

# D1 – Fleximode

## Informing principles

1. There is increasing evidence that the skilled use of blended learning environments using a number of media, technologies and interaction modes will result in both more effective and more sustainable educational than the use of unimodal methods. The appropriate use of learning technologies will help USQ to effectively reach students with differing learning styles, skills and needs, regardless of location. Furthermore, demonstrated expertise with new technologies will make graduates more marketable in the labour force.
2. The effective and efficient use of learning technologies requires significant investment in new infrastructure and the ongoing need for course design support, faculty training and technology maintenance and upgrading.
3. The ICE Rollout and Moodle Implementation strategies are complementary to the general principles of the Fleximode sub-project.

## Goals

- To establish a consistent and cost-effective approach to learning materials development and delivery that is in line with student expectations and staff needs.
- To introduce two fleximode categories that delineate the particular type and level of resources to be applied to USQ courses and the associated access to/distribution of those learning materials in 2009: a minimum standard for all courses and a recommended standard for the top 20 programs.
- To develop and implement a single standard process for the creation of course materials which enables distribution by print, CD/DVD and web; aim to have the vast majority of course materials developed or converted into ICE by the end of 2009.
- To have the vast majority of USQ academic staff use the ICE templates for course materials development by 2009, which will enable consistent production of fleximode materials.
- To establish robust communication networks and working relationship between DeC, Faculties, LTSU and LFII (especially Moodle and ICE staff).

## Strategic alignment

- Learning and Teaching Production and Distribution Project.
- USQ Realising our Potential Initiative
- Program Revitalisation Project
- USQ Learning and Teaching plan

- Technology-enhanced Learning Project: Moodle Implementation, ICE Rollout
- DAIS Strategic Directions plan

## Details of Faculty support for an 18 month period

Consistent implementation of the new standards and processes across the University will require the cooperation of senior management in all faculties, particularly Deans, Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) and Heads of School.

In order to maximise efficiency and provide a consistently high quality of learning and teaching across all disciplines, faculties and campuses, it is essential that all USQ staff work within the framework provided and meet all minimum standards and requirements for course materials in accordance with USQ policies.

The following strategies are being used:

- DAIS staff working with Assoc Deans (L&T) and with individual academic staff in other faculties on request to convert and develop courses in ICE
- DAIS staff to assist faculty academic staff to take up use of the new development process; providing demonstrations and training
- Technology-Enhanced Learning Project Officer has been appointed to ensure faculty support is adequate and that resources are most appropriately apportioned.
- In S3 2008 a pilot project with DAIS/Faculty of Business to produce all courses in ICE and on CD. This model will form the basis of work with other faculties.
- Documentation and multimedia presentations have been developed and distributed to assist staff in understanding the concept of fleximode

## Tasks, timelines & budgets

Tasks	Timeline
Initial training of DeC/DAIS/Faculty staff	Ongoing
Appointment of TEL Project Officer	May 2008
Finalisation of Faculty Plans/Course/Program Offering	May 2008
Initial faculty planning for ongoing conversion of existing course materials into ICE	02 June 2008
Establishing timelines for training of faculty and support staff based on faculty plans	16 June 2008
Development of draft policy on fleximode for ratification at ROP Governance	23 June 2008
Learning and Teaching Materials Production and Distribution Plan to ROP Governance	2 July 2008

Approved Learning and Teaching Materials Production and Distribution Plan to SLC	16 July 2008
Draft policy on Fleximode to USQ LTEC	2 August 2008
Negotiations with each Faculty about adopting the Fleximode concept	August 2008
Formalise faculty planning for ongoing conversion of existing course materials into ICE	August 2008
Approved Fleximode policy to Academic Board	17 September 2008
Work with the Faculty of Business staff in preparation for S3 2008 trial	September 2008
Hold information sessions for faculty academic staff	September 2008
Hold trial of Fleximode in Faculty of Business S3 courses	November 2008
Evaluation of Faculty of Business pilot	January 2009
Identification of issues arising from trial	30 January 2009
Full implementation begins	February 2009
Evaluation of ongoing implementation	June 2009
Reports completed and distributed as per ROP timelines	July 2009

## Total Resources/ Budget Required

The majority of costs are already covered by operational budgets within relevant cost centres or by core system budgets allocated to DICTS.

Additional funding provided by an 18 month appointment of Technology-Enhanced Learning Project Officer (HEW 7) as part of the Program Revitalisation budget through LTSU.

## Required documentation and policy rewriting

### **Institutional policies:**

- Effectively integrating technology into all USQ courses requires the organisation to articulate institutional goals and priorities for technology-enhanced learning into the University's planning documents and learning and teaching plans
- Faculty teaching and curriculum plans need to be integrated with the University's strategic technology plans and budget allocations
- DAIS staff will ensure all required documentation and policy drafting will be completed.
- FAQs available from USQAssist, ICT Help Desk, Materials Development Officers, Electronic Publishing staff and from Moodle Functional Support staff.

### **Infrastructure:**

- ICT infrastructure and technical support for all core systems
- Regularly updating the minimum computing requirements for students
- Supporting students and lecturers in adoption of the new processes and use of authoring tools

## Professional development requirements

### Training for staff

- Using ICE and Moodle
- How to teach how to integrate a variety of media, technologies and interaction modes into courses
- Support staff – training to offer assistance and troubleshoot problems
- FAQs available from USQAssist, ICT Help Desk, Materials Development Officers, Electronic Publishing staff and from Moodle Functional Support staff.

## Scholarship opportunities

Opportunities to write conference papers and journal articles on the implementation and adoption of fleximode are available through a host of various events and publications.

## Communication plan

- Documentation and multimedia presentations have been developed and distributed to assist staff in understanding the concept of fleximode.
- Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching) will be kept informed through GLS Faculty Liaison Meetings
- Project reports to LTEC; ROP; SLC
- General developments to USQ staff via Faculty forums and LTSU newsletters

## Evaluation strategies

- Staff & student surveys and feedback
- % uptake of Fleximode activities in each faculty
- Feedback from Associate Deans (L&T)
- Independent review by other academic staff in other institutions
- Formal benchmarking activities using the ACODE benchmarks