

Program revitalisation update

Issue: August 08

Program revitalisation is part of the Program Portfolio Review and Renewal Project, a major subproject of the Realising Our Potential (ROP) Project, and is itself made up of four major subprojects:

- [Course and Program Mapping Project](#)
- [Academic Professional Development Project](#)
- [Vertical Integration Project](#)
- [Technology Enhanced Learning and Flexible Delivery Project.](#)

These projects are managed by the Learning and Teaching Support Unit (LTSU) in conjunction with the Division of Academic Information Services (DAIS). Major subprojects contain a number of elements, each playing a part in the success of the overall project. This update will provide stakeholders with the latest information on these subprojects.

Course and program mapping – subproject updates

The Course and Program Mapping Project is designed to allow USQ to create a program focus through program development, planning, and importantly the development of a course and program management system.

Course and program management system

Development of the Course and Program Management System (CPMS) continues to progress albeit slowly. Scoping of the database interface changes required for the additional fields within the course specification is just about complete. The lack of PeopleSoft proficient staff continues to be a major concern for the timely completion of this project, particularly in relation to the CPMS interface to the SCHED. However, an external consultant has been identified to undertake the work required within the new SharePoint portal that will house the main elements of the CPMS.

Graduate qualities and skills

The customisation, mapping and alignment of graduate qualities and skills process is already underway within some faculties as part of current accreditation or re-accreditation requirements, and some as part of program revitalisation. Some programs will need to be reviewed for gaps in implementation as they began this process before establishment of new policies and processes. Other programs that are aligned to the former policy may require attention to clarify links between this and the current policy at the top level. This is particularly important for identified ‘top twenty’ programs. The process of specifically tailoring workshops on graduate qualities and skills is still in process with a second workshop in the Faculty of Business MBA program; this will be followed by a final session dealing with the issue of writing skill-based course objectives and learning outcomes.

ePortfolios

We have successfully installed the Mahara software as the ePortfolios system to be used in the semester two courses. The ePortfolio system may be accessed from <http://eportfolio.usq.edu.au>. Although in trial mode, staff may visit this site to become familiar with the environment prior to its semester one 2009 launch. It should be noted however that there is no guarantee that information placed in the portfolio during the trial phase will be made available in semester one next year, so don't spend too much time playing.

Benchmarking and evaluation

A cross USQ benchmarking framework was tabled at the Planning Quality Review Committee on 1 August 2008 for feedback and endorsement. The course and program evaluation templates have also been trialled by the Bachelor of Education – Early Childhood in the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Sciences from 14 to 21 July 2008. A follow-up session on 21 July was also held with the course examiners to seek their feedback on the utility of the course templates. In total 16 undergraduate programs have been trialled for the Program Annual Assessment. These templates have been trialled in relation to the Undergrad Program Management Committee (UPMC) action for Program Annual Assessment. Future information sessions will be held to assist the program coordinators and teams' familiarisation with the program templates and data sets.

Academic professional development – subproject updates

The Academic Professional Development Project (APD) is designed to provide a comprehensive suite of open source professional development resources for the universities academic staff. These resources support staff from the time of induction through to, hopefully, the completion of a Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching.

Induction

New staff that completed their teaching and learning induction prior to June 2008 are now due to complete their small project. This process is being supported by Learning and Teaching Designers (LTD's) in faculties. This process has been reviewed since 2008 and new requirements are in place for current staff. This process will involve the participant working alongside a faculty based mentor on their action research as well as their LTD. The outcomes will be disseminated at the LTSU Learning & Teaching Week. Provision for Fraser Coast staff to attend a local induction has also been arranged for November 2008.

Foundations

Resources have been gathered by the research assistant for all modules in the program. Her contract is now complete as she has moved on to alternative work. In this reporting period, the project has been on hold but for semester two, time has been freed up to devote to the Academic Professional Development Project. As mentioned in the last report, another project has emerged from this work – that of developing a Standards for Teachers at USQ guidelines document.

LTSU resources and website

For the website to be effective, it is vital that staff across the university find the resources easy to find, access and use. This is currently our primary focus and is reflected in the new navigation structure which we expect to come into effect this month. Once this has gone live, we will develop a strategy to communicate this effectively across the university. Ease of navigation will continue to be our focus, and we continue to evaluate this to align it with the university's strategic aims and objectives.

Tailored professional development

Professional Development (PD) sessions are at different stages for each of the faculties. Faculty of Engineering and Surveying (FOES) have a well established program of workshops that is underway and is reasonably well attended by staff. The FOES has decided to run their PD sessions in a professional discussion format with various parties facilitating these discussions. The other faculties are in the process of identifying their needs and establishing a program of PD. Alongside this, Fraser Coast has recognised a need for PD and so a week long PD event has been scheduled for November to provide face to face, online and synchronous e learning sessions for staff in teaching and learning, ICT and HR issues.

Peak events

A review with key staff involved in the recent visiting scholar was undertaken. This highlighted that although on the whole the visit was a success there are processes that need to be established to ensure more effective events in the future, in particular: use of technology to relay session to Fraser Coast & Springfield; and liaison with academic staff in LTSU and faculties to establish agendas for visiting scholar. The plans for the LTSU Learning & Teaching Week are now underway for February 2009.

Communities of Practice (CoP)

Faculty of Business CoP for core first year course leaders continues monthly meetings. Members presented two refereed papers at the July HERDSA conference and these papers are now available on USQ library eprints. At this conference, USQ's community of practice initiative was highly commended by Dr Wenger as an excellent example of communities of practice in operation in Higher Education. [Dr. Etienne Wenger](#) is a pioneer and globally recognized leader in the field of communities of practice and their application to organisations.

Sessional staff

Proforma's have been received on induction/PD activity for staff in each faculty. This documentation, once released to LTSU, is ready to be compiled and analysed to identify examples of best practice which will be disseminated, as well as to inform policy. A Moodle site has been requested so that esupport and PD can be provided to distant staff.

Staff ePortfolios

As much as possible the staff ePortfolio subproject project will use the same timelines, processes and infrastructure as the student ePortfolio subproject. This will be done to reduce the duplication of effort (planning, implementation, staff development support). However, issues related to employee privacy and HR processes must be carefully addressed especially when staff ePortfolios are used to support the BUILD and promotions processes in 2010.

Vertical integration project – subproject updates

The Vertical Integration Project is very much focused on the student learning journey. Its aim is to provide learning support equitably and efficiently across all campuses, both on shore, off shore and across all modes and levels of enrolment.

Academic learning support

Overall project progressing:

- Virtual Learning Centre (VLC) online booking system went live in July, Wimba workshops sessions scheduled
- PALS re-badging implemented with structure program called Meet - Up. These sessions extended to Springfield and Sydney campus; Wimba sessions planned
- Associate Deans have supported implementation of standard plagiarism software and the investigation into how to centralise academic misconduct processes

Indigenous perspectives

The contract for Indigenous Education Consultant has expired, therefore all but one of the areas are highlighted red. All resources planned are with LTSU staff for final development before being put on the resource page. The future of embedding Indigenous perspectives relies on upcoming discussions between CAIK and LTSU about cooperation and sustainability. To meet its original objectives, this project needs an ongoing commitment.

Community engagement

This project began on 30 July and will be ongoing as part of the embedding of graduate qualities and skills in undergraduate programs, as well as future articulation into postgraduate programs. Current activities focus on developing a means of documenting current community engagement activities, and identifying opportunities to expand on these, supported by relevant information and examples. A review of specific terminology in USQ documentation might be necessary to achieve consistency in use of terminology (e.g. key terms and concepts: community; engagement; local; regional; global).

Program moodle sites

As we near the end of our first semester using Moodle we have more capability to start to use Moodle in additional ways such as program and interest based communities. Thus far, several communities have been created and many more are in planning. Use of tools such as Wimba classroom, Wimba Voice Tools, Wimba Pronto, and ePortfolios will greatly enhance the community building power of these communities. In addition the creation of a community Moodle server will improve our ability to support wider community engagement.

Technology enhanced learning and flexible delivery – subproject update

The Technology Enhanced and Flexible Delivery Project will see USQ develop a new framework for the provision of flexible, high quality course materials and programs support.

Fleximode

The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Project Team in conjunction with the Executive Director (DAIS) and the Director of LTSU have developed a draft Fleximode policy. Members of the project team will be meeting with the Associate Deans (Learning & Teaching) in the coming weeks to discuss any issues relating to the policy in its current form. It is envisaged that this will be endorsed at USQ Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee (LTEC) on 6 August 2008 for forwarding to the next Academic Board (17 September 2008). Once the Fleximode policy has been ratified negotiations with faculties can continue re the adoption of the Fleximode concept. The project team met with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Flexible Learning) on 15 July to formalise faculty planning and develop timelines for the rollout of fleximode in faculties across campus.

ICE rollout

The second meeting of staff from Electronic Publishing Services (EPS), ICE technical team and the TEL project team will be held to determine the ICE support team and develop formal support mechanisms for ICE. A project schedule was also developed to migrate staff software requirements and courses from ICE 1 to ICE 2. Delays have been experienced due to technical difficulties and also the absence of key staff in the rollout of ICE 2. It is envisaged that this delay will put the project approximately 4 weeks behind the original schedule.

Moodle development

The USQ *StudyDesk* support team have:

- been introduced to the university community at the New Learning Technologies Roadshows conducted in June and July

- met with the Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching) in Faculty of Business to discuss working protocols. Meetings to establish linkages with other faculties were scheduled for the week of 14 July.
- held meetings with the support team and the Learning Futures Innovations Institute (LFII) to discuss collaboration on a range of issues going forward
- completed HEAT training and are now working co-operatively with ICT support on support issues through HEAT.

Work continues on developing and documenting procedures with the Moodle implementation team with the official handover to DeC at the end of July.

Virtual classrooms

Awareness of the Wimba Classroom has increased through exposure at the recent New Learning Technologies Roadshows and the follow-up sessions. (<http://mystaffdesk.usq.edu.au/moodle/course/view.php?id=665>). The ICT Service Desk is also now fully supporting Wimba Classroom and it is hoped that Division of Information and Communication Technology Services (DICT) training will be available within one month.

Program teams

The faculty support team co-ordinators have continued the planning and documentation of processes. The next meeting of representatives from LTSU, Distance and e-Learning Centre (DeC) and the Library were scheduled for 15 July where the discussion focus was clarification of faculty support team structure and roles. With the establishment of the sharepoint environment for communication and collaboration, staff have identified a need for further training in the use of this software, therefore use of this area by key staff to date has been minimal.

Table of acronyms for the Program Revitalisation Project

Acronym	Meaning
ALS	Academic Learning Support
APD	Academic Professional Development
BUILD	Building Upon Individual Learning and Development (USQ performance management system)
CPMS	Course and Program Mapping System
CoP	Communities of Practice
DeC	Distance Education Centre

DAIS	Division of Academic Information Services
FOES	Faculty of Engineering and Surveying
HERDSA	Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Division of Information and Communication Technology
LFII	Learning Futures Innovation Institute
LTEC	Learning and Teaching Enhancement Committee
LTD	Learning and Teaching Designer
LTSU	Learning and Teaching Support Unit
MBA	Master of Business Administration
PALS	Peer Assisted Learning Strategy
PD	Professional Development
PRP	Program Revitalisation Project
ROP	Realising our Potential
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning
VIP	Vertical Integration Project
UPMC	Undergraduate Program Management Committee
USQ	University of Southern Queensland
VLC	Virtual Learning Centre
WBL	Work-based Learning