The University of Western Australia
Case Study Summary
4 February 2015

Project focus

UWA seeks to:

- Embed university-wide quality teaching criteria into policy and practice
- Emphasise the role of pedagogy in transforming teaching into effective learning outcomes
- Raise the profile/status of teaching and learning across the university
- Apply the AUTCAS model to the development of Research and Service criteria and standards

University Profile

The University of Western Australia is a Go8 university with a population of approximately 25,000 students and 1,500 (FTE) academic staff. Colloquially known as a 'sandstone' university, UWA is a research-intensive institution which is currently ranked 88th on the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) Shanghai Jiao Tong scale. The increased pressure on all universities to remain competitive in the growing and changing global market has meant that student experience has become an increasingly important measure of university status. As such, there is increased focus on quality teaching and learning outcomes.

Institutional context

In recent history there have been a number of critical initiatives which have driven the push toward teaching excellence and enhanced the profile of teaching and learning at UWA. Some of these initiatives have focused on policy formation whilst others have focused on teaching practice (all of initiatives are grounded in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning).

These initiatives are:

- Teaching Qualities Indicators Project (TQI)
- Teaching Quality Framework Indicators (May, 2009)
- AUTCAS project (February, 2014)
- Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme (PTIS)
- Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Research Internship Scheme (ULTRIS)
- International Tutors at UWA program
- Introduction to University Teaching
- Foundations of Teaching & Learning
- Sessional Staff Development program
- T & L Workshops

UWA has developed a teaching criteria framework comprising six areas of activity; six areas of core knowledge and six professional values. The teaching criteria have been reviewed by the UWA Promotions Committee and approved by the Vice Chancellor.

The political imperative for the development of teaching criteria

UWA needs to develop a career path for teaching focused roles and there is a need to clarify what is expected of staff in terms of teaching quality for purposes of appointment, promotion and performance review.

Changes in the higher education sector have put pressure on universities to review teaching practices. This change is driven by a combination of student demand, global competition and technological advancements in ICT. There is a financial and scholarly imperative to remain competitive – especially given UWA's stated goal of maintaining its top 100 status in international university rankings. Although research remains the dominant measure of university status, diversification of the sector and the emphasis on the quality of the student experience is forcing a cultural shift in the direction of improved teaching and learning outcomes.

Teaching criteria

Prior to UWA's involvement in the AUTCAS project, the university's *Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning* (CATL) had developed a teaching criteria framework comprising of six areas of activity; six areas of core knowledge and six professional values. The teaching criteria have been reviewed by the UWA Promotions Committee and ratified by the Vice Chancellery.

The six UWA teaching criteria are:

1. Design and planning of learning activities, unit/courses and degree programs
2. Teaching and supporting student learning
3. Assessment and giving feedback to students
4. Developing effective learning environments, student support and guidance
5. Integration of scholarship, research and professional activities with teaching and in support of student learning
6. Evaluation of practice and continuing professional development

Whilst we did not change the existing 6 criteria to the 7 listed in the AUTCAS framework, we did review the evidence listed under AUTCAS criterion 7 to ensure that it was incorporated into the existing six UWA criteria.

UWA is currently in the process of adding minimum standards. The criteria and standards are being discussed at faculty level. At this stage no decision has been made as to whether the university will develop a common set of minimum standards or whether individual faculties will be responsible for setting their own minimums.

Approach to implementation

The AUTCAS project built on the work already achieved at UWA. Further work with the Promotions committee, Senior DVC & HR have progressed the development of teaching standards/indicators across academic levels. This work has led to the development of companion frameworks for Research and Service.

The following stages describe the strategy for engagement and implementation of the UWA teaching criteria framework across the university:

Stage 1: Preparation and analysis
- Work with HR who are:
  - overseeing the development of all criteria (Teaching, Research and Service)
  - reviewing all probation/promotion/PDR documents
  - cross-checking all documents for consistency

> ➢ Peer review of teaching (CATL direct).

- University guidelines for peer review are listed under the ten dimensions of teaching. This will also assist staff in the provision of evidence for criteria. Staff can also link to other university resources such as Curtin; ECU's Peer Assisted Teaching P.A.T. scheme etc.
- Map the 10 dimensions of teaching (as listed in the UWA peer review process) against the UWA teaching criteria.
- Assess what tools are required to support the peer review process. NB: Curtin's peer review cycle is worth investigating.
- Analyse costs/resources required to implement the peer review process (for CATL and for individuals)

Stage 2: Implementation
- Embed two types of peer review in faculties (collaborative peer review and developmental/evaluative peer review)
- Establish a peer review training programme
- Development of Teaching, Research and Service portfolio templates.

Role of the AUTCAS framework

UWA's involvement in the *Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards* project has progressed the development of quality teaching standards through the creation of a teaching quality framework which demonstrates how teaching criteria may be interpreted in practice. The framework offers exemplars of best practice and links to multi-media resources in support of quality teaching/learning outcomes. The framework maps quality teaching standards against promotional levels. As a result of this initiative, UWA is in the process of developing similar promotional standards matrices for the Research and Service components of academics' work.

The AUTCAS framework was used to inform the development of expectations and standards for each development level. It also gave us an opportunity to link with the promotions committee and HR in reviewing and examining information services and policy.

- Review of the evidence and agreement on setting expectations and standards.
- Faculties taking ownership and localising expectations and standards.
- Implementation in the promotions and decision-making processes.

Achievements and emerging issues

Achievements
- Development of frameworks outlining standards and expectations across all academic levels for teaching, research and service.
- Prioritisation and embedding these frameworks into policy and processes by the university leadership. Leadership has taken ownership of this process and made it a priority project by taking it out to the faculties.
- Review of evidence and agreement on setting expectations and standards.

Emerging issues
- Faculties taking ownership and developing localised examples and expectations.
- Implementation into promotion processes and decision making.

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