



University of  
Western Sydney  
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**Annual Report 2010**  
Teaching Development Unit

teaching

UWS

learning

assessment

academic partnerships

supporting

workshops

initiatives

e-learning

programs

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## Director's Report

Dear Colleagues,

This Annual Report outlines the numerous projects, programs and initiatives the Unit has been engaged in over 2010. We have had an extremely successful year in terms of contributions to University strategic priorities, partnership work with Schools/Colleges and cross-institutional projects.

The highlights of the year include several institutional studies that focused on student experiences, evaluation of programs and impact of initiatives. The largest study looked at the Student Experiences of Technology. This study was conducted in collaboration with Macquarie University and the University of Technology, Sydney, and is the first major study of this type conducted at UWS. The survey was a great success, with over 7,500 UWS student responses. The results, which were disseminated to UWS senior staff during 2010, identified a high level of student satisfaction with technologies at UWS. Recommendations for improvement will be used in infrastructure planning, teaching initiatives and future developments.

Staff in the Teaching Development Unit (TDU) also conducted a formal 3 year evaluation and report to UWS senior staff about the Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program. This highly successful program is becoming even more valuable as academic recruitment strategies bring many new teaching staff to the University. The outcomes of the evaluation indicate that the program is contributing to the improvements in quality teaching at UWS. Building on the success of this program, TDU has been asked to develop units for a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education. This development will be a focus for work in 2011.

There has also been a strong focus on improving the quality of e-learning sites. In 2010, UWS achieved a 100% uptake of vUWS sites, with many sites showing a range of quality learning resources, information and activities. Data from the Basic Standards project shows the increase in alignment with the standards in 2010. TDU continues to provide a robust e-learning system for staff and students.

The Unit had a number of staffing changes throughout the year which saw both the welcoming of a number of new staff members and farewelling of others. I would like to take this opportunity to thank TDU staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year, and to thank Professor Stuart Campbell (PVC L&T) and his office for their support.

Regards,

Associate Professor Janne Malfroy  
Director, Teaching Development Unit  
January, 2011

# 1. Institutional Learning and Teaching Initiatives

The Teaching Development Unit (TDU) has contributed to a wide range of strategic initiatives this year. Highlights are listed below.

## UWS Student Experience of Technology

In 2010, TDU continued work on a project aimed at providing a clearer understanding of the UWS student experience and expectation of technologies for learning, social and work activities. The momentum for this initiative came from several sources, including:

- ◆ senior executive interest in understanding what technologies students were accessing for learning, social and work activities;
- ◆ national level discussions about the need to develop in Australia the types of institutional level surveys being used overseas; and
- ◆ an internal need for empirically derived information to support planning and staff development.

In 2010, TDU researched the topic through two different approaches, an institutional survey offered to all students and a series of focus groups with first year students.

The *Student Experience of Technology* (SET) survey was offered to all UWS students in May 2010. The survey was developed as part of a collaborative research project with Macquarie University and University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). The rationale for the study was to provide relevant information for infrastructure and professional development planning, assist staff in developing programs and services that make more effective use of technologies for learning and teaching purposes, and to provide more effective learning environments for students.

Each of the three universities was responsible for gathering and analysing site-specific data. A total of 7,411 students at UWS responded, which provided a 20.4% return rate. The survey asked 127 questions about student access and use of technologies for learning, administration, communication and social and work purposes. The survey also asked specific questions about the use of vUWS and support services for learning. Results indicate UWS students are moderately to highly satisfied with the current level of services and supports for learning. Data also revealed UWS students are well equipped, with levels of computer ownership consistent across all age groups and cohorts. UWS students are reported as active users of technology for study with nearly all students indicating they use technology for study from home or campus one or more times a day. UWS students rate themselves as technologically literate with the capacity to learn new technologies.

Despite the private use of social network technologies such as Facebook, Twitter, wikis and blogs, students do not currently prefer these technologies for their university learning experiences. Students would prefer that more and better use is made of core learning technologies; for instance, data specifies students' desire for greater access to online lecture recordings, discussion boards in vUWS and tracking academic progress and grades online.

The results from this survey were provided in a report to the UWS Executive, and subsequently in a public report that was issued to senior academic staff and Directors. The report includes a summary of the results, as well as cohort data and recommendations for planning and improvement strategies. The results will continue to be provided to academic groups in 2011.

The *First Year Student Experiences with Technology Focus Group* research project was a small scale UWS focused project intended to complement the aforementioned SET survey. It was designed to gain better insights into commencing students' use, understanding and interaction with technologies as part of their learning experience in higher education. The project team engaged a total of 131 first year undergraduate students in small semi-structured

focus group interviews across three of the six campuses in a variety of discipline areas. Data provided a number of short and long term suggestions for improvement with findings supporting and complementing those presented in the SET report. A summary of this project will be posted on the QiLT site in early 2011.

## Analysis of early stage implementation of the new Assessment & Learning Guides policies

In 2009 and 2010, TDU conducted a small research study to investigate how assessment criteria and standards had been communicated in Learning Guides produced in 2009, the first year of staged implementation of the new policies. The study reviewed all level one Learning Guides placed in the online Learning Guides repository in Autumn and Spring Sessions 2009. The total number of Learning Guides reviewed was 159. These represented all Schools teaching at undergraduate level.

The study enabled TDU to gain a detailed picture of how staff had implemented criteria and standards-based assessment and Learning Guides in 2009. TDU acknowledges that processes are in place in Schools to review and improve Learning Guides.

In 2010, the results of the study were communicated to UWS staff through the TDU web site and via a presentation to senior staff at the UWS Quality Forum in November. The study identified key areas for evaluation for improvement of Learning Guides, including:

- ✦ ensuring alignment between learning outcomes and type of assessment task for all assessment tasks (validity);
- ✦ ensuring that the assessment task description and the criteria and standards clearly relate to the same task;
- ✦ increasing the extent to which exemplar(s) of related work are provided to students; and
- ✦ increasing the extent to which a rationale for the assessment task is provided to students, particularly for exams and tests and critical/analytical tasks.

## UWS and CADRE Projects

In 2010, the University funded CADRE to work with key projects within the institution to leverage the specialist skills of the CADRE team to enhance online learning at UWS. The TDU Director was invited to participate as a specialist consultant and committee member on this work. In 2010, projects were developed in partnership with Law, Nursing, Education and Badanami. TDU will provide follow-up support in 2011 for additional changes to resources once CADRE has completed the development phase. It is expected that this collaborative work with CADRE will continue well into 2011.

## College of Business Engagement

The Teaching Development Unit has had several key projects with the College of Business (CoB) in 2010. TDU was fortunate to have Dr Fernanda Duarte, School of Management, join us on a part-time secondment. She co-ordinated the publication of two more CoB Good Practice Guides: No. 3: *Developing Teacher Presence in the Classroom* and No 4: *Engaging First Year Students in Large Tutorials*.

**College of Business & Teaching Development Unit 2010**

**College of Business Good Practice Guide No. 3**

### Developing teacher presence in the classroom

Building a positive and productive relationship with students depends to a large extent on how you use your teacher presence in the classroom. Here are some suggestions to develop a teacher presence and student rapport.

**Be well prepared for class**

- Plan carefully for each class. Consider learning outcomes, session structure, support building strategies, focus and range of activities, a range of learning tasks and resources to be used.
- Prepare activities that promote active learning, i.e. learning which is based on active engagement of students.
- Use a selection of ice-breakers to establish a relaxed atmosphere in class (see LMO Early in class: co-ops).
- Design your teaching resources thoughtfully so they are clear, easy to read, and relevant.
- Make sure you arrive a few minutes before tutorial time to convey a message of punctuality and responsibility.
- Acquire yourself with relevant LMO profiles (e.g. assessment, student academic misconduct) so you can report appropriately to student's queries.

**Rationale:**  
Being well prepared for your class will enable you to feel in control, which will enhance your teacher presence and facilitate rapport with students.

**Establish rapport with students**

- Use confident body language when you enter the classroom. Walk tall. Open up. Smile.
- Make eye contact with all students.
- Learn your students' names (see LMO Tutor's Guide, p.6 for strategies to learn student names).
- Discuss and develop collective ground rules and expectations with students.
- Deal with misbehaving students quickly but not angrily or sarcastically.
- Start each class with something catchy (e.g., one-minute quiz, an interesting news item).
- When appropriate, use humour to "lighten up" a difficult concept or issue.
- Motivate all students to participate in discussions and activities.
- Be culturally sensitive. Make sure students from different cultural backgrounds feel welcome in your class.
- Cultivate students' trust by fostering a spirit of open and safe inquiry.

**Rationale:**  
Establishing rapport with students will build a positive teacher presence and create a productive learning environment.

**Motivate students to learn**

- Show your enthusiasm about the subject through your passion about the subject matter of your field. If you do not feel enthusiastic on a particular day - "fake it" but maintain authenticity.
- Build a case for learning, explaining why the class is important. Students will be more likely to engage if they "buy in" to the relevance of the unit or topic under discussion, especially when you link it with their professional future.
- Be explicit about the types of teaching techniques you will be using (e.g., group work, case studies, storytelling, quizzes, etc.). Explain how these activities will assist learning.
- Whenever relevant, discuss current issues in the news, politics, current, education, social, sport, yourself and informed about what is happening in Australia and internationally.
- Listen** actively to your students.
- Respond** positively to their contributions (e.g., "good point", "I see what you're saying", "it's very interesting observation"). **Pause** from time to time and check for understanding. **Ask** students, "Does this make sense to you?"

**Rationale:**  
If students feel motivated to learn, they will engage more actively in class discussions and activities which will facilitate deep learning.

*Developing Teacher Presence in the Classroom*

**College of Business & Teaching Development Unit 2010**

**College of Business Good Practice Guide No. 4**

### Engaging first year students in large tutorials

Large tutorial classes (i.e., with more than 30 students) require well designed activities and sound management. Below are some suggestions to manage large tutorials and engage first year students in active learning.

**Designing active learning activities**

- Provide clear guidance for students to undertake the process of tutorials (e.g., by the end of the tutorial you will be able to understand the following concepts...). Discuss with students the purpose and relevance of planned tutorial activities.
- Assign material with different on-classroom activities to establish a relaxed atmosphere in class. Consider techniques for group work including finding groups, "Think, Pair, Share" and debates.
- Check handouts for active learning - not just for information, insert interactive resources in handouts with tasks and resources for students to engage with.
- Prepare engaging open-ended questions for group discussions to help students reflect, analyse and communicate (e.g., "What is the evidence to support your opinion? How could you justify the conclusion? What new insights do you have from the point of view?"). Avoid questions that can be answered with yes or no closed questions.
- During the first 10 min, pay attention to the "tone" of the group (i.e., whether group is quiet or noisy) or if discussion are dominated by certain individuals. If necessary, re-align their activities accordingly.
- Learning student names is not always a huge task as it is worth trying different strategies to do so (e.g., name cards, name games). Using students' names will draw them more easily into tutorial discussions and encourage them to learn together.

**Rationale:**  
Designing appropriate activities will ensure greater student engagement and active learning.

### Practical strategies that work

**Checking for understanding**

- Ask students to digest information by encouraging them to explain key concepts to each other, paired them to use the "top partner" by trying what they are learning to be used as a write-up and give to their professional practice.
- Use questioning techniques such as **probing** to check students to reflect on a question before responding, **re-phrasing** to ensure that students understood the question, **probing** for clarification or **re-directing** questions to other students to think out other perspectives, and **rewarding** useful answers.
- Check for understanding several times during the tutorial by asking questions and naming items.
- Monitor students' body language to check for lack of engagement. Change the mood with an anecdote, an eye-catching picture or a different task altogether.
- End the tutorial by consolidating knowledge. Ask questions such as: "What are the key points you have learned from today's discussions?"

**Rationale:**  
Regularly checking for understanding will increase retention of concepts.

**Using group management strategies**

- Engage, inspire and challenge students through well planned collaborative learning activities with clearly operationalised processes (e.g., hypotheticals, problem-solving, case-study analysis).
- Prepare a set of ground rules for group work (e.g., students must take turns in making contributions to collective decisions when specified time limits, students must respect responses as promptly as each other). Discuss ground rules with students.
- Prepare a set of ground rules for group work (e.g., students must take turns in making contributions to collective decisions when specified time limits, students must respect responses as promptly as each other). Discuss ground rules with students.
- Consider common problems that may arise from small group discussions (e.g., unpreparedness, students not listening to each other, dominating group off track). Plan ways of dealing with these problems. Build in opportunities for using students to see an different case (e.g., role-play, one-minute reports).
- Make them a bit "light" to attract students to small groups for class work. Encourage them to use the advantages of having discussions from (e.g., engaging each student a number which corresponds to a group, always get names from a box or envelope).
- Actively facilitate small group discussions to avoid the possibility that one member might dominate the conversation.

**Rationale:**  
Having well-planned, well-guided small group discussion activities will facilitate engagement and active learning.

*Engaging First Year Students in Large Tutorials*

These guides provide focus points for sessional staff to review their teaching strategies and to engage with strategies employed by experienced staff.

Dr Duarte also conducted a small research study investigating the concept of teaching effectiveness. She interviewed several experienced teaching staff, several of whom have had their teaching recognised through institutional and national teaching awards. Her results will be used as case studies on the QILT site and in the Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program to help new staff understand effective teaching practice and learner engagement. Dr Duarte also expects to publish her results in the near future.

## School of Marketing Learning and Teaching Sessions

These sessions were a collaborative partnership between the School of Marketing and TDU and were open to any staff members within the College of Business. They were designed to be interactive and support staff in continuing to develop and diversify their teaching and learning practice (See Table 1).

Table 1: School of Marketing Learning and Teaching Sessions, 2010

Workshop	Date	Duration	TDU Facilitator	Number of Participants
Developing a portfolio of strategies for handling difficult in-class interactions	23/02/2010	2	Rosemary Thomson	12
Developing and implementing processes to assure assessment	23/03/2010	2	Rosemary Thomson	8
Creating dynamic presentations using Prezi	27/04/2010	2	Lynnae Rankine	9
Using case studies in teaching	07/09/2010	2	Fernanda Duarte and George Rosier	20
Teaching first year students: Strategies to assist students (and staff) to survive and thrive	12/10/2010	2	Lynn Burnett	6

## Basic Standards

The implementation of the Basic Standards for E-Learning Sites was an area of focus by the Unit in partnership with the College of Business. Reviews of vUWS sites for consistency with the Basic Standards were useful in targeting specific areas of improvement. Individual consultations and small group training and support activities were provided across the Schools in the College for staff to self review their own vUWS sites. Templates were designed for some Schools to assist in their reflection of learning design and supports for specific cohorts of learners.

## UWS College

TDU worked with UWS College staff on both assessment and e-learning development activities in 2010.

- ◆ Enhancing the e-teaching capabilities and quality of vUWS sites. Underpinning this work was the development of a College-wide vUWS template for academic programs that provided consistency in design and supports for students. Regular reviews of UWS College sites for uniformity with Basic Standards shows continued improvement in the quality of vUWS sites.
- ◆ Criteria and standards-based assessment. TDU provided a half-day workshop for UWS College academic staff on 13 October. The workshop assisted staff to differentiate between criteria and standards-based assessment practice and earlier assessment practice, and to refine existing marking schemes.

## ALTC leadership project 'Subject Coordinators Leading Professional Development for Sessional Staff'

This project is led by the University of Wollongong, and includes the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), and the Australian Catholic University (ACU) as well as UWS. The UWS leaders are Associate Professor Janne Malfroy, with assistance from Rosemary Thomson. The project group invited 10 subject coordinators from each university to participate in stage 1 of the project. This commenced with a group workshop at UTS on 18 June. This workshop looked at leadership capabilities of subject coordinators and initiatives that could support their leadership and management of sessional staff. Each participant developed an individual action plan which they implemented over Spring session, 2010.

The UWS group investigated a range of activities suited to their own teaching context. Projects included developing more supportive induction processes for sessional staff, using social media to connect teaching and sessional staff, training sessional staff to help set up multiple-choice online quizzes to provide formative assessment on work in large classes, improving liaison processes with external professional sessional staff, and developing strategies to improve moderation of assessment. The outcomes have been very impressive so far and UWS is keen to build on this work next year. The Project Leaders will be running workshops in early 2011 to further develop the leadership framework, and extend the project to other universities.

## Graduate Certificate in Higher Education proposal

Building on the success of the Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program (see Section 2), TDU was asked to develop a proposal for a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (GCHE). This initiative aligns very closely with the 'Making the Difference' strategy, in particular 'Building organisational strength' and 'Developing high quality staff'.

In order to meet the teaching development needs of academic staff such as Course Coordinators and Heads of Programs, TDU recommended that the GCHE be available for both new academics (building on the Foundations program) and mid-career academics who may wish to formalise their qualifications for promotion and leadership purposes. This proposal recommended that a UWS GCHE be designed to suit both new and more experienced teaching staff, through a design that allows for flexibility in delivery, highly contextualised project work and targeted skills development focused on the needs of students at UWS. It is expected that a unit on e-teaching will be trialled in Autumn session 2011, and that resources developed for a unit on curriculum review processes will be used in the design of the new Science curriculum. A Reference Group will be formed early in 2011 to provide academic advice and support to the development of the units.

## Discussion Papers and Reports

TDU staff researched and wrote several key discussion papers for senior UWS staff this year.

Title	Audience	Authors
Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Proposal	Senior Executive	Janne Malfroy & Stuart Campbell
LMS Upgrade	Senior Executive	Janne Malfroy & Lynnae Rankine
Internationalisation of the Curriculum	Senate Education Committee	Lynn Burnett & Janne Malfroy
LMS options: Moodle/Blackboard paper	Senior Executive	Janne Malfroy & Lynnae Rankine

## 2. Formal Programs in Learning and Teaching

UWS is committed to the development of the teaching skills of its academic staff. The formal learning and teaching programs offered at UWS are designed to ensure its teachers meet appropriate standards of professionalism. Highlights of 2010 were the formal evaluation of the first three years of the Foundations of University Learning and Teaching program (Foundations program) and a substantial integration of graduate expertise into the program through peer support roles and modelling of good practice in assessment. TDU continued its contributions to the school-based Sessional Staff Induction to Learning and Teaching program, and co-designed and facilitated the Academic Leadership Program for UWS Heads of Programs (HOPs).

### Formal Evaluation of the first three years of the Foundations Program

In 2010, TDU formally evaluated the first three years of the program and reflected on its achievements. The evaluation drew on independently led focus groups with graduates, individual interviews with three Heads of Schools, collated survey data from successive programs, and reflective feedback from the program's facilitators, the academic staff in TDU.

Overwhelmingly, both current participants and graduates consider the Foundations program to be a valuable induction for those commencing their teaching at UWS. The primary impact, acknowledged by both graduates and Heads of Schools, is that graduates have become better teachers. This outcome aligns with the 'Making the Difference' strategy which aims to develop staff capacity for high quality teaching in order to create a superior and engaged learning experience for students. As UWS increases its staff profile, the program will continue to play an important part in developing quality teaching.

Graduates highlighted the following features of the program as instrumental in the success of the program:

- ✦ flexible structure of the program which accommodates the diverse learning needs and work demands of participants
- ✦ exposure to research and literature in teaching and learning in higher education and to teaching practices used by colleagues at the University, which enables participants to broaden their expertise and try out a greater range of possibilities for improving their own teaching and assessing practice
- ✦ valuable involvement in microteaching and cycles of observation and feedback on teaching which enhance teaching effectiveness
- ✦ flexible assessment which enables participants to investigate areas of interest and value to them, and helps them recognise the value of researching their own practice
- ✦ valuable feedback on learning throughout the program and on assessment tasks, which promotes continuing learning

Heads of Schools reported positive feedback from staff about the usefulness of the Foundations program. They said that staff had gained tools for reviewing and developing their teaching and assessing practice; that participants often formed ongoing working relationships focused on developing and refining their teaching practice; and that graduates encouraged new colleagues to view the program positively.

The report on this evaluation process was published and disseminated to all senior academic staff in the University. The TDU Director was invited to present a keynote at the Foundations Colloquium, hosted by the University of Newcastle, in November 2010. Findings from the report were presented to this national group of academic developers, and consequently TDU has received requests for benchmarking collaboration from other universities.

## Foundations of University Learning and Teaching Program 2010

Detailed information about the Foundations program can be found on TDU's website and has been outlined in previous annual reports.

In 2010, in response to an increase in new academic staff appointments at UWS, TDU was required to increase the number of Foundations programs offered. Previously, the Foundations program was provided each February and July. Due to a greater number of new academic appointments in 2010, the program was offered four times (February, June, July and November). Seventy-two staff out of an eligible eighty-eight (81.8%) commenced the Foundations program in 2010. Some new academic staff were granted exemption from the program. Formal evaluation of Module 1 (the only face to face session) shows a mean satisfaction rating of participants of 4.3/5.



*February 2010, Foundations Program*



*June 2010, Foundations Program*



*July 2010, Foundations Program*



*November 2010, Foundations Program*

Foundation program graduates, as well as other experienced teaching staff at the University, contribute to the ongoing development of the Foundations program by sharing good teaching practice during the cycles of peer observation, feedback and reflection on teaching in Module 2 'Reflective Practice'. Dr Simon Myers, a recent graduate, successfully redesigned unit assessment to engage students in their learning, reduce marking load and lower the unit's failure rate. Dr Myers contributed to the Foundations program by participating in a video interview discussing his redesign. The video has been used in 2010 programs to explore good practice in assessment redesign and group assessment.

## Induction to Learning and Teaching for New Sessional Staff

In 2010, TDU continued to work collaboratively with Schools to provide Induction to Learning & Teaching for new Sessional Staff. Sessional induction comprises a 3-hour mandatory, paid session focusing on assessment, teaching large / small classes, and student academic misconduct and minimising plagiarism. Each topic is contextualised to the particular School and group of sessional staff attending.

TDU prepared guidelines and worksheets to assist School staff in preparing, conducting and evaluating sessional induction sessions. These materials included a framework for conducting School-based Induction to Learning and Teaching (developed collaboratively with School representatives, and updated each year); evaluation form; and participant list. TDU also provided copies of the publications *Teaching@UWS 2010* and the *UWS Tutors Guide* for each sessional staff member attending the school-based inductions. *Teaching@UWS* and the *UWS Tutors Guide* are also available electronically at <http://www.uws.edu.au/tdu>

TDU collaborated with the College of Business to provide a College-wide 2 hour teaching skills workshop for new sessional staff in both major sessions. Following the workshop, new sessional staff also attended a one hour School-specific session.

## Academic Leadership Program for UWS Heads of Programs

In 2010, TDU continued its collaboration with the Organisational Development Unit (ODU) to provide the Academic Leadership Program for Heads of Programs (HOPs) at UWS. The program was originally developed by Professor Tricia Vilkinas, Associate Professor Betty Leask and Associate Professor Richard Ladyshewsky, under the auspices of the Australian Learning & Teaching Council (ALTC). The program was contextualised for UWS by TDU and ODU. Nine HOPs graduated from the inaugural Academic Leadership program in September 2010. A further eight HOPs commenced the Academic Leadership program in mid-2010.

Participation in the Academic Leadership program involves attendance at three workshops, completion of the Integrated Competing Values Framework 360 degree feedback tool, and development of a personal action plan focused on working towards the achievement of a designated project. Personal action plans enable participants to further develop their strengths and/or to work on strengthening self-identified gaps in their leadership capabilities. A comprehensive resource book was provided for each participant.

## 3. vUWS Management and Support

The Teaching Development Unit provides comprehensive management and support for the University's learning management system (vUWS). In 2010, the number of units which offered a vUWS presence grew from 93% to 100%. Tracking data shows that students regularly (from a few times a week to more than once a day) use vUWS to access course and unit information, online readings and other relevant material, participate in discussions, take quizzes for self or formal assessment purposes and track their own progress and grades.

Some of the highlights of our work in 2010 include:

### E-Learning Service Desk

The Service Desk is available to all students and staff, through email and phone enquiries. The Service Desk staff have detailed and expert knowledge about the diverse functionality and tools available within vUWS and are equipped with strategies and techniques to help trouble-shoot both simple and complex enquiries. During 2010, more than 9,490 enquiries were received by the Service Desk. Over 5,900 enquiries were from staff and more than 3,560 were from students. This service continues to be rated highly by students in the Student Satisfaction Surveys.

A total of 79 technical investigations were initiated with the system vendor, Blackboard. These technical investigations involve a combined approach between Blackboard Support Staff and e-learning specialist staff at the E-Learning Service Desk to engineer solutions and undertake in-depth testing to address and remedy any technical issues. The Service Desk also handle vUWS site creations and in 2010, over 3,500 requests and sites were made available for staff and students.

### System improvements to help staff manage large classes

A common enquiry to the E-Learning Service Desk from academic staff involves streamlining gradebook data management. For large classes with over 400 students, effective gradebook management practices can have a significant benefit to academic workload. In 2010, 97 vUWS sites had more than 400 students, twelve of these sites had between 1,000 and 2,000 students, and one site had more than 2,000 students. TDU effectively responded to this situation by adding functionality to the vUWS-Callista middleware system to include five extra default columns within each vUWS gradebook. These extra columns enabled designers of vUWS sites to:

- ✦ identify and manage 'active' and 'inactive' students accessing vUWS;
- ✦ identify and manage student access in vUWS sites that are populated with student data from multiple unit numbers;
- ✦ help manage grades where there are multiple teaching staff involved;
- ✦ differentiate between teaching periods (particularly useful for year-long sites);
- ✦ differentiate and manage students based on campus information; and
- ✦ confirm enrolment status of students as shown in Callista.

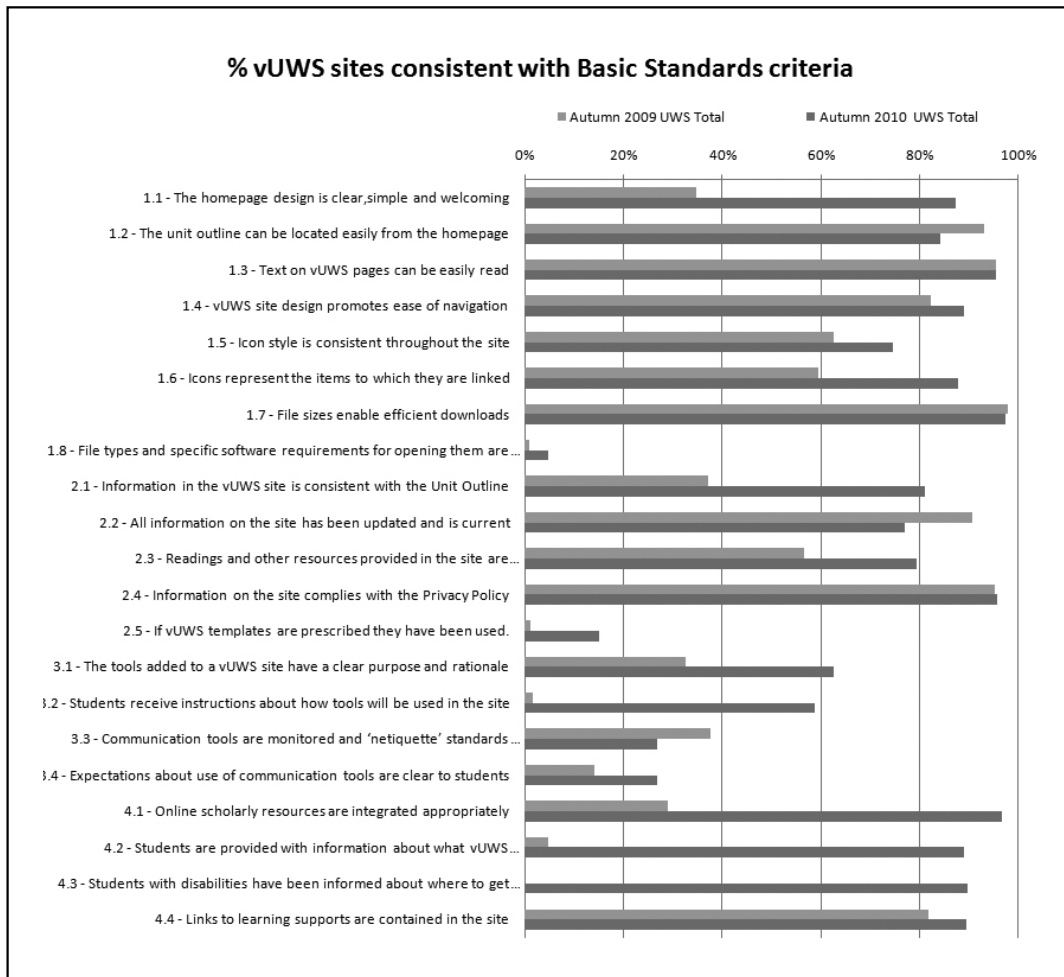
### Customised vUWS template designs

TDU has been working closely with Schools and unit areas within the University to develop templates for vUWS sites that provide consistency in design and links to student support materials across all vUWS sites within the School or unit area. In 2010, templates were developed for UWS College, Sydney Graduate School of Management, and the Schools of Biomedical and Health Science, and Nursing and Midwifery.

## Improving Quality in E-Learning

The E-Learning Quality Framework (ELQF) continues to be an important focus of TDU work with all vUWS sites being reviewed for consistency with the Basic Standards for E-Learning Sites. TDU's continual review of quality in e-learning sites shows significant increases in consistency. Important technical and organisational criteria include the level of clarity of course and unit homepages, ease of navigation, and ease of instructions relating to tool use and access to information about student supports. Surveys have showed ongoing improvement (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: vUWS site consistency with Basic Standards 2009 - 2010



## Proposed Learning Management System Upgrade

The Campus Edition 8 (CE8) version of the Blackboard learning management system has been superseded by Learn 9.1. In 2010, TDU, in partnership with ITS, proposed that the University upgrade the learning management system (LMS) to Learn 9.1 during 2011-12.

Associated with this upgrade, staff and students will experience new social and active learning features to further foster student engagement, efficiency and productivity enhancements for academics, and an early warning system that identifies students-at-risk.

## 4. Teaching Development Activities

### Workshop Program

Building the capacity of academic staff to provide high quality teaching is a core component of TDU operations. While the majority of the Unit's work in this area happens in close partnerships with Schools, an open workshop program is available to all staff in addition to customised sessions designed to facilitate specific teaching development needs. In 2010, TDU extended its repertoire of workshop activities through sessions that focused on further developing the e-teaching skills and knowledge of staff using vUWS. These sessions ranged from managing student data in vUWS to podcasting and increasing interaction and were attended by 144 staff during the year.

A detailed list of sessions and participant numbers is included in Appendix B 'Workshop and Session Summary'.

### Online Modules

The successful online module, 'Introduction to Blended Learning' launched in 2009 continued to be accessed by staff in 2010 as an essential resource for their teaching. A total of 263 staff accessed this workshop over the course of 2010. Complementing this online module, TDU coordinated a range of other online and blended modules that focus on practical application of vUWS technologies to enhance student learning and provide affordances for staff to manage their e-learning environments. Attendance levels were high as 91 staff participated in the online and blended delivery modules of 'vUWS Essentials', 'Designing for Communication' and 'Creating Groups, Assignments and Assessments in vUWS'. Formal evaluation of these workshops shows a mean satisfaction rating of participants of 4.5/5.

### Custom Workshops

Twelve customised workshops were developed and facilitated by TDU to meet specific staff development needs over the course of the year. These workshops were attended by 95 staff across Schools in each of the 3 Colleges. Custom workshops varied in duration, delivery mode and focus. In 2010, TDU provided sessions on preparing vUWS sites for the forthcoming teaching sessions; collaborating using wikis and Google docs; creating dynamic presentations using Prezi; increasing interactivity using Wimba Create; improving quality of e-learning sites using the Basic Standards; and leveraging quizzes and journals to improve learning.

The customised workshops extended beyond academic staff with TDU providing vUWS workshops for 294 Early Childhood undergraduate students prior to the start of Autumn semester. These workshops focused on student orientation to vUWS, being an active member of an online learning community, completing online assessments and strategies for effective online collaboration.

### School and College-Based Partnerships

TDU continues to offer a distributed model of teaching development support. TDU staff believe that in order to support institutional teaching and learning initiatives and improvements, the Unit needs to work in partnership with academic staff. During 2010 TDU worked with various Schools to support initiatives that had been negotiated with Heads of Schools and key members of staff. In the School of Biomedical and Health Sciences, Kristy Coxon and other members of the Occupational Therapy team worked with staff from TDU in preparing multimedia resources for their units with specific emphasis on the production and distribution of short video clips and audio files for students. TDU continued to partner with the School of Marketing in 2010, designing, organising and conducting a number of workshops aimed at re-energising teaching, learning and assessment in the School. Workshops were open to staff from across the College of Business. Workshops focused on areas such as: developing a portfolio of strategies to handle difficult in-class interactions; developing and implementing processes to assure assessment; developing sessional staff understanding of criteria and standards-based assessment; creating dynamic presentations using Prezi; using case studies in teaching; and teaching first-year students.



*School of Marketing - Learning and Teaching Seminar Series, Spring 2010 brochure*

TDU further strengthened its partnership with UWS College during 2010 through strategic teaching development activities to enhance the e-teaching capabilities of College staff and improve the quality of vUWS sites. Eight teaching development activities were developed and facilitated by TDU for UWS College. These sessions covered a range of activities such as the essentials of vUWS, staff moving their sites across to new vUWS templates for the College, and increasing interactivity using Wimba Create. These sessions were attended by 69 staff.

TDU also collaborated with UWS College to support staff in extending their knowledge of criteria and standards-based assessment. A half-day workshop with 45 staff was conducted in October 2010. The session enabled staff to differentiate between criteria and standards-based assessment practice and previous assessment practice, and to refine rubrics used in their own units.

## Visiting Scholar Workshop

TDU offered an interactive workshop for UWS staff facilitated by visiting UK Higher Education Consultant and Researcher, Professor Mick Healey in September. Professor Healey's workshop, *Reflections on Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, explored the status of the scholarship of teaching in higher education, provided a discipline-based approach to the development of scholarship of teaching, highlighted linkages between teaching and research and examined the role of pedagogic research. The workshop was well attended with over 40 participants from across the University.



*Professor Mick Healey's workshop, Reflections on Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, September 2010*

## Contribution to Research Supervisor Development Program

TDU continued to work in partnership with the Office of Research Services and the Associate Deans, Research to provide a comprehensive Research Supervisor Development Program. In 2010, ten Research Supervisor Forums were held for 231 academics. Six sessions were held at Bankstown, two at Parramatta and one each at Penrith and Campbelltown.

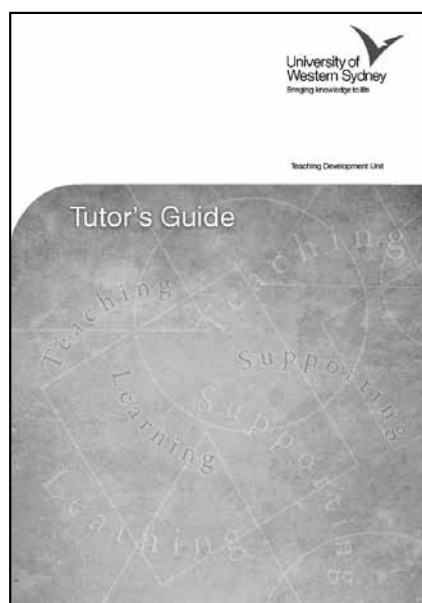
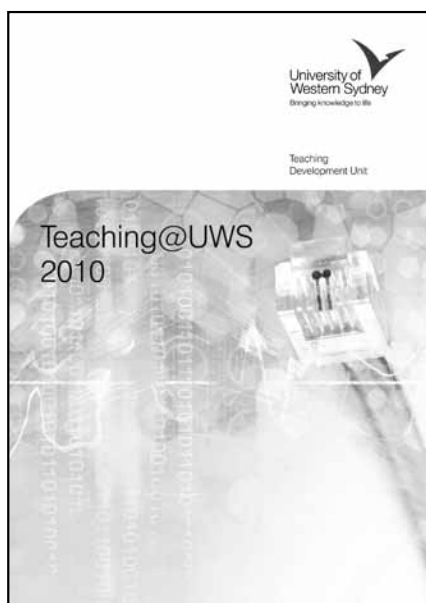
The program provides sessions for different discipline groups and staff at different stages of their research supervisor career. In 2010, ten sessions were offered: two were College based forums, one was for experienced staff new to UWS, two for staff new to supervision, two with special guest speakers (Professor Antony Paré, McGill University, Canada and Professor Cheetham, PVC Research, UWS) and three for renewal of registration on examination, publishing and candidate writing.

Evaluation of the program is important to check relevance and in 2010, overall rating of the forum was 94% good or excellent. Knowledge of presenters was rated as 100% either good or excellent, ease of understanding of information was rated as 96% good or excellent and overall content was rated as 91% good or excellent.

## Teaching Publications

TDU continues to provide staff with quality UWS specific teaching publications. Each year, the publication *Teaching@UWS* is updated. New sessional staff members are given *Teaching@UWS* and the *Tutor's Guide* at induction sessions for sessional staff.

*Teaching@UWS* and the *Tutor's Guide* are also available electronically, at [www.uws.edu.au/tdu](http://www.uws.edu.au/tdu)



Other TDU publications (*The Basic Standards for E-Learning Sites*, *Lectures Online* and *Assessment Guide*) remain relevant to academic staff at all levels of appointment. They are distributed at workshops, on request from Schools, and are available on the TDU website.

Two additional publications were developed in partnership with the College of Business in 2010 (*Good Practice Guide No. 3: Developing teacher presence in the classroom* and *Good Practice Guide No. 4: Engaging first year students in large tutorials*). These are distributed through the College of Business and are also available on both TDU and College websites. They have been especially designed for sessional and new teaching staff.

## Website updates

UWS had an extraordinarily successful ALTC Teaching Awards year. TDU showcased this success and profiled the national award winners on the Quality in Learning and Teaching (QILT) website.

The screenshot displays the QILT website interface. At the top left is the QILT logo with the tagline "Showcasing Quality In Learning and Teaching at UWS". To the right is the University of Western Sydney logo and the text "Teaching Development Unit". A horizontal navigation menu includes "Home", "Assessment", "E-Learning", "Teaching Practice", "Scholarship of Learning & Teaching", and "Contact Us".

The main content area features a section titled "ALTC Award Winners" with the text: "UWS is proud to recognise the achievements of our staff who have received Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Awards for Teaching Excellence. Find out more about UWS award recipients". Below this text are four portrait photos of award winners with their names and departments: Michael Blissenden (School of Law), Dr. Loshini Naidoo (School of Education), Dr. Anne Power (School of Education), and Dr. Susanne Gannon (School of Education).

On the right side of the main content area, there is a vertical navigation menu with the following items: "Assessment", "E-Learning", "Teaching Practice", "Scholarship of Learning & Teaching", and "Contact Us".

Below the main content area, there are two additional sections: "Student Experience of Technology Survey" and "E-Learning Exemplars". The "Student Experience of Technology Survey" section includes a paragraph about a 2010 survey and a "Read more..." link. The "E-Learning Exemplars" section features a video player showing a presentation slide titled "101143 Psychology Behavioural Science" and a caption: "Short videos showing how UWS staff use e-learning to enhance student learning outcomes."

At the bottom of the page, it says "University of Western Sydney Teaching Development Unit 2011".

The QILT site at <http://tdu.uws.edu.au/qilt>

## 5. Engagement with the Higher Education Community

Staff in TDU play an active role in key organisations in the higher education sector. This interface provides opportunities for learning about work in other universities, profiling excellence at UWS, hearing from guest speakers and accessing resources for UWS.

### Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC)

TDU has continued to play a key role in the University's relationship with the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) and has contributed to the outstanding success of UWS staff in their submission for ALTC Teaching Awards. In 2010, UWS achieved ten Citations for Outstanding Student Learning Awards, one Award for Teaching Excellence and one for Programs that Enhance Learning. TDU contributed to this success through close collaboration with Associate Professor Catherine Sinclair, in her role within the *Promoting Excellence Initiative* (PEI), as a committee member of the ALTC Liaison group, and by providing individual support for applicants.

Dr Lynn Burnett represented the University at the ALTC funded symposia 'D-cubed Dissemination Investigation Project', 22 April, 2010, Sydney.

Associate Professor Janne Malfroy is a partner in an ALTC Leadership grant 'Subject Coordinators: Leading Professional Development for Sessional Staff' for 2010 and 2011. The project is led by the University of Wollongong, in partnership with University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), Australian Catholic University (ACU) and UWS. The focus of this project is to establish a cross-disciplinary framework to support subject coordinators in their role of leading and managing sessional staff. More information about this project is included in Section 1 of this annual report.

### Australasian Council for Open, Distance and E-Learning (ACODE)

These national meetings are attended by nearly every university in Australia, with a strong representation from New Zealand. These meetings provide a forum to explore implementation issues associated with new e-learning initiatives and offer opportunities to review institutional resources, practices and policies. One of the substantial benefits is that staff from other universities often provide copies of newly developed resources which can be used in all institutions, saving considerable development time. The themes for 2010 were particularly relevant to the work of TDU (see Table 2).

Table 2: ACODE meetings 2010

Theme	2010 Dates	Location	UWS Representative
Exploring systems and technologies promoting success for diverse learners	18-19 March	University of Tasmania	J. Malfroy
Blended Learning	8-9 July	Queensland University of Technology	L. Rankine
Open Educational Resources movement	16-17 November	Massey University, New Zealand	I. Olney

Associate Professor Janne Malfroy was asked to represent the ACODE group on the Program Committee for the CCA-Educause Conference *The Game Has Changed* to be held in April 2011 at Darling Harbour, and hosted by UTS. The program committee has responsibility for managing keynote speakers, organising reviews of all full papers and extended abstracts.

## Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD)

The CADAD meetings focus on sharing information about national agendas in learning and teaching development, hearing from invited international guests and developing resources that are useful and available to all members (see Table 2). The network is also extremely valuable for benchmarking activities.

Table 3: CADAD meetings 2010

Theme	2010 Dates	Location	UWS Representative
Status of Foundations programs and Graduate Certificates	22–23 March	RMIT Melbourne	J. Malfroy
Updates in national projects and directions (ALTC)	20-21 October	ALTC Office Sydney	J. Malfroy

In 2010, TDU Director, Associate Professor Janne Malfroy was a member of the CADAD Benchmarking Working Party. The group has completed a full benchmarking document as a resource for all academic development units in universities. In 2012, it is expected that an accompanying resource booklet will also be developed.

## Blackboard Community

The Australian Blackboard Campus Edition User Group has representation from all Blackboard clients in the region and the role of this group is to liaise with, and lobby Blackboard for enhancements to the learning system. TDU has a key role as TDU staff member, Kathie Goldsworthy, co-chairs this group (see Table 3).

Table 4: Blackboard meetings 2010

Theme	2010 Dates	Location	UWS Representative
Blackboard Exemplary Course Program Reviewer	February	Online	K. Goldsworthy
Australian Blackboard Campus Edition User Group	29 March	Hosted by University of Sydney	K. Goldsworthy (Co-Chair) L. Rankine E. Black T. Bowring L. Phan
Australian Blackboard Campus Edition User Group	16 September	Hosted by Blackboard	L. Rankine

## Foundations Colloquium

The Foundations Colloquium annual meeting was held on 11 and 12 November 2010 and hosted by the University of Newcastle. This Colloquium brings together representatives from most Australian universities and focuses on formal learning and teaching programs for new academic staff. The Colloquium enables engagement in constructive collaboration, sharing of innovations and resources, and canvassing of common challenges. The agenda this year focused particularly on the role of Foundations programs in the national agenda of professional accreditation for new academic staff, and the processes for program evaluation.

Associate Professor Janne Malfroy was invited to be a keynote speaker on the topic '*Arguments about compulsory Foundations Programs sector-wide: Reasons why they should and shouldn't be compulsory*'.

Ms Rosemary Thomson also attended the Colloquium and contributed to the discussions about the formal evaluation of the UWS Foundation program during 2010. Detailed information about this formal evaluation can be found in Section 2 of this report.

## 6. Research and Scholarly Activities

### Funded Projects

**ALTC leadership project 'Subject Coordinators Leading Professional Development for Sessional Staff'**. This project is lead by University of Wollongong, and includes University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), Australian Catholic University (ACU) as well as UWS. The UWS leaders are **Associate Professor Janne Malfroy**, with assistance from **Rosemary Thomson**.

### Book Chapters and Case Studies

**Burnett, L.** (accepted for 2011). Enhancing first-year student experience by supporting staff through the First Year Advisor initiative and coordination. Case study. In M. Morgan (Ed.). *Joining the dots – A practitioner's guide to enhancing the student experience: Supporting and interlinking student transitions*. UK: Routledge.

### Refereed Publications

**Burnett, L. & Larmar, S.** (2011). Improving the first year through an institution-wide approach: The role of First Year Advisors. *International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education* 2(1), 21 – 35. (Not ranked until 2012)

**Malfroy, J.** (accepted for publication in 2011). *The impact of university-industry research on doctoral programs and practices* Studies in Higher Education (A\*)

### Refereed Conference Papers

Halse, C. & **Malfroy J.** (accepted for 2011). Rethorising doctoral advising as professional work. *American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting*, 8-12 April, New Orleans, USA.

**Goldsworthy, K. & Rankine, L.** (2010). Learning design strategies for online collaboration: An LMS analysis. *Australian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE)*, 5 – 8 December, Brighton Beach, Australia.

**Olney, I., Buy, R., Coxon, K., Coe, R., Bissett, M.** (2010). OT's collaborating in IT: A team approach to improving learning and teaching using a staged implementation of technology. *Australian Society for Computers in Learning in Higher Education (ASCILITE)*, 5 – 8 December, Brighton Beach, Australia.

**Olney, I., Rankine, L., Malfroy, J.** (accepted for 2011). Staff development for e-learning: new playing field, new rules. *CCA-Educause Australasia*, 3-6 April 2011, Sydney, Australia.

**Thomson, R. & Myers, S.** (2010). Tapping into students' creativity in groups to promote learning of core concepts in Biochemistry. Accepted to the *ATN Assessment Conference 2010: Sustainability, Diversity and Innovation*, 18-19 November 2010

### Conference Presentations

**Rankine, L.**, (2010). Re-vUWS: A lightweight and detailed process for VLE evaluation. *BbSummit Australasia*, 13-15 September, Cairns, Australia.

## Invited Speaker

**Associate Professor Janne Malfroy** was invited to be a keynote speaker at the Foundations Colloquium, University of Newcastle 11-12 November, 2010. Rosemary Thomson, Foundations Coordinator, TDU, also attended the Foundations Colloquium.

**Associate Professor Janne Malfroy** was invited to be a keynote speaker at the College of Business Learning and Teaching Forum, Parramatta 16 July, 2010.

## Journal Reviews

TDU staff contribute each year to scholarly peer review of articles. In 2010, the following journals were supported:

- ✦ Studies in Higher Education (A\*)
- ✦ Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Journal (A)
- ✦ Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice (B)
- ✦ Australasian Journal of Educational Technology (AJET) (B)
- ✦ Journal of The First Year Experience and Students in Transition (C)

## Conference Reviews

TDU staff contribute each year to scholarly peer review of conference papers. In 2010, the following conferences were supported:

- ✦ Ascilite Conference: *Curriculum, technology and transformation for an unknown future*, Sydney 2010
- ✦ Oxford University, Centre for Excellence & Teaching and Learning, *Preparing for Academic Practice* Conference, December 2010
- ✦ EdMedia Conference, Toronto 2010
- ✦ Educause Conference, *The Game Has Changed*, Sydney April, 2011

## Teaching Resources

Thomson, R., & Malfroy, J. (2010). *Teaching@UWS*. University of Western Sydney

## PhD Supervision

**Associate Professor Janne Malfroy** was co-supervisor for PhD candidate, Susan Mowbray, who successfully completed her PhD this year.

## 7. Committees and Governance

Level	Committee Name	TDU Staff
UWS Committees	UWS Senate Education Committee	Janne Malfroy
	Spaces and Technologies Committee	Janne Malfroy
	First Year Experience Advisory Committee	Lynn Burnett
	Academic English Literacies Committee	Janne Malfroy
	Honours Working Party	Janne Malfroy
	CADRE Steering Committee	Janne Malfroy
	Vice-Chancellor's Excellence Awards Panel in the category of Teaching	Janne Malfroy
	ALTC Liaison Group	Janne Malfroy Lynn Burnett
	Student Non-Academic Misconduct Committee	Lynnae Rankine
College Committees	College of Health Sciences EAP Committee	Ian Olney Janne Malfroy
	College of Arts EAP Committee	Rosemary Thomson
	College of Business EAP Committee	Janne Malfroy
	College of Arts Teaching Excellence Awards Panel	Janne Malfroy
	College of Business Teaching Excellence Awards Panel	Janne Malfroy
	College of Health Sciences First Year Experience	Lynn Burnett
	College of Business SM Excellence Working Party	Janne Malfroy
	College of Health Sciences Teaching Excellence Awards Panel	Janne Malfroy
Divisional Committees	Inclusive Practice in Learning Technology	Tom Bowring

## Appendix A - Staff Profile

Teaching Development Unit	
Associate Professor Janne Malfroy	Head, Teaching Development Unit
Tiffany Courville	Administration Officer (from August)
Alyssa Ablitt (on secondment)	Administration Officer (April to August)
Jodie Clark	Administration Officer (to April)
Kylie Jackson (on secondment)	Administration Officer, Projects (from August)
Aaisha Slee (casual, part-time)	Project Officer, Foundations
Maria Glaros (casual, part-time)	Research Assistant
Academic Development	
Dr Lynn Burnett	Senior Lecturer in Higher Education
Dr Fernanda Duarte (on secondment)	Senior Lecturer in Higher Education
Dr Ian Olney	Lecturer in Higher Education (E-Learning)
Rosemary Thomson	Lecturer in Higher Education
E-Learning	
Lynnae Rankine	E-Learning Manager
Kathie Goldsworthy	E-Learning Systems Administrator
Elizabeth Black	E-Learning Projects Coordinator
Tom Bowring	E-Learning Staff Developer
Gina Saliba	E-Learning Designer (from September)
Deney Bernacer	E-Learning Systems Officer
Daniel Collins	E-Learning Media Developer
Sheikh Faruque	E-Learning Systems Officer
Le Hoa Phan	E-Learning Designer (to July)
Hermey Cortez (fixed term contract)	Graphic Designer
Cihan Kenar (fixed term contract)	E-Learning Services Officer

## Appendix B - Workshop and Session Summary

### 2010 Advertised Programs / Open Workshops

Topic / Focus	Teaching Development Activities	No. Sessions	No. Attended
Foundations of University Learning and Teaching	Foundations of University Learning and Teaching (February 2010)	1	17
	Foundations of University Learning and Teaching (June 2010)	1	23
	Foundations of University Learning and Teaching (July 2010)	1	20
	Foundations of University Learning and Teaching (November 2010)	1	12
Visiting Scholar Workshop	Reflections on Developing the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning	1	45
Research Supervisor (Development) Forums	RSF - Early candidature plan, Confirmation of Candidature, publication plan, status support, writing incentives, resources	1	18
	RSF - ERA: Implications for Higher Degree by Research Supervisors	1	22
	RSF - Examinations and the role of supervisor	1	24
	RSF - For experienced supervisors new to UWS	1	18
	RSF - Guest Speaker: Professor Anthony Paré	1	19
	RSF - Induction of New Supervisors	2	54
	RSF - Judging performance & dealing with troublesome candidates	1	33
	RSF - Research higher degree candidates and publishing	1	15
	RSF - Writing and your candidate	1	24
Using vUWS (Includes small group sessions and campus-based clinics)	Designing for Communication in vUWS ( <i>blended</i> )	2	14
	vUWS Essentials ( <i>fully online</i> )	Fully online	68
	Face-to-Face Service Desk Support Session	2	9
	Groups Assignments & Assessments in vUWS ( <i>blended</i> )	2	18
	Podcasting: How to Create, Edit & Present Audio Online	2	22
	Jazzing up your vUWS site	2	17
	Managing Student Data in vUWS	2	29
	Increasing Interaction with <i>Wimba Create</i>	2	20
	Increasing Interaction with <i>StudyMate</i>	2	13
	Enhancing your vUWS site with Video	3	31
	Using <i>Prezi</i>	1	9

### 2010 Customised College and School-based sessions

Topic / Focus	Teaching Development Activities	No. Sessions	No. Attended
Implementing Criteria and Standards-Based Assessment	UWS College	1	45
vUWS Customised Session	UWS College	8	69
	School of Humanities and Languages	1	5
	College of Business	3	17

### 2010 Student Orientation sessions

Topic / Focus	Student Information Sessions	No. Sessions	No. Attended
vUWS Orientation	School of Education	14	306







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Teaching Development Unit  
Published April 2011