Teaching induction program evaluation: A research intensive institution perspective

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In response to organisational and staff needs identified through a needs analysis, an institution-wide induction program for new teaching staff was piloted at a large research intensive institution.

Program components and objectives are described below and data from a preliminary evaluation of program pilot are presented.

Program Comprises

- Content that meets academics explicitly articulated needs.
- Interactive face-to-face sessions supported by online resources and activities.
- The use of effective and experienced UQ teaching staff as presenters.
- Network building activities with a modularised program structure to accommodate staff diversity.
- Online resources (e.g. ‘just in time, just for me’ toolkit) to support teachers in their first semester.
- Mentoring and peer observation linked to existing initiatives.

Training Provides

- Evidence-based foundational teaching and learning (TL) advice, focusing on how students learn best.
- Contextualised instruction on UQ’s policies, frameworks, and operational systems used in schools and faculties.
- Links to staff with key teaching and learning roles at school and faculty level.
- Networking opportunities at multiple levels (e.g. school, discipline, faculty, institution).
- A springboard that encourages further and ongoing professional development in teaching and learning.
- Support for documenting evidence for performance reviews and recognition of TL at multiple levels (e.g. school, faculty, institution, national).
- Connection and support over the semester.

Program Objectives

As a result of participating in the program, academics new to teaching will be prepared to:

- Understand some essential features of the teaching and learning landscape at UQ
- Teach for learning
- Manage classes effectively
- Use assessment for learning
- Use relevant sources of support for teaching and learning at UQ
- Continue to improve their teaching
- Gather and use evidence of their teaching

Results & Interim Findings

‘Should be offered to all academics’ (Program participant)

Participants: 34 academics participated in the pilot program from all faculties and one institute with a range of teaching experience (0 to 20 years).

Improvements needed:

- More time for discussion
- More interaction with the team between sessions (online and face to face)
- Inclusivity – engaging the more experienced participants
- More online resources

Strengths of the program:

- Comprehensive, integrated overview
- Awareness raising and a great introduction
- Links to a community of peers and interdisciplinary contact

Figure 1: Participants’ mean reported feeling of being positive toward the course, confident about, and prepared for upcoming teaching responsibilities increased over the course of the semester. Scale: 1 = Strongly feelings of disagree, 5 = Strongly agree

‘Made me realise the importance of the learning objectives in electronic course profiles, not just tick a box’ (Session 1)

‘This was excellent in critiquing my own work’ (Session 2)

‘The practical content of today’s class (examples, policy, guidelines) were particularly useful. Well thought through, good balance of content and discussion’ (Session 3)