

# STRATEGIC COMMISSIONED PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING

**Projects are grouped by topic.**

2016

## PERSONALISED LEARNING IN A MASSIFIED HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

The University of Sydney

**Title:** Scaling the provision of personalised learning support actions for large student cohorts

**Lead institution:** The University of Sydney

**Partner institutions:** The University of New South Wales, University of South Australia, University of Technology Sydney, University of Texas at Arlington (USA)

**Project Leader:** Dr Abelardo Pardo

**Abstract:** This project will identify, develop, showcase and disseminate among Australian higher education institutions a set of guidelines and exemplars to scale the deployment of Personal Learning Support Actions (PLSAs) to large student cohorts. A PLSA is any instructor designed action (i.e. assessment, feedback, etc.) to help students while learning. Several barriers impede the deployment of frequent and effective PSAs in large student cohorts. The data supporting the decision process is either not available or requires a convoluted access procedures, there is a lack of tools that combine human decisions with technology and the communication with students is reduced to conventional channels (email) and unfeasible when scaling personalisation. The proposed solution combines data collected from student interactions in a learning environment, analytic methods, and the expertise of instructors to scale the provision of personalised learning support to large student cohorts. Overcoming these barriers will allow Australian educational institutions to embrace an approach to high quality personalisation in large student cohorts.

**Funding:** \$348 000

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND GOOD PRACTICE IN ASSESSMENT

The University of South Australia

**Title:** Contract cheating and assessment design: exploring the connection

**Lead institution:** The University of South Australia

**Partner institutions:** Griffith University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Sydney, Swansea University (UK)

**Project Leader:** Dr Tracey Bretag and Rowena Harper

**Abstract:** Following the 2015 MyMaster contract cheating scandal, it has become apparent that there is a significant problem with university students using online cheat sites to complete assessments. While authenticity is a recognised feature of good assessment practice, its potential for nurturing academic integrity has not been adequately explored. To determine if and how authentic assessment may be used to address contract cheating, this project will conduct two national surveys (one of students and one of teaching staff) to examine the relationship between assessment design and cheat site use. Furthermore, the project will analyse three large, Australian datasets which demonstrate the types of assessments most commonly contracted out to third parties. The findings will enhance sector understanding of this critical issue, and will be used to develop an evidence-based framework, resources, and national professional development tour that demonstrate the potential for authentic assessment, and assessment design more broadly, to address contract cheating in Australian higher education.

**Funding:** \$338 000

## THE FUTURE OF THE ACADEMIC WORKFORCE

University of Technology, Sydney

**Title:** Scholarly teaching fellows as a new category of employment in Australian universities: impacts and prospects for teaching and learning

**Lead institution:** University of Technology, Sydney

**Partner institutions:** Griffith University, RMIT University, The University of New South Wales, University of Canberra

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor James Goodman

**Abstract:** By 2017 universities in Australia will have created at least 800 positions for a new type of academic, the Scholarly Teaching Fellow (STF). This project investigates the impact on teaching and learning of this ground-breaking development in the nature of academic work. It will consult widely with universities, employees and a range of stakeholders to develop concrete proposals on how STF positions may develop into the future.

**Funding:** \$277 000

2014

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE SUPPORT

The University of Melbourne

**Title:** What works best: Strengthening the evidence base for English language practices in higher education

**Lead institution:** The University of Melbourne

**Partner institutions:** James Cook University, Edith Cowan University, University of Technology, Sydney

**Project Leaders:** Associate Professor Sophie Arkoudis, Dr Anne Harris

**Abstract:** Since the introduction of the Higher Education Standards Framework in late 2011, many higher education institutions have developed strategic plans for addressing the English language learning needs of all students. However, practices can be fragmented and not considered as core business within learning and teaching. The challenge for institutions is in identifying, monitoring and evaluating best practices for English language approaches. There is little publicly available information that can guide institutions towards best practice approaches and effective strategies for monitoring and evaluating those approaches. This project will produce resources to strengthen the evidence base for English language practices in Australian higher education. It will engage with the sector and produce a framework, case studies and practical resources that will guide institutions in strengthening their English language practices.

**Funding:** \$324 000

## 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Bond University

**Priority Area:** The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Student Experience

**Title:** Engaging postgraduate students and supporting higher education to enhance the 21st century student experience

**Lead institution:** Bond University

**Partner institutions:** University of Southern Queensland, Victoria University, Australian Council for Educational Research, Council of Australian Postgraduate Association

**Project Leaders:** Associate Professor Shelley Kinash, Professor Linda Crane

**Abstract:** The diversity of this 21<sup>st</sup> century student profile is amplified not just by advancing technology and cultural change, but by the exponential rise in numbers in a demographic that was previously sparsely populated and research-focussed. This project will (1) undertake a comprehensive analysis of the broad experiences of Australian coursework postgraduate students, and the relationship these broad experiences have to learning, and (2) establish evidence-based recommendations, including best practice guidelines, that can be used to impact and enhance Australia's postgraduate students' experiences.

**Funding:** \$260 000

## University of the Sunshine Coast

**Title:** Shaping the 21<sup>st</sup> century student experience at regional universities

**Lead institution:** University of the Sunshine Coast

**Partner institutions:** Central Queensland University, Charles Sturt University, James Cook University, Southern Cross University, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland, Federation University Australia

**Project Leaders:** Professor Karen Nelson, Ms Kylie Readman

**Abstract:** The contribution of regionally-located universities to their communities and to Australia's future prosperity is well recognised. However, national data indicates that students enrolled at regional universities have less positive outcomes than those of their peers enrolled in capital city universities. Measures such as lower participation, progression and completion rates, higher levels of attrition and poorer graduate destination outcomes are often juxtaposed with positive scores in other measures such as sector-wide surveys. This project will seek to understand the 21<sup>st</sup> century experiences of the diverse undergraduate student populations of regional universities to identify how equitable outcomes for these students can be achieved. New information and key practices will be discovered and a rich suite of resources will be made available to the sector for take-up and use. As a result, regional universities will be able to strengthen their contributions to their regions and the nation by ensuring more students have a successful university experience.

**Funding:** \$284 000

## The University of Melbourne

**Title:** Innovative perspectives and approaches for enhancing the student experience

**Lead institution:** The University of Melbourne

**Partner institutions:** Macquarie University, The University of Queensland, The University of Western Australia, Indiana University (USA), Navitas

**Project Leader:** Professor Hamish Coates

**Abstract:** To effectively manage the undergraduate student experience, institutions must understand who students are and what they expect from higher education. Students have changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and institutions need to understand and do things differently to enhance their experience. This project will build the capacity of higher education institutions to enhance the student experience. Through literature/context reviews and fieldwork it will build new conceptualisations of Australia's undergraduate students that go beyond stereotypes, generalities and dated assumptions. Through a scan of institutional practices, the project will identify new and under-utilised empirical options for understanding and enhancing the 21st century student experience. It will expand approaches to measuring student experience and develop an enhancement framework that will support institutions to use new data and technologies to understand and improve students' experience.

**Funding:** \$326 000

## University of Technology, Sydney

**Title:** Student engagement in university decision-making and governance – towards a more systemically inclusive student voice

**Lead institution:** University of Technology, Sydney

**Project Leader:** Professor Sally Varnham

**Abstract:** As the higher education sector looks towards a period of change, it is imperative that universities are able to accurately identify and quickly address the needs of students. It is timely to develop, trial and refine systemic processes that enable Australian universities to include the student voice in decision making and governance. This project will investigate how the student voice may be engaged at different levels to define student expectations in an evolving higher education environment. It will (1) undertake and synthesise international research, particularly in the UK, (2) undertake a research-informed review within the Australian context, and (3) engage in a wide ranging pilot project across a number of diverse universities to demonstrate how higher education processes may embrace a more systemic inclusiveness of the student voice at all levels of institutional decision making.

**Funding:** \$239 000

## The University of Western Australia

**Title:** Student experiences of threshold capability development with Intensive Mode Teaching

**Lead institution:** The University of Western Australia

**Partner institutions:** RMIT University, University of Tasmania

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Sally Male

**Abstract:** A growing mode of teaching experienced by students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is Intensive Mode Teaching (IMT). Flexibility is becoming increasingly important for students and IMT is a way of providing this flexibility. IMT also has appeal for educators and institutions, both onshore and offshore, where the possibilities have expanded due to advances in technology. With the rapid interest and adoption of IMT, it is important to ensure that the student experience is not put at risk. This project will promote and support improved student experiences for threshold capability development in units that involve IMT. A Good Practice Guide on supporting the student experience will be developed using an approach designed to establish sector-wide relevance and impact.

**Funding:** \$296 000

## DEVELOPING GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

### Macquarie University

**Title:** Classroom of many cultures: co-creating support curriculum with international community partners and students.

**Lead institution:** Macquarie University

**Partner institutions:** PACOS Trust, Restless Development, Bahay Tuluyan

**Project Leader:** Professor Greg Downey

**Abstract:** Feedback from institutions overseas suggests the 'partner voice' within current Australian curriculum could be strengthened to better prepare students to undertake international activities. Partners are often best-placed to contribute to pre-departure orientation, assisting students to overcome misconceptions and to prepare adequately. This project will co-create curriculum materials to support international Work Integrated Learning and community-based service learning with host partners in students' destination countries. It will partner with Non-Government Organisations from Malaysia, India and the Philippines and link with entities from other destination countries. By including partner perspectives and concerns in pre-departure, in-country and re-entry educational programming, the project will model intercultural collaboration and inclusion of diverse intercultural perspectives in the curriculum design. The co-creation process will be documented to provide methods for curriculum adopters who wish to tailor the materials to their own international partnerships.

**Funding:** \$348 000

### RMIT University

**Title:** The global canopy: linking international inbound students with domestic outbound students for improved learning and global connections

**Lead institution:** RMIT University

**Partner institutions:** Central Queensland University, Deakin University, The University of Newcastle, The University of Sydney and University of Western Sydney

**Project Leader:** Dr Patricia McLaughlin

**Abstract:** While Australian universities welcome significant numbers of inbound international students and also increasingly encourage outbound student mobility, the two 'strands' of international activity rarely engage in deliberately organised learning and teaching activities. The cultural advantages and abilities of either cohort is rarely capitalised upon in any deliberate or cohesive way at the learning level. The two groups, are 'as ships in the night', with opportunities for long-term relationships, improved global connectedness, cross-cultural understandings and fertile learning interactions unrealised or operating coincidentally. This project will investigate coherent approaches of integrated teaching and learning between these two cohorts at six universities. It will create a Global Canopy, showcasing diverse disciplinary case studies, an enduring website, podcasts, videos, a symposium and best practice guide. It will cross-fertilise learning and teaching global perspectives for the benefit of all students.

**Funding:** \$278 000

## James Cook University

**Title:** Educating diverse learners: curriculum and pedagogical frameworks that bring global perspectives from the periphery to the core.

**Lead institution:** James Cook University

**Partner institutions:** University of Western Sydney

**Project Leaders:** Dr Kelsey Halbert, Dr Peta Salter, Professor Michael Singh

**Abstract:** Just as the New Colombo Plan refers to a 'Third Wave' required for genuine cultural exchange, so too programmes across higher education need a 'Third Wave' of curriculum refreshment that foregrounds local/global interrelatedness through developing and enhancing student capacities to live, work and contribute to local/global communities. 'Global perspectives' in Australian higher education, to date, have focused on bringing perspectives in or on taking students out. However, a Third Wave approach aims to make the 'global' an integrated everyday experience for students. This project will investigate students' dispositions towards global perspectives and identify factors which act as inhibitors and enablers of cultural exchange. It will draw upon cultural theory, service learning and best practice to theorise and develop curriculum and pedagogical frameworks suited to diverse higher education contexts. These frameworks will inform the development of learning and teaching strategies which centralise global perspectives, bringing them from the periphery to the core for Australian graduates.

**Funding:** \$229 000

## University of Western Sydney

**Title:** Enhancing programmes to integrate tertiary outbound mobility experiences

**Lead institution:** University of Western Sydney

**Partner institutions:** Macquarie University

**Project Leaders:** Dr Tim Hall, Associate Professor Tonia Gray

**Abstract:** Across the Australian university landscape, educators are striving to internationalise the curriculum and develop students as culturally competent 'global citizens'. There is a desire to design, implement and embed Outbound Mobility Programmes (OMPs) into the curriculum to create a more globally aware Australian workforce for the future. This project will deploy experience-based educational theory within itinerary development and seek a deeper understanding of the decision making processes of students presented with OMP opportunities. It will develop curriculum resources which maximise the probability of positive transformative experiences for participants. A mixed-methods research design incorporating case studies, interviews and surveys will produce an evidence base to enable the project to re-tool tertiary globalisation curriculum and produce technology-enriched educational resources. These materials, co-created by students and staff, will assist in leveraging students' positive experiences to enhance recruitment, preparation and re-entry phases of OMPs.

**Funding:** \$246 000

# GOOD PRACTICE REPORT

## University of South Australia

**Title:** Mapping resources, activities and processes supporting the development of tertiary learning and teaching grant applications

**Lead University:** University of South Australia

**Partners:** Central Queensland University, Curtin University, Monash University, The University of New South Wales, Tabor College Inc.(SA), The University of Auckland (NZ)

**Project Leader:** Dr Gavin Sanderson

**Abstract:** Most tertiary institutions in Australia and New Zealand have competitive learning and teaching grants, many of which articulate to national programs on a competitive basis. While some institutions have highly-structured, well-resourced and systematic approaches to support the development of grant applications, others take a less prescribed and resourced approach. While the approach of any institution is shaped by a variety of contextual factors and one size will not fit all, it is likely that some approaches, including professional development for applicants, are more supportive and effective than others. This project will produce a Typology of resources, activities and processes to support the development of learning and teaching grant applications. The Typology will raise awareness in institutions about the range of approaches that exist to support authors to build competitive, relevant and robust proposals. The project's deliverables can assist institutions to benchmark their internal processes to enhance the suitability and quality of learning and teaching grant applications.

**Funding:** \$45,000

## 2013

# GOOD PRACTICE REPORTS

## The University of Sydney

**Title:** Good Practices Report: Assuring learning outcomes and standards

**Lead University:** The University of Sydney

**Partners:** n/a

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Mark Freeman

**Abstract:** This project will provide a summative evaluation of good practices from current and previous work on learning outcomes and standards and recommend future work to stakeholders (including OLT, providers, disciplines, deans' councils, professional and peak bodies) for meeting the challenge of proving and improving student achievement and graduate outcomes.

**Funding:** \$30,000

## Queensland University of Technology

**Title:** Good Practice Report: Postgraduate research and coursework degrees

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Jillian Hamilton

**Lead University:** Queensland University of Technology

**Partners:** n/a

**Abstract:** Bringing together key outcomes and findings of national learning and teaching projects on postgraduate courses into a summative report, this project aims to provide a coherent overview and improved dissemination of good practices and resources and provide academics and their universities with accessible information and tools to improve the delivery and development of postgraduate degrees.

**Funding:** \$30,000

## NATIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHING RESOURCE AUDIT AND CLASSIFICATION

### Charles Sturt University

**Title:** National learning and teaching resource audit and classification

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Philip Hider

**Lead University:** Charles Sturt University

**Partners:** University of Wollongong, Australian Council for Educational Research

**Abstract:** The project aims to improve access to the Office for Learning and Teaching's project resources through a systematic review of the metadata currently provided in its database and the development and implementation of a new schema, taxonomies and guides to support the use of the database into the future

**Funding:** \$149,000

# LEARNING ANALYTICS

## University of South Australia

**Title:** Student retention and learning analytics: a snapshot of current Australian practices and a framework for advancement

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Shane Dawson and Dr Tim Rodgers

**Lead University:** University of South Australia

**Partners:** University of Technology, Sydney, Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Melbourne, University of New England, and Athabasca University (Canada)

**Abstract:** This project will undertake a review of learning analytics across Australian universities within an international context. The project will focus on how learning analytics are informing teaching practice, personalised learning, and applications for improving retention and identification of students at-risk and will provide recommendations for guiding and advancing the implementation of learning analytics.

**Funding:** \$235,600

## Charles Darwin University

**Title:** Learning analytics: assisting universities with student retention

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Deborah West

**Lead University:** Charles Darwin University

**Partners:** Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, Murdoch University, Griffith University and The University of Newcastle

**Abstract:** The aim of this project is to develop a framework which cross references the tools available through learning management systems and learning analytics, with variables and actions to improve retention of at risk students. This will be accomplished through a rolling literature review, two national surveys, in depth interviews and case studies.

**Funding:** \$319,200

# GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

## Bond University

**Title:** Supporting graduate employability from generalist disciplines through employer and private institution collaboration

**Project Leader:** Dr Shelley Kinash

**Lead University:** Bond University

**Partners:** James Cook University, University of Southern Queensland and Australian Council for Private Education and Training

**Abstract:** The aims of this project are to collect, collate and disseminate existing best practice strategies and emerging innovations to improve employability of higher education graduates from the disciplines of humanities, visual/performing arts, life sciences and computer science. The project will derive and disseminate recommended practical strategies to improve graduate employability.

**Funding:** \$239,400

## RMIT University

**Title:** Developing graduate employability through partnerships with industry and professional associations

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Margaret Jollands

**Lead University:** RMIT University

**Partners:** Monash University and Queensland University of Technology

**Abstract:** The project will track key influences on graduate employability by documenting experiences of students, graduates, employers, representatives of professional bodies and academic staff. Fields of study with both low and high employment outcomes will be investigated. A framework will be developed that identifies good practice and opportunities for innovation in undergraduate programs.

**Funding:** \$250,800

## Curtin University

**Title:** How universities can best support students to develop generic skills: enacting strategies for graduate employability

**Project Leader:** Associate Professor Dawn Bennett

**Lead University:** Curtin University

**Partners:** Flinders University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Sydney, Australian Council of Educational Research and TAFE Vic – North Melbourne Institute

**Abstract:** This collaborative project responds to growing social and economic demands for graduates who can negotiate rapidly transforming employment contexts. The project will synthesise a significant body of research to advance understanding of students' attainment of employability skills. With a focus on action and intergraded, it will include case studies with graduates and with students transitioning from study into work, consulting widely with academic leaders, employers and teaching staff. Challenges for graduates of general degrees will be of particular interest.

**Funding:** \$266,000

## TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING

### Deakin University

**Title:** Curate, credential and carry forward digital learning evidence

**Project Leader:** Professor Beverly Oliver

**Lead University:** Deakin University

**Partners:** Curtin University

**Abstract:** The project aims to network and advise Australian higher education providers to deploy tools that enable all students to collect rich evidence of learning and credential learning outcomes using digital badging. It will explore and disseminate pathways, alliances and business models to remain competitive in a disrupted environment.

**Funding:** \$318,250

## Monash University

**Title:** What works and why? Understanding successful technology enabled learning within institutional contexts

**Project Leader :** Professor Neil Selwyn

**Lead University:** Monash University

**Partners:** Australian Catholic University and Griffith University

**Abstract:** The project is designed to identify the key enabling elements of already successful forms of technology-enhanced learning, and identify possible barriers to replicating these existing models, and how they can be overcome. It will set out steps by which these interventions can be engineered into practical cost-efficient applications across the Australian university system.

**Funding:** \$209,000

## The University of Queensland

**Title:** Enhancing student learning outcomes with simulation-based pedagogies

**Project Leader :** Dr Pierre Benckendorff

**Lead University:** The University of Queensland

**Partners:** Griffith University, La Trobe University, Southern Cross University, University of South Australia and Victoria University

**Abstract:** The project aims to map the features and characteristics of online simulations in business education and assess the associated challenges. It will identify and promote innovative pedagogies associated with the use of simulations in universities and evaluate the learning outcomes associated with these pedagogies.

**Funding:** \$177,650

# 2012

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

### Macquarie University

**Title:** Academic integrity in Australian – understanding and changing culture and practice

**Project Leader:** Dr Abhaya Nayak

**Lead University:** Macquarie University

**Partners:** Australian Catholic University; The University of Sydney; Rutgers State University of New Jersey

**Abstract:** This project will develop guidelines for policy development and benchmarking, create online resources that address identified cultural issues and gaps and establish student societies to promote peer-driven culture change.

**Funding:** \$227,000

### Victoria University

**Title:** Working from the Centre: supporting course co-ordinators implement academic integrity policies, resources and scholarship

**Project Leader:** Dr Fiona Henderson

**Lead University:** Victoria University

**Partners:** James Cook University; RMIT University; Southern Cross University; The University of Queensland; University of Canberra

**Abstract:** The project focuses on the ways that course co-ordinators can be assisted in managing systems and harnessing teaching and learning resources to ensure that academic integrity policies are adhered to.

**Funding:** \$130,000

### University of South Australia

**Title:** Embedding and extending exemplary academic integrity policy and support frameworks across the higher education sector

**Project Leader:** Dr Tracey Bretag

**Lead University:** University of South Australia

**Partners:** Griffith University; Queensland Institute of Business and Technology

**Abstract:** This project will help build capacity within Australian higher education providers to develop an institutional culture of academic integrity and will transfer the principles of exemplary academic integrity policies to both the public and private higher education providers regulated by TEQSA.

**Funding:** \$299,000

## The University of Newcastle

**Title:** Plagiarisms and related issues in assessment not involving text

**Project Leader:** Simon

**Lead University:** The University of Newcastle

**Partners:** Monash University; The Australian National University

**Abstract:** This project will investigate the understanding of both academics and students concerning academic integrity regarding assessment items that are not written text, such as computer games and visual images. The project will explore: how they regard such breaches, how academics discourage such breaches, detect them, and deal with the consequences.

**Funding:** \$201,000

## PROFESSIONALISATION OF THE ACADEMIC WORKFORCE

### Murdoch University

**Title:** Professionalisation of the academic workforce

**Project Leader:** Professor Richard Cummings, Winthrop Professor Denise Chalmers, co-leader (UWA)

**Lead University:** Murdoch University

**Partners:** Curtin University; Edith Cowan University; The University of Notre Dame Australia; The University of Western Australia

**Abstract:** This project aims to synthesise the available information and material on quality teaching into a coherent, high quality and accessible online framework to provide academic staff and their institutions with the tools to improve their approach to developing quality teaching.

**Funding:** \$238,000

### The University of Melbourne

**Title:** Academic Workforce 2020: Framing a national agenda for professionalising university teaching

**Project Leader:** Professor Richard James, Dr Chi Baik, co-leader

**Lead University:** The University of Melbourne

**Partners:** The Australian National University; University of Tasmania; University of Western Sydney

**Abstract:** The project aims to enhance the professionalisation of university teaching. The project will create a national Framework for Academic Professionalism and propose the steps needed through 2013-2020 to raise academic professionalism. The framework will be accompanied by an integrated suite of evidence-based resources to support coherent, effective policy and practice.

**Funding:** \$310,000