

# Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Action

## Case Study - Business

This case study was developed as part of an ALTC National Teaching Fellowship, *Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Action* in 2010-2011. One of the outputs of the fellowship was [a process model of internationalisation of the curriculum](#). The model identifies five-stages of internationalisation of the curriculum:

- Review and Reflect
- Imagine
- Revise and Plan
- Act
- Evaluate

As you read through this case study it is useful to think about the following questions:

1. What are the enabling factors within the institutional context?
2. What does the case study tell you about the process of IoC?
3. What does it tell you about the product, an internationalised curriculum?
4. What questions does it raise for you?

### Institutional context

A three-year internationalisation plan was introduced in 2011 and a draft internationalisation policy was in circulation at the time this case study was undertaken. A particular driver for this activity was the identification of internationalisation as a review area for an upcoming AUQA review. The internationalisation plan includes a curriculum internationalisation project supported by two dedicated staff. The curriculum internationalisation project aims to develop a community of practice within the university through organizing workshops and building networks of people and experience.

The university's strategic plan does not mention internationalisation, however one of the five graduate attributes relates to global perspectives. This global perspective is linked to awareness of the discipline in a global as well as local context, and being able to function in a multicultural, globalised context. The university's teaching and learning plan does not mention internationalisation explicitly, either, and hence internationalisation is widely interpreted by academic staff as being primarily concerned with attracting international students and possibly also encouraging outbound student mobility.

### Background

The Business faculty had recently reviewed the extent to which all graduate attributes had been embedded in its courses and programs. This was motivated by stakeholder consultation (with students, staff and, most importantly, industry) which indicated that attributes and skills that students should have been graduating with (under the graduate attributes framework) were not

always clearly demonstrable. This is a situation that can arise when academics following policy guidelines attach graduate attributes summaries to their course outlines, but without due consideration for how they are actually going to develop and test these attributes.

The mantra of the review process was that claims about graduate attributes needed to be ‘evidence-based’, i.e. it was not enough to list graduate attributes in course outlines, there needed to be evidence that they were being appropriately developed.

A key condition for success was identified early on as ‘buy-in’ from academic staff. Academics had indicated that they felt overburdened by administration, and it was feared that they see internationalisation as just another management fad that would eventually pass them by if they sat tight for long enough. The approach to overcoming this was firstly to be aware of such attitudes, and secondly to demonstrate to staff the structure and substance of the graduate attribute process.

The embedding of the graduate attributes faculty-wide was mapped in a review of every unit as part of a desk audit, and gaps were identified. In the next step a ‘wish-list’ of how the graduate attributes could be embedded in the various courses and programs was developed. This was based on research and guided by two further criteria: firstly, the approach of some universities to address the graduate attributes overwhelmingly in a final year capstone course was rejected in preference for a scaffolded cumulative program-wide approach to embedding; and secondly the graduate attribute statements were aligned with the requirements of professional accreditation bodies. The ALTC’s National Graduate Attributes project outcomes were also consulted as a point of reference at this stage.

The documentation of the embedding process described above was useful in ensuring consistency in courses with large numbers of students, across a number of campuses with several academic staff members and many tutors involved in teaching and assessment. The documentation also enabled a gap analysis to be undertaken over the whole program. Every single major was mapped, the gaps identified and courses that were possible sites for filling these gaps were identified.

The next stage involved getting academic staff to engage with the review process. Sub-committees in each school were involved at this stage. All academic staff in the faculty were given the opportunity to comment. One-on-one meetings were arranged with the faculty teaching staff, most importantly the course coordinators, to go through each course in detail. Specific assessment criteria were aligned with assessments and assessments were aligned with *each* graduate attribute statement, to ensure the embedding of graduate attributes would this time be evidence-based, i.e. ensuring that all skills, all attributes were actually being assessed. Every course was not required to cover all of the graduate attributes, but in each year of the program all graduate attributes and skills needed to be cumulatively developed and assessed.

## The process of IoC

### *Reviewing and reflecting*

Having reviewed and mapped all graduate attributes as described above, when the request came to think about what internationalisation of the curriculum might mean in a specific program, a re-iteration of the graduate attributes review was undertaken, this time specifically focussed on internationalisation. In the initial review of the graduate attributes process, internationalisation was

not singled out or given top priority. It was only considered within the 'global perspectives' attribute and mostly addressed by group work and aims to develop intercultural competence.

After discussion as part of the review and reflect stage, it was noted that other graduate attributes (for example communication, teamwork) might also have relevance to internationalisation of the curriculum. It was decided to see what would happen if the site for internationalisation of the curriculum was not solely within the 'global perspectives' graduate attribute.

### **Imagining**

A second iteration of the mapping and gap analysis was undertaken, linking internationalisation with all the graduate attributes. For example 'operating on a body of knowledge' can be extended to include in an international as well as Australian contexts and examples; communication can be defined to specifically encompass culturally and linguistically diverse groups; problem solving can be specified to include research in an international context, and ethical behaviour interpreted within a broader context of considering the impact of decisions on culturally diverse people in different countries.

### **Reviewing and planning**

There is a recognition that professional development for teaching staff needs to complement the innovations which have taken place in the teaching and assessment items of course outlines. Staff need to be comfortable with the pedagogical aspects of internationalisation, i.e. with the internationalisation of the curriculum in action. Intercultural competence was identified as a particular priority.

A second area that has been identified for the focussing of energy is the informal curriculum: the students of this university tend to come onto campus for classes, and then leave immediately – in fact there is always less and less space for students, as increasing enrolments have led to the need for more offices for staff. Developments in the informal curriculum may be able to meet this deficit.

This process took around 12 months and is ongoing.