – \( F_{30} = 0.342, p > 0.84 \);
• PTA – \( F_{30} = 0.334, p > 0.85 \);
• FTG – \( F_{30} = 0.590, p > 0.67 \);
• PTG – \( F_{30} = 0.969, p > 0.44 \);
• SP – \( F_{30} = 1.619, p > 0.19 \);
• JAF – \( F_{30} = 0.677, p > 0.61 \);
• Oth – \( F_{30} = 0.893, p > 0.48 \); and
• Tot – \( F_{30} = 0.514, p > 0.72 \).
Centre functions

In Question 7 respondents were asked to consider a range of 36 Centre Functions (identified below), to rate the Importance of each Function to their Centre (using a response scale of N/A, Not important, Somewhat important, Important, Very important), and to also rate their Satisfaction with the Centre’s performance on each Function (using a response scale of N/A, Not satisfied, Partially satisfied, Satisfied, Very satisfied). Not all of the identified Functions apply to all Centres. Where a respondent indicated a Satisfaction rating for a Centre Function other than ‘Not applicable’, this was taken to indicate that a particular Function did apply to the operations of that Centre. The chart below indicates the frequency of reporting of Centre Functions, including an indication of the percentage of Centres reporting a Function.

Reputation and external drivers
1. Preparing for the Australian Universities Quality Assurance (AUQA) audit and supporting implementation of recommendations
2. Improving your University’s Learning and Teaching Performance Funding (LTPF) performance
3. Improving your University’s Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) performance
4. Improving your University’s Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) performance
5. Supporting staff engagement with ALTC (formerly Carrick) award, grant and fellowship opportunities
6. Research into teaching and learning management/policy

Plans and policies
7. Developing teaching and learning plans and policies
8. Implementing teaching and learning plans and policies

Professional development of staff
9. Providing professional learning for casual teaching staff
10. Providing professional learning for new continuing teaching staff
11. Providing professional learning for ongoing teaching staff
12. Providing professional learning for Faculty (or equivalent) teaching/learning leadership

Improving courses and units
13. Engaging in curriculum renewal
14. Improving the quality of individual units
15. Improving student evaluation of courses, units and teaching
Supporting students’ learning
16. Delivering academic skills services to students
17. Providing bridging/transition/orientation programs for students
18. Supporting student peer learning/mentoring schemes

Innovation, evidence and scholarship in teaching and learning
19. Mobilising data and evidence to improve teaching and learning
20. Undertaking the scholarship of teaching and learning
21. Promoting productive relationships between research and teaching
22. 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.
23. Supporting innovation in curriculum and pedagogy
24. Providing pilot/greenhouse for new technology/innovation

Dissemination
25. Bringing in good practices from across the sector
26. Sharing internal good practices across the University
27. Developing communities of learning amongst staff
28. Supporting staff peer evaluation and mentoring to improve teaching

Technology leadership and management
29. Demonstrating leadership in implementing educational technologies
30. Implementing and supporting educational technologies
31. Ensuring reliable operation of e-learning technology systems and applications
32. Ensuring reliable operation of lecture theatre technologies
33. Ensuring reliable delivery of learning resources either online and/or offline

Recognition and reward
34. Supporting schemes which recognise and reward excellent teaching within the institution

Human resource management of staff
35. Developing academic workload models supportive of teaching and learning commitments and directions
36. Contributing to recruiting and selecting capable academic teachers to the organisation

A method for visualising and interpreting importance-satisfaction data is the importance-satisfaction grid (Aigbedo & Parameswaran, 2004) – where the importance rating (converted to an increasing ordinal value) is plotted on the vertical axis and the satisfaction rating (converted to an increasing ordinal value) is plotted on the horizontal axis. The grid is divided into quadrants using the grand mean values for all importance ratings as a vertical divider and the grand mean of all satisfaction ratings as a horizontal divider. The ‘normal’ interpretation of the quadrants is customarily as follows:

- Quadrant D: low importance and low satisfaction – low priority items;
- Quadrant C: low importance and high satisfaction – possibly doing more than necessary on these items;
- Quadrant B: high importance and high satisfaction – keep up the good work! and
- Quadrant A: high importance and low satisfaction – concentrate improvement efforts on these items.

However, in this case, it is not ‘customers’ performing the rating exercise; here it is a self-assessment of Satisfaction and Importance of Centre Functions. In this case, a more appropriate interpretation of the grid quadrants might be:

- Quadrant D: low importance and low satisfaction – items considered a low priority by the Centre;
- Quadrant C: low importance and high satisfaction – not important but doing a good job, be careful of being too self-satisfied;
- Quadrant B: high importance and high satisfaction – keep up the good work! and
- Quadrant A: high importance and low satisfaction – where the Centre would like to prioritise improvement efforts.

The following IS grid presents the mean Importance and Satisfaction ratings for the Centre Functions survey data:

Without trying to make overly literal inferences from the IS grid data, the position of items furthest from the intersection of the grand mean lines and nearest a diagonal line between the grand mean lines are those that most represent the characteristics of the IS grid quadrants noted above. A measure of the statistical significance of these results is given by the mean 90 percent confidence intervals for the Importance and Satisfaction ratings. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Importance ratings is +/- 0.28. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Satisfaction ratings is +/- 0.30. Here, a number of Function clusters are observed (noted in the diagram above). Based on the IS grid data, we might conclude that, relatively speaking, Centres:

- give a low priority to engaging Centres in institutional HRM issues (35/36);
- don’t generally see it as a Centre responsibility to promote the T/R nexus (21);
- are happy with Centre contribution to student support, but don’t view this a important work for the Centre (16/17/18);
- feel that the Centre is doing a good job at promoting engagement with ALTC (5);
- feel that the Centre is doing a good job supporting reward of good teaching (34);
• feel that the Centre is doing a good job supporting new academic staff (10);
• would like to a better job at PD for casual and continuing staff (9/11); and
• would like to a better job at development for T&L leaders (12).

Other Centre Functions identified by respondents included:
• Supporting curriculum accreditation processes
• Uni & Faculty Committee work
• Providing efficient reproduction and distribution of learning resources to off-campus students
• leadership development
• Provision of accredited training to VET staff
• Career development for academics ie preparing for probation & promotion
• Providing strategic advice about learning and teaching to executive
• curriculum design and development - course level
• Facilitating Student Evaluation of Teaching
• Copyright management for the university
• Supporting Faculty learning and teaching priorities
• Promote new models of learning resource development
• Research & publication of higher ed innovation & issues
• Internal communication about learning and teaching (newsletters, etc)
• curriculum design and development - unit level
• Contributing to Governance and Management of the University
• Supporting the developmental work of academic committees
• peer review train-the-trainer
• membership of academic decision-making committees

Common key Functions, for some Centres, not included in the survey include:
• learning materials development and production; and
• contributing to university committee work.
**Indicators of success**

In Question 8 respondents were asked to consider a range of 10 broad areas of Centre Function (identified below), to rate the Capacity (in terms of resources and opportunities) of their Centre to achieve success (using a response scale of N/A, Low, Medium, High, Very high), and to also rate the Capability (in terms of staffing expertise) of their Centre to achieve success (using a response scale of N/A, Low, Medium, High, Very high). The following IS grid presents the mean Capacity and Capability ratings for the Centre Indicators of Success survey data:

1. Reputation and external drivers
2. Plans and policies
3. Professional development of staff
4. Improving courses and units
5. Supporting student learning
6. Innovation, evidence and scholarship
7. Dissemination
8. Technology leadership and management
9. Recognition and reward
10. Human resource management of staff

Very little ‘off-diagonal’ rating is observed from the B quadrant (relatively high Capacity and Capability) down to the D quadrant (relatively low Capacity and Capability). This indicates that Centres see a reasonable alignment between their Capacity and Capability, with
Capability (staff expertise) always rated slightly higher than Capacity (resources and opportunities). Additionally, the general ordering of Function areas from top right down to bottom left provides an indication of the relative ranking of where Centres view themselves as having an organisational impact. A measure of the statistical significance of these results is given by the mean 90 percent confidence intervals for the Capacity and Capability ratings. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Capacity ratings is +/- 0.24. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Capability ratings is +/- 0.27. Parallels are observed with the Centre Functions IS data; ‘Recognition and reward’ and ‘Professional development of staff’ are seen as high-impact Functions, while ‘Human resource management of staff’ is seen as a low-impact Function.
**Constraints**

In Question 9 respondents were asked to consider a range of potential Constraints on allowing Centres to achieve their objectives within the next two years, and to rate 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, the table below gives the mean significance rating for each Constraint, ranked in order of mean rating:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q9-4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9-3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9-5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>76</td>
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</table>

4. Insufficient staff time in faculties to engage with Centre activities/initiatives
3. Insufficient staff time in Centre to be effective in all the required areas
5. Incorrect or outdated general perceptions of the role and Function of the Centre
2. Insufficient resources to have a significant impact
6. Institutional priority given to research over teaching and learning activities
10. Perception that only Faculty (or equivalent) staff can improve teaching and learning
9. Dependency of support on other institutional areas to achieve outcomes
7. Inadequate sense of a shared direction/purpose for the Centre
1. Short-term thinking on achieving lasting and significant outcomes/changes
8. Lack of availability of teaching and learning data required for effective Centre operations

A measure of the statistical significance of these results is given by the mean 90 percent confidence intervals for the Constraint ratings. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Constraint ratings is +/- 0.31. Time, for both Faculty and Centre staff to effectively engage in teaching and learning improvement activities are the top priorities. It is not surprising given the significant amount of restructuring of Centres reported above that Centres might experience problems with the wider university population having outdated/incorrect conceptions of the Centre’s Function and purpose.

Other Centre Constraints identified by respondents included:

- Competing agendas by Executive Deans
- Short term budget cycles - one year expenditure allocations when significant change takes time
- Restructure
- qualifications and capabilities of Centre staff
- Significant 'all of organisation' change agenda
- Parochialism among some senior academic leaders
- unwillingness of executive to allocate resources to professional development of teachers
- Change in Funding Model (from full cost recovery)
• Lack of university level leadership/cohesion
• Perception by some Faculty leaders that most teaching 'problems' are individual not systemic
• correct mix of staff in the Centre
• Permissive management of faculties
• tardiness in reducing small cross campus units to redirect resources to teaching improvement
• Poor understanding at high levels of change management

Key Constraints, for some Centres, not identified in the survey include:
• dealing with change;
• parochialism issues;
• the qualifications and skills of Centre staff;
• Faculty management issues;
• Senior university management issues.

An ANOVA test revealed no significant difference in the mean rating of any survey Constraint item, between any of the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2:
• Q9-1 – \( (F_{29} = 1.063, p > 0.39) \);
• Q9-2 – \( (F_{29} = 1.131, p > 0.36) \);
• Q9-3 – \( (F_{29} = 1.236, p > 0.32) \);
• Q9-4 – \( (F_{29} = 0.516, p > 0.72) \);
• Q9-5 – \( (F_{29} = 0.672, p > 0.61) \);
• Q9-6 – \( (F_{29} = 0.273, p > 0.89) \);
• Q9-7 – \( (F_{29} = 1.027, p > 0.41) \);
• Q9-8 – \( (F_{28} = 1.174, p > 0.34) \);
• Q9-9 – \( (F_{29} = 0.449, p > 0.77) \); and
• Q9-10 – \( (F_{28} = 1.633, p > 0.19) \).
Key relationships
In Question 10 respondents were asked to consider the relationship between their Centre and nine key university stakeholder positions (identified below), to rate the Importance of that relationship in achieving Centre objectives (using a response scale of N/A, Not important, Somewhat important, Important, Very important), and to also rate their Satisfaction with the effectiveness of that relationship (using a response scale of N/A, Not satisfied, Partially satisfied, Satisfied, Very satisfied). The following IS grid presents the mean Importance and Satisfaction ratings for the Centre Relationships survey data:

1. Vice-Chancellor
2. DVC/PVC(Academic) (or equivalent)
3. Chair of Academic Board (or equivalent)
4. Faculty Deans (or equivalent)
5. Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) (or equivalent)
6. Heads of School (or equivalent)
7. Associate Heads of School (Teaching and Learning) (or equivalent)
8. Faculty (or equivalent) academic development staff
9. Faculty (or equivalent) educational IT support staff

A measure of the statistical significance of these results is given by the mean 90 percent confidence intervals for the Importance and Satisfaction ratings. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Importance ratings is +/- 0.24. The mean 90 percent confidence interval for the Satisfaction ratings is +/- 0.25. The ‘winner’ in both Importance and Satisfaction is the relationship between the Centre and the DVC(A), followed by the
Associate Deans (T&L). Faculty Educational Technology staff are viewed as having relatively little connection/relevance to the Centre. The position of Chair of Academic Board appears to be considered ‘friendly, but relatively unimportant’ to the Centre.

Other Centre Relationships identified by respondents included:
- Institutional IT support staff
- Other support sections, student services
- Library Services staff
- Chair of Quality Teaching and Learning Committee
- Degree Coordinators
- Learning Assistance
- Chief Operating Officer
- Course/program co-ordinators
- Information technology
- Student services staff
- Director of Human Resources
- PVC Quality
- Flexible Learning /Delivery Services
- Student support services
- Director of Quality Improvement and Planning
- Information Technology and Information Services
- Planning, Quality and Review.

Key Relationships, for some Centres, not identified in the survey include:
- Quality/Planning area;
- Student Services area;
- Program/Degree Coordinators; and
- University IT area.
Centre recognition and inclusion

In Question 11 respondents were asked to indicate, on a numbered continuum (‘1’ representing ‘Never consulted/included’ and ‘20’ representing ‘Always consulted/included’), the degree to which Centre staff are routinely included in all relevant committees and activities concerned with teaching and learning in their University. Based on assigning an increasing ordinal value to each continuum point, that ratings for Question 11 are:

The mean scale rating was 17.6, with a standard deviation of 2.21. Respondents felt that Centres were generally well included in relevant university committees and other activities. An ANOVA test revealed no significant difference in the mean scale rating for Question 11, between any of the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2 ($F_{29} = 1.247, p > 0.31$).
Other data / analysis

Question 12 invited respondents to add any additional information. The following are all of the additional un-edited comments received.

*Was not too clear about the focus of the HR questions. Key message is that it is a small unit, poorly resourced in terms of staffing and finances, struggling to meet all its responsibilities and in the midst of changing senior leadership within the institution, and within an institution which has traditionally emphasised research and high levels of decentralisation. The Unit is hard working with some excellent staff, but currently a bit isolated and planning initiatives to achieve better outcomes. Consequently a lot of the responses place us in the middle categories: not wonderful, but not awful. Hope the responses reflect this picture.*

*As centrally located support units, it is sometimes difficult to get appropriate recognition of excellent work.*

*Many of the satisfaction ratings were averages, when the real response would be variable according to the Faculty or situation concerned. We have extremely good relationships with some Faculties and less involvement with others.*

*The section on performance indicators was too general - much work done in our section is on particular components of courses, following a project basis.*

*The Centre is currently in the middle of a restructure which involves merging of two centres. I have responded as though this merger was complete. The major impact of this in terms of questions asked is on the staffing numbers.*

*This response is from a Centre with dual sector accountabilities. The staffing profile is reflective of this although considerable work has been carried out in shaping the profile to better reflect the University profile. This Centre has in place and embedded model of Educational Developers working in Faculties on negotiated projects as part of their load. In addition secondments from the Faculties are in place as a professional development strategy for teaching staff and to contribute to the strategic projects undertaken by the Centre. The Centre is not directly accountable for student learning support; however it offers accredited teacher professional development programs for VET and HE staff.*

*We have a group of staff who are appointed in conjoint positions (appointed to a general staff scale but now conjoint academics) - there are currently 5 of these (put under general staff - 4 F/T, 1 P/T.)*

*As a very new (3 months) centre with further staff yet to be employed it is difficult to offer a satisfaction rating. I have completed the functions information on what is planned to happen but again it is not fully implemented so things might change!*

*In some situations, such as when relating to the Academic Directors (like Faculty T&L Deans), there are very big differences between individuals, so I had to compromise between a good and a bad (as they are in reality).*

Some respondents have noted the fact that their Centre is very new or about to undergo a restructure – reinforcing the organisational turbulence that has been a common experience for many Australian Centres. A number of respondents noted the difficulty in providing an
overall assessment of their Functions in a particular category, noting a broad array of separate individual projects, and, in particular, the key point that relationships between the Centre and particular individual key institutional stakeholder positions vary widely in nature – from the constructive to the virtually non-existent.

Many of the survey items result in ordinal data that can be treated as pseudo-interval data for the examination of the existence of correlations between item pairs. All of these items were tested for pair-wise correlation against each other. For a number of reasons…
- the relatively small absolute number of respondents;
- the constrained four point response scale;
- that response scales produce ordinal rather than true interval data;
…it would be unwise to infer too literally causal relationships between the item pairs. However, for completeness, the observed statistically significant pair-wise correlations are reported here.

Centre Directors who indicated a high level of Satisfaction with the Centre Function ‘Promoting productive relationships between research and teaching’ also indicated a longer incumbency in the role of Director of their Centre as it was currently configured ($r = +0.57, p < 0.002$). This suggests that the scholarship of teaching and learning, and/or the teaching/research nexus are issues that require a period of Centre stability and maturity to be tackled effectively.

Centre Directors who indicated a high level of Satisfaction with the Centre Function ‘Sharing internal good practices across the University’ also indicated a higher number of Centre staff appointed for special projects ($r = +0.50, p < 0.006$). This suggests that ‘special projects’ staff can play an important role in engaging with, and promoting the Centre to, the wider university community.

Centre Directors who indicated a high continuum score for the ‘Centre recognition and inclusion’ item also indicated a higher Satisfaction with the Centre’s relationship with the Chair of Academic Board ($r = +0.48, p < 0.007$). While the Chair of Academic Board may be viewed as a largely ceremonial role, it is true that Academic Board (or its equivalent) is the peak forum for academic matters in the university. This suggests that a good working relationship with the Chair of Academic Board may be indicative of a high profile for the Centre in the broader academic life of the university.

Somewhat intriguingly, Centre Directors who indicated a high continuum score for the ‘Centre recognition and inclusion’ item also indicated a lower Satisfaction with the Centre’s relationship with Faculty Academic Development Staff ($r = -0.74, p < 0.003$). It is not clear why there should be a strong negative relationship between perception of the profile of the Centre and the Centre’s relationship with Faculty academic development staff. When taken together with the previous correlation, one possible interpretation is that, to obtain the highest profile in the university, the Centre should strive to cultivate effective relationships at the highest academic levels of the university.
Conclusions

A snapshot summary of the main findings is presented at the beginning of this report, and the full details are presented throughout. A common theme emerging from a number of survey items is the turbulent environment faced by many Centres – the time since last restructure, incumbency of the current Director and total Directorship experience of the current Centre Director all have mean values of ‘more than one year but less than three years’. Most Centres would consider their work in the areas of ‘Recognition and reward’ and ‘Professional development of staff’ as high impact Functions, and they would be pleased with their efforts in the former area, and wish to perform better on the latter. The principal Constraint identified by Centres was ‘lack of staff time’, both in the Faculties and in the Centre, to engage in teaching and learning improvement activities. Overall, Centres feel well included in relevant university committees and other activities. An important point raised by respondents is that the nature of their engagements and relationships with different individual institutional stakeholders and groups vary widely in nature – from the constructive to the virtually non-existent. While Australian teaching and learning Centres are a diverse group, we note that virtually no significant differences in mean survey ratings are observed between any of the institutional groupings given in Appendix 2, except for the item relating to time since last Centre restructure – and even then only two pair-wise significant differences in mean Centre age between groupings were observed.
AUSTRALIAN TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTRE DIRECTORS' SURVEY

Background information

1. Please classify your University as:
   - Member of the group of Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU)
   - Member of the Group of Eight (Go8) research intensive universities
   - Member of the Australian Technology Network (ATN)
   - Strongly allied with Open and Distance Education
   - Unaligned and belonging to no particular grouping of universities
   - Other, please specify

2. Has your Centre recently been restructured?
   - Within the last 12 months (from September 2007)
   - Within the last 1-3 years (from September 2005)
   - Within the last 3-5 years (from September 2003)
   - It is 5 years or longer since the last restructure
   - Other, please specify

3. Please identify your Directorship (or equivalent) status.
   - Continuing
   - Interim
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(s) 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time academic staff</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time academic staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time general staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time general staff</td>
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</tr>
<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>
<tr>
<td>Any other Centre staff</td>
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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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation and external drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Australian Universities Quality Assurance (AUQA) audit and supporting implementation of recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Learning and Teaching Performance Funding (LTPF) performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving your University's Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting staff engagement with ALTC (formerly Carrick) award, grant and fellowship opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research into teaching and learning management/policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plans and policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing teaching and learning plans and policies</td>
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<td>Implementing teaching and learning plans and policies</td>
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<th>Partially satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Providing professional learning for casual teaching staff</td>
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<td>Providing professional learning for ongoing teaching staff</td>
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<td>Providing professional learning for Faculty (or equivalent) teaching/learning leadership</td>
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<td>Engaging in curriculum renewal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving the quality of individual units</td>
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<td>c</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving student evaluation of courses, units and teaching</td>
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<td>Supporting students’ learning</td>
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<td>Delivering academic skills services to students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing bridging/transition/orientation programs for students</td>
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### Innovation, evidence and scholarship in teaching and learning

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<th>Important</th>
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<th>Partially satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mobilising data and evidence to improve teaching and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting productive relationships between research and teaching</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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</tr>
<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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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</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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### Dissemination

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<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very satisfied</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bringing in good practices from across the sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharing internal good practices across the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing communities of learning amongst staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting staff peer evaluation and mentoring to improve teaching</td>
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<td>Demonstrating leadership in implementing educational technologies</td>
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<tr>
<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>Supporting schemes which recognise and reward excellent teaching within the institution</td>
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<td><strong>Human resource management of staff</strong></td>
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<tr>
<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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</table>
### Assessment of capacity and capability as indicators of success

8. 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 capacity).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function area</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Capability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reputation and external drivers (AUQA, LTPF, CEQ, GDS, ALTC/Carrick, management/policy research)</td>
<td>N/A Low</td>
<td>Medium High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plans and policies (Developing and implementing plans and policies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional development of staff (For casual, new, continuing and T&amp;L leadership staff)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving courses and units (Quality of courses and units, internal evaluations)</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
(Workbad 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)

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

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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.

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**Significance**
### Constraint

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

Please specify any further constraints not listed (optional, up to 4)

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

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.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Never consulted/included · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · Always consulted/included
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.

At any time you can use the 'Save and Continue' button at the bottom of the page to save your survey responses, so that you can leave and return to the survey later.
Appendix 2 – Institutional groupings in Australian Higher Education

1. The Group of Eight (Go8)
   Australian National University
   Monash University
   University of Adelaide
   University of Melbourne
   University of New South Wales
   University of Queensland
   University of Sydney
   University of Western Australia

2. Australian Technology Network (ATN)
   Curtin University of Technology
   Queensland University of Technology
   RMIT University
   University of South Australia
   University of Technology, Sydney

3. Innovative Research Universities (IRU)
   Flinders University
   Griffith University
   James Cook University
   LaTrobe University
   Murdoch University
   University of Newcastle

4. New Generation Universities (NGU)
   Australian Catholic University
   Central Queensland University
   Edith Cowan University
   Southern Cross University
   University of Ballarat
   University of Canberra
   University of the Sunshine Coast
   University of Western Sydney
   Victoria University

5. Non-aligned / No grouping
   Bond University
   Charles Darwin University
   Charles Sturt University
   Deakin University
   Macquarie University
   Swinburne University of Technology
   University of New England
   University of Southern Queensland
   University of Tasmania
   University of Wollongong

This list was adapted from *Student surveys on teaching and learning Final Report* by Barrie, Ginns and Symons, taking into account recent changes in the compositions of the ATN and IRU groupings.