The mission of the ITL is to work with members of the University community to enhance and help assure the quality of teaching and student learning experiences.
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1. Introduction and summary

2006 was a year of transition for the Institute for Teaching and Learning. I was appointed as Director early in 2006 and took up the position in October, nearly two years after the departure of the previous Director, Associate Professor Michael Prosser. I would like to thank Professor Michael Jackson, the Acting Director during the interim period, and the ITL staff who supported him. Their achievements, documented in more detail in the following pages of this report under headings of academic development activities, research and service to the community, are substantial. Some highlights of the year include:

The co-ordinating and processing of over 90,000 responses from students on their learning experience and the provision of a discussion forum containing representatives from each faculty (the Evaluation and Quality Assurance working group) to assess how these data might be used to improve student learning.

Tai Peseta gained her doctorate and received a NSW Institute for Educational Research Award for Outstanding Research for her thesis Learning and Becoming in Academic Development: an autoethnographic inquiry. With colleagues in the Faculty of Economics and Business she was awarded a national Carrick Citation for an Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning.

University-wide Strategic Working Groups in the areas of research-enhanced learning and teaching, generic graduate attributes and evaluation and quality assurance provided a forum through which university strategic issues were addressed and senior staff in teaching and learning leadership positions were able to develop through sustained collaboration with colleagues and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching).

Christine Amsar returned from secondment in July 2006 and continued her research into the Indigenous academic experience, working collaboratively with both Aboriginal and Māori collaborators.

ITL continued to work strategically with USyd eLearning. This included managing the strategic eLearning working group, which looked at emerging areas of growth in eLearning in the student experience at the University. The working group was relocated to the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor during 2006 to mirror new responsibility lines for integrating eLearning into both the academic and infrastructure portfolios of the University.

Angela Brew continued her work on the relationship between teaching and research, and had the book entitled Research and Teaching: Beyond the Divide published by PalgraveMacmillan.

In 2006 the Institute staff had one book, 3 book chapters and 17 refereed journal and conference articles published. They gave a total of 25 presentations and received one Carrick teaching development grant and two continuing ARC research grants.

Simon Barrie was a member of a team awarded a Carrick grant to investigate the development of generic attributes in Engineering students and with his colleague Dr Tai Peseta he received an award for teaching excellence from the faculty of Education & Social Work.

Over 300 staff of the university participated in formal ITL coursework programs related to teaching and learning. ITL staff also contributed to a range of faculty-based teaching development forums.

The ITL was again invited to discussions on teaching development at the annual meeting of the Oxford Network, a consortium of 12 international research-intensive universities, led by the University of Oxford and held at the University of Utrecht in 2006.

Keith Trigwell
Director ITL
Professor of Higher Education
2. Academic Development Activities

In 2006 the ITL engaged in a series of strategic academic development activities that ranged from coursework with (mainly) early career staff on introductions to teaching, through to university-wide projects with a focus on senior teaching and learning leaders, and on university strategic initiatives (such as research-enhanced learning and teaching). A review of each of these is addressed in this section.

2.1 Courses and Programs

2.1.1 Principles & Practice of University Teaching & Learning program

In 2006 a total of 150 staff completed the ITL’s Principles and Practice of University Teaching & Learning (P&P) program. The program is both an introduction to teaching and to the teaching and learning orientation of The University of Sydney. Participants comprised faculty-based academics as well as staff with teaching responsibilities from central units, and of fee-paying participants from outside the University.

The program continues to receive positive feedback. In 2006 77% of participants Agreed or Strongly Agreed that overall (they were) 'satisfied with the quality of the program'. Evaluation data for this and other ITL programs are included in Appendix 2.

2.1.2 Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education)

The Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education) supports university teachers in developing their professional expertise as teachers in order to better understand and enhance the learning of their students. It provides them with opportunities to reflect on educational theory and student learning research from the perspective of their own teaching experiences through the scholarship of teaching and learning.

All four units of study are offered through the Faculty of Education and Social Work and are taught by staff of the Institute. In 2006 36 university staff graduated from the Certificate course.

As a result of feedback received during the 2006 program, a decision was taken by ITL staff to review the effectiveness of the program, particularly the units of study in second semester. The review is being conducted in 2007.

Evaluation data for this and other ITL programs are included in Appendix 2.

2.1.3 Research Higher Degree Supervision Development Program

In May 2006, the Development Program for Research Higher Degree Supervision was re-launched. Along with substantially updated content, the program was launched with a new web interface. The program houses a number of resources...
related to university policy on supervision and training; it retains its strong commitment to a reflective and scholarly based approach to improving research supervision; and it now links to external online resources such as those developed by the consortium of universities in the for Improving Research Supervision and Training (fIRST) group. One of the major features of the new website is that it provides a more personalised learning experience for supervisors undertaking the program.

There were 119 new registrations in 2006 bringing the total number of academics enrolling in the program to 635, since the web-based version of the program began in 2002. An additional 12 supervisors completed the Recognition module in 2006 bringing the total number of completions at the end of the year to 68.

2.2 Projects

2.2.1 Evaluation and Quality Assurance (EQA)

1. The ITL's EQA Project continued to support the university through the collection and reporting of data on the quality of student learning experiences through surveys such as the CEQ, the PREQ, the SCEQ, the SREQ, the USE and the Feedback for Teachers surveys.

2. The ITL worked with the university community to contribute to institutional initiatives to assure and benchmark the student learning experience with national and international partners.

3. ITL investigated how the university community is responding and using USE data to plan improvements. This included a review of faculty processes for collecting and responding to USE results and an investigation of how individual academic staff are using the survey data in the context of the different faculty systems. This information will help in planning strategies to support better use of such data.

4. The ITL developed and introduced an expanded range of Feedback for Teachers surveys. These surveys were developed to provide confidential feedback to individuals on their teaching in particular contexts: teaching at a distance, teaching online, teaching in clinical settings, teaching in laboratories.

5. The ITL continued to refine the extended SCEQ scales on E-learning, Research-led teaching and Generic Attributes and contributed to discussions in relation to the use of these scales as part of the University’s benchmarking activities.

Teaching evaluation service

1. Unit of Study Evaluation
   In 2006 ITL continued to support faculties in using the Unit of Study Evaluation (USE) system first introduced in 2001. In 2006 ITL processed 80,957 USE surveys for faculties and other units within the University of Sydney, a slight increase from 2005.

2. Feedback for Individual Teachers
   The ITL continued to support staff choosing to gather feedback on their own teaching through the Feedback for Teachers service. This service includes standardised scannable surveys, standardised and customised open response surveys, resources to support collegial peer review of teaching and teaching resources, and resources to support focus groups and structured group interviews.
In sum, the ITL prepared for the University community 2738 reports representing feedback from 90,934 respondents on the major survey forms. The following table gives the orders and individual forms processed for the core standardised surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Reports</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in Lectures</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>6612</td>
<td>2,171</td>
<td>80,957</td>
<td>2,725</td>
<td>90,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching in Tutorials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of Study Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**EQA Working Group**

The EQA Working Group worked towards the following goals in 2006:

1. Contribute to the University Teaching & Learning Plan to facilitate alignment between faculty plans and university plan.

2. Develop faculty strategies to implement the University’s response to issues identified in the first LTPF round.

3. Develop faculty level QA processes in relation to any university initiatives on assessment.

4. Members to contribute to the development of productive L&T benchmarking initiatives in their faculties.

5. Develop strategies to inform faculty students and staff about L&T QA processes in order to engage them as active participants.

6. Collect information about how faculties use EQA data in promotion.

The group met three times in 2006 and discussed the variations in faculty systems for gathering and responding to USE data and the different faculty awards processes and how these related to the university and Carrick awards. The group planned how members would contribute to a session on ‘Faculty Strategies to Assure Standards” as part of the forthcoming university Teaching and Learning Forum. They also discussed a report on the University of Queensland benchmarking data and agreed to investigate developing faculty level benchmarking projects using this data, and considered the preliminary data on how staff in faculties were responding to and using the USE data. The third meeting of the group for 2006 was convened by the PVC in response to the LTPF to discuss strategies to improve the quality and response rates on the CEQ surveys.

### 2.2.2 Generic Graduate Attributes (GGA)

The Strategic Working Group identified the following goals for 2006:

1. Begin a staged strategy to improve assessment of graduate attributes by starting with improving the writing of learning outcomes. Achievements included:
• Develop resources to support staff in writing learning outcomes that integrate generic attributes as the first stage in developing assessment that tests achievements of these attributes.
• Collect examples of learning outcomes from all faculties
• Develop a resource to support working group members in running sessions/discussion in their faculty on writing learning outcomes

2. Develop strategies to assure and reward implementation of generic attributes in units of study. Achievements included:
• Include as field in Faculty Unit of Study templates currently under development
• Support faculties in considering and responding to USE data on graduate attributes
• Establishing awards for teaching of generic attributes

3. Begin discussions to extend project to Attributes of RHD graduates and Attributes of Graduates of Postgraduate Coursework Degrees. **Achievements included:**
• Begin development of statement of attributes of graduates of Research Higher Degrees and Postgraduate Coursework degrees that articulates with undergraduate statement.
• Establish international research group.
• Initiate discussion with appropriate PG committees and groups in faculties and the university.

4. Finalise the development of a poster and brochure to help inform students of the generic graduate attributes.

A detailed report of the projects achievements in relation to these goals is available at: http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/graduateAttributes/Progressreport2006.pdf

**Other achievements:**

In addition to the above goals, the members of the Graduate Attributes Project successfully applied for TIES funding to support their work in several faculties. Through The University of Wollongong the project leader secured Carrick funding in partnership with two other universities to work at a national level on a project on developing the generic attributes of Engineering Graduates http://www.usyd.edu.au/learning/quality/carrick_grants.shtml. International interest in the University of Sydney’s uniquely research based approach to the area of graduate attributes continues to grow with several requests for international consultation and invitations to present plenary addresses at major conferences. There were several publications and presentations arising from the project in 2006. These are listed at: http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/GraduateAttributes/discussion_papers.htm

**2.2.3 Research-enhanced Learning and Teaching (ReLT)**

The ITL continued to support the University’s strategic initiatives to strengthen the links between research and teaching including encouraging and rewarding the scholarship of teaching. In 2006 the Strategic Working Group agreed new Terms of Reference and a change of name for the Working Group to better reflect its focus. The group prepared a policy on Research-Enhanced Learning and Teaching which was accepted by Academic Board at its meeting on 13th December 2006.
In 2006 the ITL Research-enhanced Learning and Teaching website was substantially updated to disseminate best practice. This included instigating a scholarship of learning and teaching database as well as a database on innovations in learning and teaching both of which are able to be added to by interested academics.

In 2006, the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) Professor Judyth Sachs commissioned a book to bring scholarship of learning and teaching initiatives in the University together. This was prepared to final draft form by the Project Leader. Chapters written by University of Sydney academics across the University were refereed by an international panel of reviewers from 10 countries.

Concerned about the implications of the scholarship of teaching and learning for the RQF, the Strategic Working Group corresponded with the DVC (Research) and the Chair of the University’s Research and Research Training Committee when she attended a meeting of the Working Group.

Other activities of the ITL in respect to this initiative included researching information internationally concerning procedures for dealing with ethical issues in undergraduate research. In pursuing this, a need to change rules regarding postgraduate coursework was identified. The ITL continued to investigate the needs, requirements and capacities of existing summer/winter scholarship schemes in providing opportunities for undergraduates to pursue research alongside academics. Investigations of the use of Web-logs for scholarship of learning and teaching discussions was also carried out in the ITL. Faculty USE items related to research-enhanced learning and teaching were investigated and shared and a set of questions about undergraduate research for researchers to use when visiting other universities on SSP was prepared. Information about Faculty websites on teaching and learning and the scholarship of teaching and learning was collated for sharing and inclusion on the ReLT website. The ITL also worked with Working Group representatives to share and extend opportunities for coursework students including undergraduates to participate in research within the curriculum in their various faculties.

2.2.4 The First Year Experience (FYE)

The ITL continues to be represented on, and active within, the First Year Experience (FYE) Working Group now being run as a cross-Faculty initiative. The ITL’s website on the FYE provides a range of resources for staff of the University who teach first year students.

2.3 Other activities

2.3.1 PhD Program

During 2006, six doctoral students were supervised by ITL staff. Four ITL staff acted as Supervisor and as Associate Supervisor. One student completed a PhD during the year.
2.3.2 Research and Development Seminar Program

Fortnightly research seminars provided a forum for academic and research staff with an interest in higher education learning and teaching to test ideas, share works-in-progress and conference papers. Topics in 2006 included: the role of education in the university, experiences of clinic-based learning, reflective learning in large groups, supporting online group learning, the scholarship of academic development, relationships between student learning and research-active teaching, dissemination of teaching innovations, and academic honesty.

2.3.3 Synergy

In collaboration with the university community, the ITL produced two issues of Synergy in 2006. Synergy is a paper and electronic medium through which university teachers can present scholarly work about their own teaching initiatives as well as a forum for communicating their explorations around student learning. Articles published in Synergy contribute to points on the University’s Scholarship Index. Synergy can be accessed at: http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/synergy.
3. Research

Research grants and work presented and published by ITL staff in 2006 is outlined in Appendix 3. Highlights of the year include:

• Receipt of $296,530 in grants from the ARC and the Carrick Institute
• The publication of one book and three book chapters
• A total of 17 articles published in international refereed journals
• Editorial work on two international journals
• 25 presentations at conferences and symposia.

This research continues to provide a scholarly basis for broader discussions of teaching and learning in the ITL’s academic development work.
4. Administration & service to the community

The ITL staff contributed to the work of many central and faculty-based University of Sydney committees where the research and development work described above is used to provide an experiential and evidence base for policy development.

Committees served in 2006

Academic Board
Academic Board Learning and Teaching Committee
e-Learning Working Group
Evaluation and Quality Assurance Working Group
Faculty of Arts Teaching and Learning Committee
Faculty of Arts Sub-committee: Teaching Excellence Awards
Faculty of Economics and Business Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee
Faculty of Economics and Business Sub-committee: Tutor Excellence Awards
Faculty of Education and Social Work Academic Programs Management Committee
Faculty of Education and Social Work Division of Graduate Studies Committee
Faculty of Education and Social Work Learning and Teaching Committee
First Year Experience Working Group
Generic Graduate Attributes Working Group
ICT Committee, Access and Support Working Party
Postgraduate Coursework Pedagogy Working Group
Research-enhanced Learning and Teaching Working Group
Sydney Welcome, Orientation and Transition (SWOT) Project Group
Teaching Improvement and Equipment Scheme grants selection committee
University e-Learning governance committee
University Management Reference Group for eLearning
University Learning and Teaching Spaces Committee
Working Party on Cultural Diversity in Learning and Teaching

Service to the wider (academic) community

All academic staff in ITL are members of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia. International contributions are made to the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and the Society for Research into Higher Education.
Appendix 1: Staff in the Institute in 2006

Academic staff
Ann Appleby Senior Lecturer (Jan – June)
Dr Christine Asmar, Senior Lecturer (July – December)
Dr Simon Barrie, Senior Lecturer (on SSP July-December)
Dr Angela Brew, Associate Professor
Dr Rob Ellis, Associate Professor and Director of eLearning (on secondment)
Dr Michael Jackson, Professor and Acting Director (January – September)
Dr Tai Peseta, Associate Lecturer
Dr Michael Prosser, honorary academic
Kim McShane, Lecturer
Dr Keith Trigwell, Professor and Director (October –December)

General staff
Silvana Daher, Administrative Assistant
Dr Paul Ginns, Survey Officer
Kelly Hong, Executive Officer
Brooke Hughes, Administration Assistant (part time)
Sue Robinson, Administrative Assistant
Jennifer Ungaro, Manager Administration and Finance
Rachel Williams, Web and Publications Manager
Appendix 2: Evaluation of academic development programs

Principles and Practice of University Teaching and Learning

The table below sets out responses to all 3 questions on the evaluation forms for 2006, broken down by each intake.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation item</th>
<th>February % Agree or Strongly Agree (n=58)</th>
<th>September % Agree or Strongly Agree (n=29)</th>
<th>November % Agree or Strongly Agree (n=48)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What I have learnt in the P&amp;P program will be useful to me in my work.</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The facilitators of the P&amp;P program effectively supported my learning.</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the P&amp;P program.</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table: Evaluation results from the ITL’s P&P programs in 2006

Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education)

In 2006 36 staff enrolled in, and completed EDPR5001 and EDPR5003, 37 in EDPR5002 and 35 in EDPR5011. The following Table indicates the number of staff completing the Unit of Study Evaluations and their overall satisfaction with each semester of the program. More detailed evaluations are available from the Institute.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sem</th>
<th>UoS</th>
<th>Overall satisfaction on USE (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>EDPR5001/EDPR5002</td>
<td>87% agreed or strongly agreed (n=26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>EDPR5003/EDPR5011</td>
<td>36% agreed or strongly agreed (n=27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Research Higher Degree Supervision Development Program**

Feedback from supervisors in 2006 who have engaged with the Independent Study Program (the ISP is comprised of 7 web-based modules) indicates a high level of overall satisfaction with the experience of studying the online materials. The modules are organized around the typical stages of a student’s candidature: a supervisor preparing themselves for the task of supervision through to the student completing the thesis.

Table 1: Feedback on individual modules in the new Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Description</th>
<th>Percentage agreement that learning outcomes had been achieved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1: Preparing for supervision (n=47, 43%)</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 2: Meeting your student (n=19, 22%)</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3: Managing the process (n=30, 49%)</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4: End of year review (n=17, 27%)</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 5: Helping your student to write (n=19, 32%)</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 6: Completing the thesis (n=22, 37%)</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 7: Recognition (n=5, 19%)</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A program of workshops also supported supervisors’ progress through the ISP. The ‘Understanding Research Supervision’ and ‘Gaining Recognition’ workshops were held twice per year; and the monthly 2 hour sessions continued in 2006. Across all the workshops, 93 supervisors participated, and 89% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with quality of the workshop.
Appendix 3: Research publications, presentations and grants

Publications

Books


Book chapters


Refereed journals: editors of whole issues


Refereed journals: articles


**Published conference papers**


**Unpublished doctoral dissertation**

Unpublished presentations: Conferences, seminars and keynotes


**Research and development grants**


Summary: This is a two year national study based at Wollongong University with colleagues from four universities. It investigates the development of particular generic attributes such as ‘systems thinking’ in engineering students.

2. Goodyear, P., **Prosser, M.** and **Ellis, R.A.**
Title: Learning through online and co-present discussion in higher education: expectations, experiences and outcomes

   2005: $76,000
   2006: $76,000
   2007: $76,000

Summary: This project will make a substantial contribution to international research in the fields of learning and teaching in higher education and learning and teaching with ICT. In practical terms, the project will provide evidence-based guidelines for the integration of ‘blended’ learning approaches, especially with respect to the ways ICT can support small group discussion activity. Scientifically, the project will add to our understanding of how students and teachers approach learning and teaching through discussion (co-present and online). Such knowledge is a vital, strategic asset given the growing economic importance of Australian higher education and of its international reputation for quality.


Title: Blended learning in schools, TAFE and universities: experience, principles, patterns and practice

   2005: $41,500
   2006: $86,500
   2007: $93,500
   2008: $48,500

Partner Organisation: Department of Education and Training

**APA(I) Award(s):** 1

Summary: Effective use of technology in education depends upon the teacher’s understanding of good ways to support learning. New uses of technology to improve learning are emerging constantly: the challenge is to share good practice. This project focuses on investigating the quality of blended learning experiences and using the outcomes to identify and share good practice using a format called a ‘design pattern’. Design patterns combine research-based evidence and the knowledge of experienced practitioners in a format which is relatively easy to communicate, learn and apply. They are not yet used in teaching with technology. We will generate and test design patterns for learning through discussion in technology-based and other classroom settings.