

Thinking about a 'Learning and Teaching Plan'

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An essential activity for all HEPs is the development of a learning and teaching plan. The process needs to be well thought through, current and consistent with both the provider's strategic plan and the student support framework. It is mostly about working towards a top end student experience. There are a number of key elements to consider in the process.

Graduate Attributes

A good place to start is the articulation of the *graduate attributes* that underline all aspects of learning and teaching. An example might include –

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and skills in their chosen discipline and apply them in relevant professional contexts.
2. Demonstrate the capacity to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and take on leadership roles in their chosen career.
3. Communicate effectively to culturally diverse professional audiences across multiple platforms to achieve common goals.
4. Solve problems independently and as part of a team by applying research methodologies, critical, creative, and evidence-based thinking to provide innovative responses to existing and future challenges and to solve real-world problems.
5. Act with professional integrity and promote ethical practice in work and business.
6. Display resilience, reflexivity, and self-awareness and respond appropriately in a range of professional contexts including new environments and issues.

Establishing Priorities

With these attributes in mind the next step is to establish *foci/priorities* that will guide the process. A set of examples might include –

The practice and scholarship of learning and teaching
Student participation and support
Industry involvement
Flexibility and responsiveness

Actions speak louder than words

With these parameters (priorities) in place a set of *actions* would follow. These actions need to be current, informed and appropriate to the institution. A set of examples may assist –

Action 1 - The practice and scholarship of learning and teaching

- Provide a learning process and environment that support interaction
- Ensure class time supports problem solving
- Utilise Blended learning experiences
- Provide clear and accurate information
- Embed reflective practices
- Encourage enquiry based and experiential learning models
- Attract and retain quality staff
- Develop a coherent institution-wide scholarship agenda
- Provide a quality induction process
- Enable peer observation and feedback
- Establish a teaching excellence award program
- Provide teaching and learning grants

Action 2 - Student participation and support

- Encourage student access and participation
- Identify students at risk in a timely manner
- Provide appropriate intervention
- Use data to monitor performance

Action 3 - Industry involvement

- Action an informed Course Advisory Committee
- Access industry experts
- Focus on real world contexts
- Provide Industry experience and career development

Action 4 - Flexibility and responsiveness

- Encourage experimentation and innovation
- Involve students in the design of courses
- Formally review units on an ongoing basis
- Encourage online resource use
- Diversify offerings

Establishing the key objectives

In turn, the combination of graduate attributes and priorities will give rise to the essential *objectives* of a learning and teaching plan. These objectives might include –

Objective 1 - Growth - to manage growth in a responsible and sustainable way that allows us to respond to any future challenges.

Objective 2 - Diversity - to provides our students (and staff) with a truly national and international community on which we overlay a quality Australian educational experience promotes free intellectual inquiry.

Objective 3 - Quality – a commitment to monitoring, measuring and reporting against the Quality Assurance KPIs that are fundamental to our ongoing health and well-being. This protects our academic, research, and professional integrity.

Objective 4 - A curriculum that enhances educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Objective 5 - Co-operation - to develop a range of courses and co-operative ventures that will set us apart. By combining our current undergraduate and postgraduate offerings we will make SISTC an attractive study option.

Objective 6 - Benchmarking (both internal and external) - to measure and map our performance and understand ourselves better

Objective 7 - A curriculum that assures learning at the AQF Level appropriate to the course.

The four-pronged approach – attributes/priorities/actions/objectives - is a good starting point. A carefully considered learning and teaching plan can not only guide the organization – particularly during a growth phase - but can also provide the necessary support framework for both staff and students to succeed.

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