

CAULLT

**Council of Australasian University
Leaders in Learning and Teaching**

Australian Universities' Provision of Professional Learning: Environmental Scan

November 2019

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Executive Summary

In December 2018 CAULLT sent a survey to their 35 Australian university members and two non-member universities, to compile a snapshot of Australian learning and teaching professional learning provision. Twenty-one of the 37 universities responded (57%). At the request of the Universities Australia Deputy-Vice Chancellor's Academic committee, in June 2019 CAULLT re-sent the survey to the remaining 21 Australian tertiary institutions. Across the two surveys, 38 of the 42 Australian institutions (90%) responded to the survey.

Key themes

In this Executive Summary, the following key themes arising from the data are presented: policies, enterprise agreements, probation and promotion; staffing of roles which provide learning and teaching (L&T) professional learning; recognition and celebration; teaching quality; and program provision.

Policies, enterprise agreements, probation and promotion

Fifty-seven percent (21) of 37 respondents reported that L&T professional learning was governed by policies, including policies related to: staff development; probation; teaching quality standards; professional development. Learning and teaching (L&T) professional learning is specifically referred to in the enterprise agreement of 58 percent (22) of the 38 responding universities. Learning and teaching professional learning is a requirement of probation in 65 percent (24) of responding universities. Probation requirements include completion of award certificates and prescribed 'courses'. Very few universities say that when this is a requirement it is consistently enforced. Probation requirements include completion of award certificates and prescribed 'courses'. Sixty-two percent (23) of 37 responding universities require L&T professional learning for promotion. Very few universities say that when L&T professional learning is a requirement for promotion that it is enforced.

Staffing of roles which provide L&T professional learning

Staff providing professional learning opportunities range from zero in one university to 100 in two other universities, with an average of 8.1 staff when the three outliers are removed. Consistent role titles employed by central L&T units include directors, managers, academic developers, education/learning designers, e-learning/education/learning technology support officers or developers.

Recognition and celebration

All but one of the 38 respondents reported that L&T success was celebrated in their university. The vast majority of respondents referred to annual, usually Vice-Chancellor sponsored, teaching awards, but also included College/Faculty/School awards. Respondents reported that their universities also recognise teaching through: teaching secondments; Advance HE fellowships; teaching conferences; Vice-Chancellor/Dean commendations for outstanding student satisfaction scores; peer teaching exchange; promotion; SOTL presentations; teaching focussed appointments; Distinguished Educators scheme; L&T research fellowships; specialist teaching studies program; and Learning leader roles.

Teaching quality

Eighty-four percent (31) of the 37 responding universities confirmed that their university has explicitly articulated what teaching quality is for their context. Universities use the UK Professional Standards Framework, AUTCAS criteria, Higher Education Standards and their own local frameworks. Documentation detailing teaching quality can be found in the areas of: vision statements; course and program design and delivery; teaching capabilities; curriculum; teaching practice and performance; teaching and learning scholarship and professional development; teaching and learning leadership; student focussed teaching; research led education; teaching evaluation scores; LMS design and application; peer review of teaching and technology enhanced learning.

Eighteen of the 33 responding institutions are in partnership with Advance HE with a further three universities indicating that they planned to sign a partnership agreement in the near future and one university indicating that it was considering withdrawing from their partnership agreement.

Program provision

Thirty-six universities (95%) reported providing a total of 100 L&T professional learning programs for their staff. Three universities provided one program, six universities provided two programs, 22 universities provided three programs, three universities provided four programs and two universities provided five programs. The programs are categorised below into four groups: graduate certificates; teaching induction; Advance HE fellowships and sessional staff.

- Seventeen (47%) provide an award graduate certificate/diploma in HE L&T.
- Twenty-five (65%) of the universities provide a teaching induction program with a duration of one day to the longest program which took place over one year.
- Seven universities (19%) provide one or more specific programs for staff to apply for an Advance HE Fellowship of some level.
- Six (17%) provide programs from 1.5 hours to one day in duration designed for sessional staff.

Twenty-nine universities provided 42 other L&T professional learning programs, with 11 universities providing two programs, one university providing three programs and the other 17 universities having one each. The programs cover topics such as learning management systems, engaging learners online, curriculum design, effective communication and research supervision.

Summary

While all universities but one respondent recognise and celebrate teaching excellence within their institutions, only those with L&T accredited award programs and Advance HE fellowships provide a transportable award which is recognised nationally or internationally.

The data show that there is inconsistent use of a range of teaching standards in the sector. It is therefore an opportune time for a national L&T recognition scheme should Universities Australia wish to do so. This has the potential to drive (and potentially reinvigorate) teaching excellence at the sector level.

Proposals for consideration

1. Universities Australia consults with all Australian universities to seek consensus on a national Australian teaching standards framework, which can be used to underpin teaching quality within institutions; and agree a number of standards which will support an Australian L&T recognition scheme.
2. Universities Australia (or another organisation or individual on their behalf) investigates and seeks an approach to developing the original proposal by Sally Kift to the DVCA group for a national Australian L&T recognition scheme which is governed by a national L&T organisation, with consideration of funding required to implement the scheme.
3. Membership of the national L&T organisation requires all member universities to implement or confirm annual L&T professional learning requirements for teaching staff.
4. The resulting teaching standards framework be contextualised for Australia with reference to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Significant consultation is carried out to achieve this.
5. Those who complete assessed programs which meet the standard(s) achieve national recognition. All Australian universities will recognise the completion of such a program at another university.
6. Universities Australia develops a teaching standards framework which can be met by all universities.

Australian Universities' Provision of Professional Learning Report

Prepared by Adjunct Associate Professor Kym Fraser, on behalf of the CAULLT Executive Committee

In December 2018 CAULLT sent a survey to their 35 Australian university members and two non-member universities, to compile a snapshot of Australian learning and teaching professional learning provision. Twenty-one of the 37 universities responded (57%). At the request of the Universities Australia Deputy-Vice Chancellor's Academic committee, in June 2019 CAULLT re-sent the survey to the remaining 21 Australian tertiary institutions. Across the two surveys, 38 of the 42 Australian institutions (90%) responded to the survey. The second survey was also sent to all New Zealand Universities. Unfortunately, only two responded. As the sample cannot be considered representative, their data is not included here.

Part 1 of this report summarises the responses to the first 19 survey questions. Part 2 summarises the answers to additional questions asked about the provision of learning and teaching (L&T) programs.

Survey results summary: Part 1

The first 19 questions are summarised under the themes of:

- Policies, enterprise agreements, probation, promotion and annual goal setting,
- Recording and staffing of roles focussed on L&T professional learning,
- Recognition and celebration, goals and incentives,
- Team activity, teaching quality, community of practice, support for external professional learning,
- Next steps in L&T professional learning, and
- General university data.

Policies, Enterprise Agreements, probation, promotion, annual goal setting and teaching only

(Ques 1-5, 9)

Fifty-seven percent (21) of 37 respondents reported that L&T professional learning was governed by policies, including policies related to: staff development; probation; teaching quality standards; professional development. L&T professional learning is specifically referred to in the enterprise agreement of 58 percent (22) of the 38 responding universities. Learning and teaching professional learning is a requirement of probation in 65 percent (24) of responding universities. Probation requirements include completion of award certificates and prescribed 'courses'. Very few universities say that when this is a requirement it is consistently enforced. Probation requirements include completion of award certificates and prescribed 'courses'. Sixty-two percent (23) of 37 responding universities require L&T professional learning for promotion. Very few universities say that when L&T professional learning is a requirement for promotion that it is enforced. The same universities did not necessarily have L&T professional learning as a requirement for both promotion and probation.

L&T professional learning is part of the annual goal setting conversation with supervisors in 81 percent (30) of 37 responding universities. Some respondents reported that while the documentation associated with this process encouraged discussion of L&T professional learning, individuals were not compelled to do so and uptake was on an 'ad hoc basis'.

A range of names are used across the sector to refer to academics whose role is to teach, including: Teaching focused academic; Scholarly Teaching Fellows; Teaching academic/Teaching academic (Clinical/Professional); Academic Developer; Teaching intensive; Teaching focussed academic; Teacher; Lecturer, teaching focussed; Senior Tutor/Tutor/Professional Teaching Fellow; Teaching specialists; Teaching Scholar; Education Specialist; Scholarly Teaching Fellow; and Education-Focussed.

Recording and staffing of roles focussed on L&T professional learning

(Ques 6 – 8)

Professional learning is recorded in university systems in 72 percent (26) of 36 responding universities. While many of the systems have context specific names, such as VU Develop, iPerform and WebKiosk, the vast majority of the systems are Human Resource systems, with two systems under the remit of the central L&T unit. In some universities this is limited to a particular professional learning, such as completion of an Advance HE Fellowship or teaching induction program and graduate certificate for probation completion purposes.

Fifty-one percent (19) of the 37 responding universities reported that staff were encouraged/required to record their professional learning individually, with some noting that uptake is ‘patchy’. Portfolios were mentioned by five of the universities as the recording mechanism.

The most staff in any university with roles associated with L&T professional learning is 100 (from two universities), and the least is zero (from one university). If we remove those three outliers from the data, the average number of staff in central units is 8.1 EFT with a range of 1 – 40, not including the outliers (please note that the data from survey 1 may not be EFT).

Some roles are consistent across institutions while some roles are not, at least in terms of their titles. Of the 37 universities with staff in roles associated with L&T professional learning:

- 12 employed a Director and/or Associate Director,
- 9 employed managers,
- 23 employed academic developers,
- 12 employed education/learning designers, and
- 6 employed e-learning/Education/Learning technology support officers or developers.

Other staff titles included: Project officer, professional staff, professional learning consultants, curriculum designers, career educators, education fellowship scheme manager, promoting excellence officer and staff education officer.

Four universities referred to staff located in the faculties and ‘academic groups’, such as Associate Deans Teaching and Learning. Many respondents explained that central L&T units utilise the support of colleagues in the faculties.

All but one multi campus university respondent said that they serviced all campuses. The one exception said that they service two of three campuses.

Recognition, celebration, goals

(Ques 10, 14, 16 & 18)

Thirty-seven of the 38 respondents said that their university celebrates/recognises teaching. The vast majority of respondents referred to annual, usually Vice-Chancellor, teaching awards, but also included College/Faculty/School awards. Awards are disseminated through newsletters, social

media and in reports to Council. Other ways of celebrating or recognising teaching success/engagement mentioned included:

- The support/celebration of Fellows,
- Annual university wide teaching conferences,
- Commendations from the Vice-Chancellor or Dean for outstanding student satisfaction scores,
- Grants and Faculty teaching awards,
- Membership of the university L&T academy, and
- An academy that recognises and celebrates staff.

Sixty-six percent (23) of the 35 respondents provided other examples of how their universities recognise effective teaching practice including: teaching secondments; peer teaching exchange; promotion; grants; Advance HE fellowships; SOTL presentations; teaching focussed appointments; Distinguished Educators scheme; identification of champions; workload allocation for specialised teaching roles; L&T research fellowships; L&T fellows; specialist outside studies program for teaching; teaching fellows scheme; and learning leaders roles.

Seventy-six percent (28) of the 37 responding universities said that their university had goals/targets associated with the recognition of teaching or teaching quality.

All but one of the responding universities provide learning and teaching awards and/or grant programs.

Teaching quality, community of practice, support for external professional learning

(Ques 11, 12, 13, 15 & 17)

Eighty-four percent (31) of the 37 responding universities confirmed that their university has explicitly articulated what teaching quality is for their context. Universities use the UK Professional Standards Framework, AUTCAS criteria, Higher Education Standards and their own local frameworks. Documentation detailing teaching quality can be found in the areas of: vision statements; course and program design and delivery; teaching capabilities; curriculum; teaching practice and performance; teaching and learning scholarship and professional development; teaching and learning leadership; student focussed teaching; research led education; teaching evaluation scores; LMS design and application; peer review of teaching and technology enhanced learning.

Seventy percent (26) of the 37 responding universities reported that their university reports teaching quality including: student experience data; industry feedback; unit and course reporting; and course review data. Reporting is to: TEQSA; Academic Board/Council and Senate; Academic Quality Committee; Education Committee; University learning and teaching committee; Faculty Associate Deans; Learning & Teaching and Executive Deans; Director of Central L&T unit, DVC (A); Senior Management; Schools; Faculties; staff; and professional accreditation bodies. Some of these indicators are used in university and group key performance indicators.

Eighteen of the 33 responding institutions are in partnership with Advance HE with a further three universities indicating that they planned to sign a partnership agreement in the near future and one university indicating that it was considering withdrawing from their partnership agreement.

Seventy-six percent (29) of the 38 respondents reported that they have a community of practice or academy or equivalent that supports and promotes effective learning and teaching practice. Topics include e-portfolios, WIL, Blended learning, the Flipped classroom, the first-year experience, entrepreneurship, employability, and excellence in learning and teaching. Also included are Advance HE Fellow CoP. Twenty-six percent (10) of universities have academies and two

universities (5 percent) have a research group and one university reported a purpose-built space for staff L&T collaboration.

Staff are encouraged to participate in sector-wide professional learning opportunities in 95 percent (36) of the 38 responding universities. The vast majority referred to conference attendance. Other opportunities referred to include: social learning via digital media; fellowships; graduate programs; webinars; peer review; membership of committees; cross-institutional workshops/symposia; scholarship; ANZATS learning and teaching stream; Advance HE fellowships, Epigeum courses and MOOCs.

Next steps in L&T professional learning

(Ques 19)

Eighty-two percent (31) of the 38 institutions surveyed outlined their university's next steps for L&T professional learning. While there is little in common among the responses, promotion, a cohesive professional development strategy, a teaching capability/development framework and fostering more ways to recognise L&T professional learning were mentioned by more than one university.

General university data

Thirty seven of the 38 respondents provided general university data. Eighty-seven percent (33) of the universities surveyed have multiple campuses with the number ranging from one to 10, an average of 5.5 campuses with the most common number of campuses being five and 10.

In the June 2019 survey respondents were asked to provide full-time equivalent staff numbers. In the December 2018 survey respondents were not asked to provide staff numbers. Therefore, the data provided in this paragraph is collated only from that provided by the 27 universities responding to the June 2019 survey.

The number of staff ranges from 168 to 10,000 with an average of 3,006 staff per university.

It is not clear from the student numbers provided if they are full time equivalent or not, or, for at least one dual sector university, if they include only HE students. In terms of student numbers provided by the 37 responding universities, the number of student ranges from 735 to 90,000 with an average of 33,939 students per university.

Survey results summary: Part 2

Thirty-six universities (95%) reported providing a total of 100 L&T professional learning programs for their staff. Three universities provided one program, six universities provided two programs, 22 universities provided three programs, three universities provided four programs and two universities provided five programs. Below the programs are categorised into five groups: graduate certificates; teaching induction; sessional staff; Advance HE fellowships and Other.

Universities with graduate certificates/diplomas in L&T

Forty-seven percent (17) of the 36 responding universities provide a graduate certificate/diploma in HE L&T. These are award courses, which require assessment. One university provides two graduate certificates making 18 programs reported on in this section. All of the courses are called graduate certificates but one is called a graduate diploma. The courses require the completion of four units, usually across one to two years, with one university not indicating the number of units and

reporting that it takes approximately three years to complete and another saying that it takes one semester to complete. Nine courses are offered online, eight in blended mode, and one in blended and online. Six universities offer the course twice a year, three reported that access was ongoing and eight courses are offered annually. Two courses offer different units in different semesters. Eight of the courses are not compulsory for staff. The other 10 courses were compulsory for at least some staff including: teaching-focussed staff; new academic staff on probation; staff in one College and staff on probation at an international campus. One of those courses reported that the first unit was compulsory for staff on probation.

All are funded by the university which likely means that the course is free for staff. Workload credit is not given for six of the 17 courses, while it is given to those enrolling in the other 12 graduate certificates. One of those universities reported that while in theory staff can access 100 hours per unit, only one staff member in five years has been able to do so. One university specified the credit was 50 hours a semester, another 30 hours in total, while another reported that the credit was three hours a week per unit.

All but one university required the development of a portfolio in their course and all but four of the courses are provided by central L&T staff. The exceptions are provided by a Faculty/College. All programs have participant data recorded in some way and examples given are: enrolment system, probation system, staff development plan, request for leave, and transcript system.

Universities with teaching induction programs

Twenty-five (69%) of the 36 universities which responded to this question reported that they provided a teaching induction. Programs were taught from one day to over one year, with program duration being: one year – one; one semester – eight; 10 weeks – two; six weeks – one; sixty hour – one; five days – two; 3 days – two; and 1 - 3 days – seven. One respondent did not provide duration information for their program.

Fourteen programs are offered in blended mode, six fully online, two in face to face mode, two in face to face as well as online mode and one in face to face, blended and online. All programs are taught each semester. The program is compulsory in 12 of the 25 universities (48%) with three of those reporting that it is linked to probation. The programs are not award bearing programs, however 13 (52%) include assessment with one of those being optional. All but one is funded by the university, with the exception using the free online MOOC, Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching. Two of the funded programs also use the MOOC as their teaching induction program having imported the MOOC into their learning management systems.

Workload credit is provided in four universities, portfolios are developed in 15 programs and all of the programs are provided or supported by the central L&T unit. Program outcomes are not recorded in seven universities and one university provided no response to this question, with 15 universities recording the outcomes. Outcomes are recorded in probation, HR central L&T unit systems and one in Faculty and central L&T unit systems.

Universities with programs that support staff to apply for Advance HE fellowships

Five universities have one specific program that supports staff to apply for an Advance HE fellowship of some level. Two universities, QUT and Griffith, have three programs that staff can do in order to receive an Advance HE fellowship of some level. The QUT teaching foundations program also gives staff who participate (it is not compulsory) the option to do an assessment which, if done successfully, results in an AFHEA. Griffith University staff who complete their Graduate Certificate also receive a FHEA. All programs are funded by their university. The University of the Sunshine

Coast program has workload credit associated with their program, and all but two programs include a portfolio. The central L&T units provide the programs and four universities record the outcome of the program, with one providing staff with a badge for successfully completing the program.

Universities with programs that support sessional staff

Six (17%) of the 36 universities reporting programs provided professional learning programs designed specifically for sessional staff. They vary from 1.5 hours to one day in duration. Three of the universities provide their program face to face with one of those also providing an online option. Two programs are provided in blended mode and one is fully online. Five of the programs are provided every semester with one of the programs being compulsory for sessional staff. The programs are not award programs and are not assessed. The universities fund their programs which Deakin University reported meant that all staff are paid to attend and ECU indicated that some staff are paid to attend. VU and Western Sydney provide workload credit for the program, which likely means that their staff are also paid to attend. Four of the programs do not include the development of a portfolio while two programs encourage but do not require it. All programs are provided by the central L&T unit, three universities record attendance in central systems, while one university indicated that the pay roll system would include a record of attendance.

Universities with other professional learning and teaching programs

Twenty-nine universities provided 42 other L&T professional learning programs, with 11 universities providing two programs, one university providing three programs and the other 17 universities having one each. The programs include:

- Learning management systems (3),
- Engaging learners online (4),
- Curriculum design for learning (2),
- Effective communication (1),
- Peer mentoring for teaching award applicants (1),
- Academic internship for PhD students (1),
- Strategic L&T faculty programs (1),
- Annual L&T symposium of 3 – 4 days (1),
- Scholarships for L&T projects (1),
- Cooperative Learning programs (2),
- ECulture where staff present unpublished research, best teaching practice and case studies (1),
- Undergraduate and postgraduate research and supervision practices (1),
- One day courses (1),
- Short sessions/workshops on specific topics (11),
- Teaching focussed programs (6),
- ADEPT developing educators pathway (1),
- Continuing PD Environment (1),
- Mid career academic development program (1),
- Welcome to SCU (1), and
- Advanced Certificate in L&T (1).

These programs are non-award programs with 17 (40%) of the 42 programs including assessment and 18 (43%) using portfolios. They engage staff from half an hour to a year, and are taught in all F2F, blended and online in roughly equal numbers, with some university responses suggesting multiple modes are offered for the programs.

Seven programs are compulsory for different groups of staff. Four programs provide workload credit, all programs are funded by the university and 40 of the 42 programs are provided by the central L&T unit (sometimes with assistance from faculties), with one of those programs supporting faculty mentors to support staff. Two programs are outsourced.

Appendix 1: Survey questions

General data questions

University name

Number of campuses

Number of EFT staff

Number of students

L&T central unit name

Contact details of person completing the survey

Professional learning questions

1a. Is learning and teaching focused professional learning/development governed by policy?

1b. Name of policy and link if available.

2a. Is learning and teaching focused professional learning/development referenced in the enterprise agreement?

2b. Comments.

3a. Is learning and teaching focused professional learning / development a requirement for passing probation?

3b. If yes, is this requirement ‘enacted/enforced/actual’ or is it more a guideline?

4a. Is learning and teaching focused professional learning / development a requirement for promotion?

4b. If yes, is this requirement ‘enacted/enforced/actual’ or is it more a guideline?

5a. Is learning and teaching focused professional learning / development part of annual goal setting conversation with supervisor?

6a. Is engagement with professional learning / development recorded in any university system institutionally, e.g. HR?

7a. How many staff (EFT) in your centre and across the university are designated to provide learning and teaching focused professional learning to colleagues?

7b. Please indicate their different titles, number of staff (EFT) with those titles, and where they are situated in the university structure?

7c. If multi-campus, do staff service all campuses?

8a. Are staff encouraged/required to record professional learning individually e.g. in a portfolio?

9a. Does your university employ teaching focussed or teaching only academics?

9b. If so what is the actual title of that role?

9c. If so, please provide a link if the award is identified in the EBA or in policy.

10a. Is success /positive engagement in learning and teaching celebrated or recognised annually? If so, how (for example university/faculty/school teaching awards or celebrations, notices, social media, website)?

11a. In this question, we are seeking to determine what support your institution provides for staff to apply for an Advance HE Fellowship. Please tick all relevant boxes.

11b. If your university does not currently provide support for staff to apply for Advance HE fellowships, has the university considered it and decided against it, or is the university considering the possibility?

11c. If you know how many of your staff have Advance HE fellowships, please indicate the number here.

12a. Does the university articulate the meaning of teaching quality?

12b. If yes, describe any indicators, standards or framework used? e.g. UK Professional Standards Framework or the Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards.

12c. If teaching quality is articulated in a learning and teaching policy or within probationary or promotion policy please indicate the policy and the web link if available.

13a. Does the university report teaching quality?

13b. If yes, to whom does the University report this? Regularity of report? Action from report? Web link if available

14. Does the University have goals/targets (or do individuals have KPIs) regarding the recognition of teaching or teaching quality?

15a. Does the university have a community of practice, academy or equivalent for staff that actively promotes and supports effective learning and teaching practice?

15b. Description, number of members and stated purpose/terms of reference, if the information exists.

16. Does the university have an internal learning and teaching awards and/or grants program or equivalent for staff that actively promotes and supports effective learning and teaching practice?

17a. Are staff encouraged to participate in sector-wide professional learning opportunities?

17b. Description of activity e.g. Fellowships, Open courses, conference attendance.

18a. Are there other ways the University seeks to recognise effective teaching practice?

18b. If yes, please list, e.g. bespoke titles, specialised secondments, additional time allocation or resources for teaching, teaching only appointments, specific criteria for promotion, research and publications about teaching, benchmarking, specialised review processes.

19. What is the university's next step / plan for professional learning?

Learning and teaching program questions

Name

Description

Duration

Mode

Frequency

Compulsory and if so for whom?

Assessed?

Award (accredited)?

Funded and if so by the university?

Workload credit provided?

Who provides the program?

Recorded in university system? If so, please comment on how.

Other comments.