ADA Consultation Summary Report

Executive summary

This report summarises the responses of UQ Associate Deans Academic to interview questions about the needs of new academics and their perceptions of the future *Teaching@UQ* program (including: time commitment, mode of interaction, collaboration, implementation, attendance requirements, use by the institution, their T&L champions, and success indicators).

The key implications able to be drawn from interviews with the ADAs were that an orientation needs to be:

- mandatory ('everyone is expected to complete')
- nuanced to meet the needs of UQ's diverse teaching staff
- offered face-to-face, with some online components
- more than one session
- organised and tailored to be a faculty-centred model
- not just foundational teaching and learning, but contextualised to UQ's policies, frameworks, and operational systems
- supported by a 'landing' web page that provides resources and links to school, faculty and University teaching pages

Suggested measures of success of the *Teaching@UQ* project included:

- typical metrics (participant evaluation surveys, SECaT improvements)
- cultural and climate changes (common language about teaching, more motivated and passionate teachers, flourishing teaching networks, peer observation operating)
- observable difference in approaches to teaching (ECP data, observation records)
- increased effective use of available systems, policies, processes and technologies (fewer issues)

ADA Consultation process, problem definition and caveats

In April 2015 UQ Associate Deans Academic (ADA) were consulted about the training to support teaching and leaning needs of academic staff new to UQ. Specifically they were asked:

- What new staff struggled with and would benefit from learning about
- The balance of generic vs faculty specific focus they would like to see in a teaching induction program
- How the program would complement existing programs and networks
- Whether they saw such a program as mandatory
- The amount of time they foresaw new academics spending on an induction program
- The mode of delivery
- The role of the program in professional development
- Champions to include in the program and
- The indicators of success for an induction program

See Appendix 1 for a copy of the questions and interview format.

One-hour structured interviews were conducted with the ADAs (including one Deputy ADA) in their offices. The interviews were led by the *Teaching@UQ* project leader Julie Duck and were attended by a note-taker from ITaLI. Summary notes were drafted and sent to the interviewees for review and verification; several returned these summaries with minor revisions.

This summary attempts to draw out the areas of agreement that emerged from these interviews and also draws attention to the unique differences and demands on faculties in regards to teacher preparation. Where possible comments have been organised by the frequency with which they were mentioned.

Problem definition

There was a shared understanding of issues around induction to teaching and learning. ADAs spoke of *a real need for Teaching@UQ* because most new T&R staff *are underprepared for teaching and learning*, some having *no teaching experience* or *have not taught for a long time,* or *have little understanding of UQ policy and systems*. There are *expectations that they* (the beginning academic) *can quickly move into teaching*. At present *they have nowhere to go for help and it is very difficult, they don't know the basics and run into problems*. They *need a deeper program* and *real introduction to teaching* that *sign-posts how to improve teaching*, through an *evidence–based* program and process, that *everyone is expected to complete*, and through which *recognition for efforts* are rewarded more formally. Teaching is *a core business for UQ* and thus we need to *create the visible face of teaching,* we need to be *setting up expectations at the outset around peer review and involvement* (in teaching)*.

Staff diversity

ADAs stressed that an induction program would need to account for the range and diversity of 'new' teaching staff at UQ. They identified:

- Experienced teachers versus those with no (or very little) experience of teaching
- The diverse roles and ranges of experience that teachers have:
    - Teaching Focussed, Teaching & Research, Research Focussed classifications

- Clinical academics and clinical professionals
- Industry professionals newly employed as lecturers
- Post-docs (becoming academics)

Faculty diversity caveat

It should be noted that, although ADAs have similar roles, the faculties in which they work differ in many respects, including the:

- organisation of schools, institutes and programs
- financial and human resources for teaching and learning (T&L)
- T&L priorities
- culture of T&L (variation in history, scope and depth of T&L activities), and
- experience of the ADAs themselves

These differences are reflected in interviewee responses and are particularly apparent in the range of needs of the different approaches to teaching identified across all faculties.

Summary of responses to the key questions

A summary of responses to key questions is reported below. They are grouped into four areas:

- Training needs of new academics
- Program implementation and delivery
- Evaluation
- Future communication

Training needs of new academics

ADAs views on the needs of new academics can be framed into **two major content themes**:

1. **Teaching and learning enhancement** that included subthemes:
   - Curriculum planning (structural alignment/using ECPs)
   - Pedagogy of teaching
   - Assessment
   - Blend of theory, principles and practice on how people learn and *how curriculum, pedagogy and assessment link together*
2. **Basic professional knowledge and skills** that included subthemes:
   - Policies and procedures (student charter, teaching, assessment, equity)
   - Course and student management
   - Mastering broader university processes and systems, and
   - Career development support (minor theme)

Program implementation and delivery

ADAs envisaged in the implementation and delivery of the program, that:

- The project needs to be clear about its scope and ambitions
- It becomes a mandatory '*part of* (an institutional) *pathway', a 'stepping stone*' that can be '*built into expectations around promotion*' and review
- Is tailored to the level of experience and diverse roles of academics
- Generic content would be introduced via a centrally organised and presented program that is extended and contextualised by Faculty specialists. Views about what exactly is generic and specific require further clarification
- Tailors to existing programs where they operate (one faculty has a formal program, two faculties have programs targeting specific groups)
- Prompts the introduction and development of further professional training as well as the creation of teaching networks where none currently exist (most faculties)
- Starts in the academic's first semester (*Catch new staff at the beginning before they are overwhelmed*) and includes an introductory session and continues with at least one follow up session(s). Views about length and spread of training varied from a couple of hours to a full day(s) spread over the semester or year, with the amount of time dependent on whether the new to UQ staff member was an experienced teacher or a beginning teacher
- Is delivered face-to-face, across campuses, and includes online components, especially for specialist teachers unable to easily access centrally delivered training
- Is delivered by experienced academics from across all disciplines with a reputation for an engaging teaching style and by other professionals with specific T&L and technical expertise.

- It includes a *Teaching@UQ* 'landing' page that provides resources and links to faculty/school 'teaching' pages

ADAs varied in their views about the following:

- Views about length and spread of training varied and the preferred method of delivery varied by faculty, depending on need and capacity. This topic requires further clarification.
- Views about the use of *Teaching@UQ* for formative and summative evaluations of performance. This topic requires further clarification.

Identified teaching and learning champions
This information was collected and stored as a project resource.

Evaluation
ADAs spoke of a **range of indicators** that could be used over the short and longer term to evaluate project outcomes including:

- surveys
- workshop evaluations
- existing UQ T&L metrics, and
- external performance metrics

They spoke in particular about **impacts on UQ culture and climate**, wanting to see:

- more engagement in communities of learning
- a common language and agenda around teaching
- more people applying for T&L awards, and
- more staff feeling that teaching can complement their research

Specific **changed behaviours** they hoped to see were:

- Increased confidence (knowledge, ability, skills)
- Increased support-seeking and a feeling of being supported
- More enthusiastic, 'passionate' teaching that is more imaginative, uses a range of approaches, and is more innovative

From a **management perspective** they hoped to see:

- Reduced issues/mistakes with ECPs
- Better designed and run courses
- Positive (and improved) SECaT scores
- More people seeking T&L professional development opportunities

From the **student perspective** they hoped to see:

- Improved indicators (course quality, integrity measures, student experience)
- More participation and engagement (attendance, course completion)

From the **faculty perspective** they hoped to see:

- Culture change (feeling that teaching is valued and more visible and vibrant)
- Increased number of grant and T&L awards applications
- Fewer complaints and problems with assessment

From the **broader university** perspective they hoped to see:
- The project endorsed in policy and procedures framework via T&L committee
- Better expectations of performance around teaching
- Constructive alignment of rhetoric and actions at all levels

Future communication
- ADAs and T&L committees would have future opportunities provided to input with regard to the needs of new academics and the proposed curriculum and implementation of the program
- Dissemination of *Teaching@UQ* interim report to ADAs and T&L committees
- ADAs and T&L committees to be kept informed and updated on each stage of the project
- Compilation of 'Needs of new academics' from Survey and ADA interview summary disseminated for review and input by T&L committees

Appendices

Appendix 1
ADA Consultation 1st round

Name:_____

Date:_____ Time:_____ Room: _____
How: Julie to claim dates. Notetaker provided.

Plan: 50 minutes, face to face.

Quickly: Introduce the scope of Teaching@UQ. 1-pager (attached to invite). Consultative approach.

Explain: Transparency --> We will provide you with a summary for comment following this meeting. We will also be publishing summary of de-identified interview themes on our website. Would you like a copy sent to you?

<u>**Questions**</u>

1. **What are the main things your new academic staff need? What do they struggle with? What would they benefit from?**

    1.1. What balance of generic teaching and learning focus versus a UQ- or Faculty-specific focus would you foresee?
    1.2. What does your faculty have in place for new academics at present?
    1.3. How can the Teaching@UQ complement the network support or Professional Development that exists in your faculty?
    1.4. Would your faculty see this as a mandatory program?

2. **What amount of time would you expect new academics to spend on the Teaching@UQ program? What spread of time: over a semester / over a year?**

3. **What mode of delivery would you favour? Online, face to face, a balance of both or mostly one or the other?**

4. **What model (e.g. workshop plus peer support plus mentor) would you prefer? How would this model involve collaboration with the Faculty? Who would you foresee delivering in the face to face <u>AND</u> online components of the program to your Faculty members?**

5. **Do you see the Teaching@UQ program as a pathway or step into more professional development?**

6. **Do you have any champions of teaching and learning within the Faculty who you would like involved in the project curriculum development/implementation?**

7. **What would be the indicators of success for the Teaching@UQ program?**

    7.1. In the short term, what would your new academics be doing differently?
    7.2. In the short term, how would students be benefitting from the program? What difference would you expect to see in student participation and learning?
    7.3. How would teaching and learning in the Faculty be different in five years time?
    7.4. How would teaching and learning in the broader university be different in five years time?

8. **Would you like to expand further on any of these points? Do you have anything else you would like to add?**

9. **How do we best communicate with you in future about Teaching@UQ activities?**

End. Thank you for your valuable time. We will supply a summary of the interview for comment very soon.