

THE CASE FOR A CENTRE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

The 2009 Bradley Review, and the Governments response to it, are transforming the Australian Higher Education sector just as radically as any of the reforms that preceded it in earlier decades. When considered from a market perspective, these reforms have ensured that the Higher Education sector must increasingly both understand and be able to respond to changing and challenging market conditions.

Within this context it is increasingly important that individual Higher Education Providers clearly understand how the component parts of their business, be they research, learning and teaching or business activity, contribute to their income profile and respond accordingly. They must ensure that they are investing in and providing the facilities, resources and experiences to practitioners which will enable them to provide the types of learning and teaching experience that 21st Century students are increasingly expecting. Within this context, it is thus vitally important to ensure that the core revenue generating and business supporting activity of the organisation, most often learning and teaching, is appropriately envisioned, led and supported at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. As well as the changed and changing environment within which Australian Higher Education Institutes must operate at the national level, there are also significant changes occurring internationally. These changes are seen in terms of a technology fuelled change in student expectation as well as an increasing requirement for an institution to be able to utilise technology to compete internationally with its learning and teaching product. At the same time is the requirement to be able to demonstrate that the product is itself continuously quality assured to the highest level.

It has also become apparent that the professional development of academic teaching staff needs to ensure that capacity is established both in pedagogical as well as technological understanding. Indeed, it is increasingly the case that appropriate teacher professional development must develop not only the individual practitioner's ability to teach, but also to teach well with technology. In addition, in an economic environment where achievement of recruitment targets often means accepting less well academically prepared, more 'at risk' students, there is an increasingly strategic requirement to ensure that students are supported in their ability to access and engage with their learning and teaching experience, in terms of time, place and their capability to meet learning expectations.

However, where the learning and teaching experience is becoming increasingly mediated via technology there is a sense in which the leadership and influence over this

aspect of the learning and teaching agenda needs to be more firmly fixed within, and led more overtly by, the academic community. And that to enable this to occur, there is a need for a recognised and acknowledged senior academic lead to both facilitate the discourse on this increasingly important area of strategic business and to ensure that the Executive are briefed and supported appropriately.

It is against this backdrop that this paper proposes the case for the establishment of centralised Centres for Learning and Teaching.

The full paper for this presentation can be found [here](#).

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