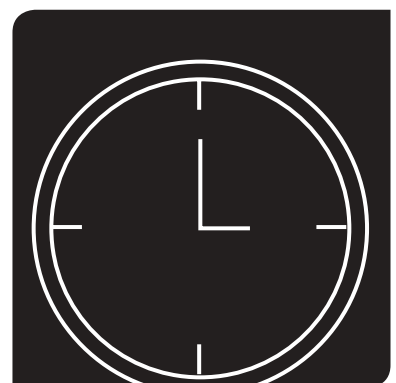
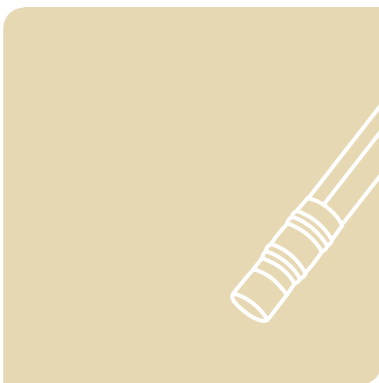
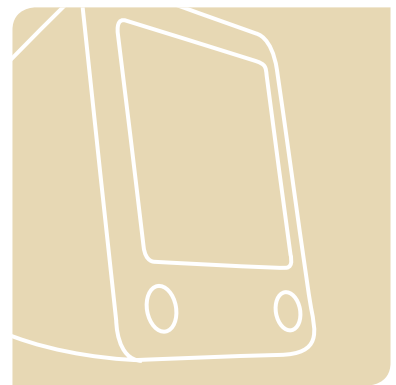
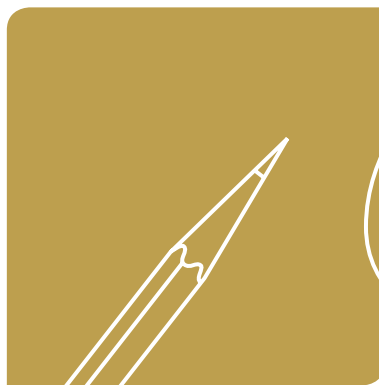




Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan

2003-2007



Teaching and Learning Enhancement Plan

2003-2007

www.uq.edu.au/teaching_learning/download/TLEP2003-2007FinalAugust2003.pdf

Contact:

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Level 3, Brian Wilson Chancellery
The University of Queensland 4072
Telephone +61 7 3365 7266
Email s.cox@admin.uq.edu.au

Introduction

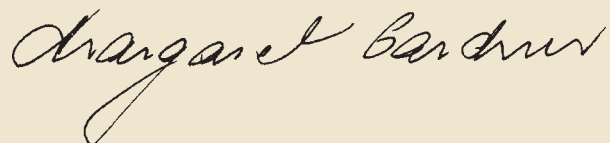
Excellence of learning opportunities and outcomes depends on the quality of the teaching and learning experience. To provide a high quality experience for students requires an environment that fosters critical inquiry as well as innovation and creativity. The environment must build a depth of knowledge that will provide a foundation for later endeavour and support independent learning that will allow a graduate to adapt to new challenges and situations.

To achieve these results some areas must be given high priority. We must ensure that facilities and resources are available to support students and staff. These include high-quality and flexible teaching and learning spaces including laboratories and field facilities, libraries with a range of resources accessible on and off-campus, and access to information and communications technology for classes and independent study. Beyond these resources, academics and other professional staff need the ability to develop their teaching and learning expertise, with support and expert advice where necessary, and recognition and encouragement for expertise applied and innovation tried.

Without these resources, the quality of the teaching and learning experience is likely to be impaired. Yet these resources will not ensure the outcomes we seek. The circumstances for our students and for staff have changed in the last few decades. The student population is increasingly diverse. Student engagement with the campus experience that underpins our teaching and learning strategies varies and cannot be assumed to be high or constant during the students' programs. Classes have become larger in many programs. Access to resources and the potential flexibility of teaching and learning has increased dramatically largely due to advances in information and communications technology.

In this Plan the University has focused on ways to deal with changing circumstances by concentrating on the way teaching and learning is enriched by the research context. The many ways in which this can be accomplished are discussed in Goal 1 of the Plan. The Plan also emphasises the many opportunities for more flexible teaching and learning practice and the need to ensure that the goal of such changes is to enhance the quality of interactions students have with their peers and their teachers. Underpinning these direct enhancements of the teaching and learning experience is a concentration on strong program-focused curriculum design and renewal and a commitment to find out what students think about the teaching and learning we provide.

To provide a high-quality teaching and learning experience is one of the most important aims of a university. To be able to do so by drawing on some of the best and most creative people available is an advantage The University of Queensland has to help achieve this aim. The Plan provides a way of bringing that creativity to bear. The Plan has been developed through the support and contributions of staff and students across the University and its goals will be accomplished by their continuing efforts.

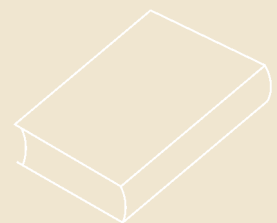
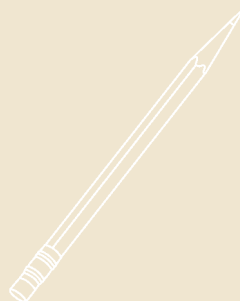
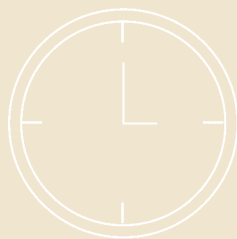


Professor Margaret Gardner
DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (ACADEMIC)
December 2003

Vision

The University of Queensland is committed to excellence of learning experiences and outcomes for its students. This will be achieved by

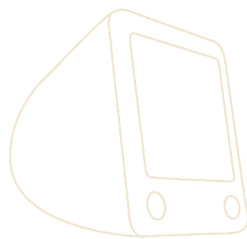
- Building and maintaining a strong research-based teaching and learning culture and practice
- Fostering critical scrutiny of curriculum for its capacity to develop graduate attributes, ensure an international perspective, incorporate developments in research and lead professional practice
- Supporting innovation in teaching and learning
- Encouraging a learning environment that supports learning communities to foster independence in student learning and peer interaction among students and
- Gathering and responding to feedback from students, staff and the community on the learning experiences provided



Priorities

Over the next five years the University will focus on

- Making an explicit link between teaching and research so that excellence in research contributes to excellence in learning experiences and outcomes for students
- Supporting coherent and innovative curriculum design and review processes at program and sequence of study level
- Supporting high-quality and innovative teaching and learning practices that actively engage students and provide the benefits of small group interactions
- Providing a high-quality learning environment that encourages independent learning and peer interaction
- Ensuring critical reflection and action on the teaching and learning environment, performance and outcomes
- Providing development opportunities and rewards which encourage teaching and learning staff to be innovative, effective and reflective practitioners



goal 1 Research-based teaching and learning

As a comprehensive, research intensive university, The University of Queensland faces the challenge of ensuring that its research strengths inform and enhance its teaching and learning at all levels. The links between the content and context of teaching and research are many. It is important that the ways that the teaching/research nexus is developed and enhances learning outcomes are given priority and focus in our teaching and learning plan.

To build research-based teaching and learning we need to recognise the many strands of this relationship of teaching and learning to research. We need to

- 1 Develop research-based attributes in graduates which encourage creativity and independence, critical thinking, effective communication and ethical and social sensitivity. These attributes and the learning experiences of students should reflect research-based understandings and culture
- 2 Encourage effective and innovative teaching and learning practice informed by educational or pedagogic research about successful teaching and learning strategies and new developments
- 3 Foster a learning community that encourages students to be part of new understandings and developments in research in their fields
- 4 Encourage staff to use their research and new research in their fields to inform their teaching

Objective

To make an explicit link between teaching and research so that excellence in research contributes to excellence in teaching and learning experiences and outcomes for students

Strategies

- 1 Identify sets of graduate attributes that describe graduate outcomes for postgraduate coursework and research students
- 2 Embed graduate attributes in teaching and assessment processes of undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework and research programs
- 3 Explore and promote teaching and assessment processes that will encourage development of graduate attributes
- 4 Undertake and disseminate research into teaching and learning practices to ensure that the most effective teaching practice is encouraged
- 5 Develop opportunities for students to engage with the University's research environment, such as building learning communities that provide the culture and experiences of research for our students
- 6 Encourage and reward staff whose teaching practice is excellent and is informed by disciplinary research or by educational research and scholarship

goal 2 Successful curriculum development and renewal

Research and changes in fields of study may require new programs and courses to be developed and others to be reconfigured or replaced. Changes in student experience or community interest and demands also lead to a need to modify programs. The level and type of resources available affect the range of programs we should offer and the quality of learning experiences provided.

While curriculum must be responsive to many forces for change there is a need to ensure that educational research and sound principles underpin proposed design changes. Successful curriculum development poses the following challenges

- 1 Building curriculum that has a coherent design to support the learning experiences and outcomes sought
- 2 Ensuring new developments draw on appropriate expertise irrespective of Faculty or School boundaries
- 3 Supporting curriculum development that is optimal for staff and student involvement and quality but does not lead to proliferation of very small programs and courses

Objective

To support coherent and innovative curriculum design and review processes at program and sequence of study level

Strategies

- 1 Encourage a "whole of program" approach to curriculum design through the program development and approval process
- 2 Promote cross-faculty and cross-school linkages for the development of programs
- 3 Provide professional development opportunities for further learning about effective curriculum design, including involvement of staff in professional learning communities to explore innovative curriculum approaches
- 4 Identify information resources and other services necessary to support curriculum as an integral part of the design process
- 5 Provide support for an internationalised curriculum through learning experiences which integrate cross-cultural dimensions into the teaching, research and service functions of the University
- 6 Through the curriculum review process, undertake annual, triennial and septennial evaluations of programs that address the extent to which programs develop appropriate graduate attributes, ensure an international perspective, incorporate developments in research and lead professional practice
- 7 Involve industry and professional associations in development and review of curriculum
- 8 Provide support for innovative program design and re-design and for curriculum review
- 9 Support the use of "curriculum design" as a category of evidence of high-quality and/or innovative teaching practice in continuing appointment and promotion processes

goal 3 Flexible and engaging teaching practice

There are major issues for pedagogy in universities. These include how to respond to the changed and diverse circumstances and needs of students and opportunities for new forms of interaction and learning mediated by information and communications technology, while retaining the benefits of face-to-face interactions.

These issues involve exploring and evaluating new approaches to teaching and learning, in particular

- 1 Ensuring that the benefits of small group interaction can be provided in larger class contexts
- 2 Exploring new forms of educational interaction supported by information and communications technology
- 3 Supporting further development and evaluation of flexible learning approaches in programs and sequences of study
- 4 Actively engaging students in learning

Objective

To support innovation and high quality in teaching and learning practices that actively engage students and provide the benefits of small group interactions

Strategies

- 1 Enhance small group and peer interactions through traditional and innovative communication methods
- 2 Provide a strong program of support for flexible learning approaches in programs and sequences of study, through infrastructure, information service provision and curriculum development
- 3 Develop strategies derived from the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC)-sponsored Teaching Large Classes project that facilitate more effective learning experiences for students
- 4 Develop a University approach to the support of Web-based teaching and learning materials and interactions
- 5 Disseminate research findings on teaching and learning practice to assist academic staff in evaluating and implementing new teaching and learning approaches and flexible learning strategies
- 6 Recognise teaching innovation through University teaching and learning awards
- 7 Support the use of peer-reviewed teaching and learning materials as evidence of innovative, high-quality teaching practice
- 8 Identify and circulate examples of high-quality assessment tasks and approaches

goal 4 The supportive learning environment

Much of the student experience depends on interactions with peers, teachers, support staff and industry work-placement staff and environments beyond the academics responsible for the courses they take. These other experiences are an important part of the quality of the overall learning environment and build effective learning communities.

The learning environment includes the physical environment in which learning takes place, through formal classrooms, libraries, cafes and a host of spaces used for independent study. It also includes the virtual environment, from email, through Web-based information and course materials, to the information resources and services provided by the Cybrary. Increasingly, the virtual environment is another critical part of the student experience at university. Finally, a social environment is created in real and virtual spaces that include interactions in classes and beyond.

In particular we need to

- 1 Ensure opportunities for peer interaction in study and social environments, recognise the blurring between these two and encourage effective learning communities
- 2 Support independent learning through excellence in information and support services
- 3 Extend the campus experience through both physical and virtual means

Objective

To provide a high-quality learning environment that encourages independent learning and peer interaction

Strategies

- 1 Provide students with skills and knowledge for independent learning
- 2 Enhance learning support services to students, including peer mentoring programs
- 3 Provide collaborative learning spaces intended for multiple uses that incorporate formal and informal requirements and can be accessed by students outside scheduled classes for group and independent study
- 4 Encourage student and staff input into the design of learning spaces to maximise effective student and teacher use of such facilities
- 5 Provide access to and training in use of information resources and information and communication technologies and networks which encourage formal and informal interactions
- 6 Ensure services are configured to deal with diverse student needs, including those of indigenous or non-English speaking background and those with disabilities
- 7 Ensure that international students enjoy high-quality academic and non-academic experiences and enhanced interactions with domestic students



goal 5 The teaching and learning feedback loop

There is always a need for effective reflection on the teaching and learning environment, performance and outcomes. In particular, there is a need to 'close the loop', to make sure that feedback sought from a variety of sources is used to maintain standards and to improve performance in the search for teaching and learning excellence.

A great deal of data are gathered from students and increasingly these data are stored on the Reportal. However, these data need to be supplemented by more peer feedback on teaching and learning and all should feed into future curriculum development, revised teaching practice or assessment schemes or improvements in the teaching and learning environment.

Objective

To ensure critical reflection and action on the teaching and learning environment, performance and outcomes

Strategies

- 1 Develop indicators and benchmarks for use in curriculum review and other quality assurance processes that articulate the qualities of effective teaching
- 2 Revise the teaching quality assurance process to incorporate reflection on teaching and learning indicators and other data
- 3 Investigate guidelines for teaching that
 - articulate standards of good practice for appraisal and related purposes
 - provide evidence of excellence of practice for continuing appointment and promotion processes and awards and
 - can be used to inform continuing professional development programs
- 4 Undertake a process of peer review of teaching, including peer review of teaching and learning materials, to inform understandings about quality teaching and learning
- 5 Encourage staff to be actively engaged in researching and monitoring their educational practice and its impact on student learning
- 6 Monitor students' perceptions of the quality of their assessment and develop appropriate remedial action for inadequate assessment practices
- 7 Provide high-quality feedback to students on all assessment and clear communication about program and course expectations and requirements
- 8 Implement a quality assurance process for assessment
- 9 Seek student feedback on teaching and learning and related service provision through various instruments, including the Student Experience Survey, and ensure that responses and outcomes are reported back to students and staff

goal 6 Staff development

Effective teaching and learning depend on staff engaging in professional development activities and incorporating, implementing and sharing good practice. It is important that staff are supported as they extend their understanding and practice. Staff development then has a number of goals:

- 1 To ensure that all staff engaged in teaching and learning and related services have adequate preparation to support effective learning for students
- 2 To provide opportunities for staff to share with one another good practice and innovative aspects of teaching and learning that they are trying or wish to try
- 3 To provide opportunities for staff to rethink, update and question the many ways they engage in teaching and learning

Objective

To provide development opportunities and rewards which encourage teaching and learning staff to be innovative, effective and reflective practitioners

Strategies

- 1 Implement staff development that supports integration of research in teaching and learning strategies
- 2 Provide professional development opportunities for staff in innovative curriculum design and the development of assessment tasks linked to course and program goals
- 3 Provide mandatory induction programs for all new teaching and learning staff
- 4 Provide staff development that is tailored to recognise the stage at which staff enter University employment and is flexible in its capacity to support the ongoing learning needs of staff throughout their teaching career
- 5 Implement a system of teaching and learning mentoring to provide for collaborative and reflective relationships that share experience and practice
- 6 Require attendance at a professional development activity or refresher course on teaching and learning at least once every two years to ensure teaching and learning practice is current and informed by UQ policies
- 7 Enhance awareness of and access to services to support teaching and learning innovation, with greater emphasis on staff development being undertaken within the School or program context
- 8 Develop a network of peers across Schools and Faculties to support enhanced teaching and learning and related service provision
- 9 Make greater use of staff in discussing best practice among the University community, enhancing awareness of possibilities for innovation



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

