



Program revitalisation update

Issue: July 08

Program Revitalisation is part of the Program Portfolio Review and Renewal project, a major subproject of the ROP project, and is itself made up of four major sub-projects:

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

These projects are managed by the LTSU in conjunction with the 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

Progress on the development of the Course and Program Management System continues slowly. Development of the Evaluations section of the database is progressing well, although gaining consensus on the most appropriate database to house other elements of the system and who should manage these has been problematic. Student Administration will soon commence work on Stage 1 development. However, ICT are experiencing a shortage in Business Analyst staff that may limit their ability to fully engage in the development of Stage 2 at this point.

Graduate qualities and skills

The customisation, mapping and alignment of the graduate qualities and skills process is well underway in some faculties as part of current accreditation or re-accreditation requirements. Some will need to be reviewed for gaps in implementation as they began this process before establishment of new policies and processes. This is particularly important for identified 'top twenty' programs. For the top twenty, some clear interim goals that align with targets set by faculty plans may be required. The process of specifically tailoring workshops on Graduate Qualities and Skills for faculty has begun with a session for the Faculty of Business MBA program; to be followed up by a repeat session, and another for staff to discuss the mapping of existing assessment in their courses. Although less of a priority, work is currently underway to complete support resources for postgraduate programs, beginning with the customisation and mapping of existent Graduate Qualities and skills for the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education.

ePortfolios

The [eProfile system](#) and supporting files were released on 17 May and thus far 110 students have created an eProfile and 69 have published their eProfile for others to see. One minor issue has been identified and is being addressed. The USQ *StudyDesk* URG has accepted the recommendation that the Mahara software should be trialled in S2 in about ten courses. We are working towards an install of Mahara as soon as possible to allow academics enough time to integrate ePortfolios into their Semester two courses.

Referencing styles

USQ has now agreed the use of the Harvard AGPS and APS referencing systems for all faculties. These systems must now be embedded into these faculties, with an emphasis on this standardisation being made apparent to teaching staff. This will be done through compiling a minimum standards document. It is then vital that all staff are supported in how they teach the students by developing a series of Professional Development activities for both on campus and distance education staff.

Benchmarking and evaluation

Both projects are progressing slowly, but well. With the Evaluation Project, of most importance is that it is at a stage of gathering feedback from all the faculties' Associate Deans through the FAQR project by Pro VC (AQ). For the Benchmarking Project, a cross USQ Benchmarking Framework will be tabled for endorsement by the senior management.

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

The Teaching & Learning Induction was modified and run on 10 June. Unfortunately numbers were low (3 staff), this issue needs to be addressed by Human Resources policy so that the requirement for new staff to attend is reinforced. The induction itself was well received with positive feedback. Evaluations have been circulated for post course comments. These will be used to further develop the course. Requirements to complete an action research project will also be closely monitored and developed in conjunction with this new cohort of inductees.

Foundations

Resources have been gathered by the research assistant for 6 of the 8 modules in the program. Some development time has been lost due to the project leader's high workload in her home

Faculty. However, arrangements have been made to buy out her teaching allocation for Semester two and this time will be devoted to the APD project. The research assistants' contract has been extended for a further 10 weeks. A further project has emerged from this work – that of developing a 'Standards for Teachers at USQ' guidelines document. The reference group will be led by Dr Reushle and membership will include some academic staff from LTSU.

LTSU resources and website

For the website to be effective, it is vital that staff across USQ find the resources easy to find, access and use. This is currently our primary focus, and will continue to be our focus, as this also needs to align with USQ's strategic aims and objectives. A new L & T homepage with easier navigation will go live very soon after final approval.

Tailored professional development

The Associate Deans Learning and Teaching have been contacted for all 5 Faculties in order to establish a Tailored Professional Development program for their staff. Two faculties are addressing the needs of their staff at Faculty Retreats, after which Professional Development events will be organised. Three faculties have outlined their discipline related needs but have not yet set dates for these sessions. One faculty has decided on a different approach to Professional Development in that they will run discussion forums rather than workshops.

Peak events

USQ had a successful visit from Visiting Scholar Frank Lyons who conducted sessions related to Work Based/Integrated Learning, as well as consulting with individual faculties. Sessions had attendance from Toowoomba, Springfield and Fraser Coast and were archived for future reference using various technologies. Following on from this visit a WBL/WIL round table was hosted in June to discuss implications for the University in this area. USQ staff also attended an external event on the Teaching Research Nexus hosted by Griffith University. The PE programme is taking shape with quarterly summits scheduled, an annual Teaching & Learning Week and invited visiting scholars when appropriate.

Communities of practice

Dr Jacquie McDonald has now begun her Senior Learning and Teaching fellowship to further USQ CoP project. This was profiled on USQ web page, and Toowoomba Chronicle, 19 June 2008, along with other USQ fellowship award winners.

Sessional staff

This sub-project has been approved; however it is vital that USQ establish a policy to support the training of sessional staff. A review of current provision will help guide the recommendations that LTSU will make to Human Resources as they compile their documentation on staffing requirements. Once these parameters are established the development

and implementation of a Moodle site to support Sessional Staff Professional Development will be possible.

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 equitability and efficiently across all campuses, both on shore, off shore and across all modes and levels of enrolment.

Academic learning support

Overall project progressing as planned:

- Virtual learning centre web site now available; online booking system delayed; WIMBA trials timetabled for S2, staff recruited.
- Embedding academic skills has appointed staff member, expected to speed progress in S2
- Restructure of ROP-Student management project means that consultations re rationalisation of learning support resources and communications are still delayed.
- Manager of online resources for international students nominated
- Online resource development for PALS implementation to be re-thought with the advent of new models of PALS evolving.
- Plagiarism prevention issues of detection software and consistency of approach across faculties raised in appropriate committees.
- Re-badging proposal for PALS currently under consideration by stakeholders
- Academic embedding skills web page developed

Program moodle sites

As we near the end of Semester one 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 planned. 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.

Internationalisation

The Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IoC) sub project is on target to meeting goals. Discussion paper has been widely circulated. One good practice USQ example has been developed. Once the ROP becomes clearer in Faculties then issues will certainly arise re expectations of IoC. If the discussion paper recommendations are endorsed by Academic Board, this will help clarify direction.

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 TEL Project Officer has been communicating with the key stakeholders to identify tasks and adjust project timelines. Faculty planning for the ongoing conversion of existing course materials into ICE continues. The University's Budget Management Committee has met and has agreed to resource the adoption of ICE as an ICT core system. At this stage there is still no endorsed fleximode policy.

ICE rollout

The first meeting of staff from EPS, ICE technical team and the TEL project team was held to determine rollover timelines for ICE 2. A project schedule has been developed to migrate staff software requirements and courses from ICE 1 to ICE 2. Staff in EPS are being trained in the new version of ICE. Currently the ICE technical team are load testing the ICE servers.

Moodle development

The USQ StudyDesk support team will be introduced to the university community at the new learning technologies roadshows scheduled for June/July. A meeting of the TEL Project team and StudyDesk support staff was held to develop a communication plan for handover once the project moves from the implementation phase to mainstream in July 2008. Meetings have also been held with the ICT Help Desk – tracking of support issues – developing procedures for using HEAT and with Faculty of Education – Feedback on the USQ StudyDesk and developing procedures for managing assignment submission issues.

Virtual classrooms

In Semester one 41 lecturers have used Wimba in their courses on <http://studydesk.edu.au>. This is a remarkable achievement given that the majority of training and support has been provided by one person working on this project for less than one day per week. Dates for starting ICT

Service Desk support and DICT training have also been agreed. The delays in resolving USQ firewall and network issues have meant that some Wimba components are not fully functional at all USQ locations. These issues should be resolved prior to S2. It is hoped that network optimisations will also allow the Wimba Pronto instant messenger to be installed allowing staff and students to establish informal classrooms when needed. Pronto will enable the provision of “office hours” for external students and this is important as such office hours have long been seen as an essential component of on campus teaching.

Program teams

The faculty support team coordinators have continued the planning and documentation of processes. Representatives from LTSU, DEC and Library have reviewed the faculty course design flowchart where certain changes were recommended and have been considered by the coordinators group and a final version is pending. 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.