

LIVE the Future AGENDA 2020

Deakin University
Course Enhancement Guidelines
2014

for a brilliant education where students are and
where they want to go

1 Background and purpose of this document

Course enhancement commenced late 2012. It is a major initiative within Deakin's *LIVE the Future: Agenda 2020*. It is designed to ensure that courses are enhanced to enable graduates to be highly employable through unit and course experiences that are personal, relevant and engaging wherever learning takes place—on campus, in the cloud, in industry settings.

To get the initiative underway, the Course Enhancement Process¹ was initially designed and led by Deakin Learning Futures in 2012-13. A Deakin Learning Futures pod—about 9-10 staff with a range of expertise and skills—was informally allocated to support each faculty. This was a good way to start, but one centralised process can struggle to cater for faculties that have diverse disciplines, contexts and priority areas.

From 2014, Deakin Learning Futures pods have been formalised, and each pod leader (a senior lecturer) reports directly to the respective associate dean teaching and learning. While there are many commonalities in the way course teams and pods operate across all faculties, diverse cultures suggest nuanced differences across faculties.

Nevertheless, Deakin's Course Enhancement Process operates within the parameters of broad guiding principles. The purpose of this document is to communicate these guiding principles.

2 Overarching guiding principles

1. Courses are enhanced to ensure they comply with the **(Proposed) Higher Education Standards Framework**, and specifically improve:
 - Course engagement (intellectually challenging and engaging cloud and located assessment, resources and experiences)
 - Course effectiveness (outcomes such as graduate satisfaction and employability)
 - Course efficiency (ensuring sustainability and affordability).
2. The focus of this process is overall enhancement of whole courses (or majors within courses) rather than single units or sequences of units that do not comprise a major.
3. Deakin's course enhancement process generally has four major stages, and progress is monitored and reported quarterly to the Executive and Council through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) using these stages:
 - Stage 1: Scoping
 - Stage 2: Assessment and learning design
 - Stage 3: Resourcing
 - Stage 4: Final evaluation

Reports use the attached template and are due 1 March, 1 June, 1 September and 1 December.

4. Timelines are set by faculties, based on completing high quality course enhancement within the scope, resourcing and agreed goals, and ensuring all stages are completed. Course teams enhance courses on a continual basis—even so, this is not to be confused with Deakin's course enhancement process which, within *LIVE the Future*, is a finite process with an agreed commencement and completion date and during which extra resources are available.
5. In addition to faculty and school leadership and support teams, university-wide resources available to provide support to faculties include:
 - The Deakin Learning Futures pod staff. The pod works at the direction of the faculty ADTL. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is informed of progress and any issues arising or barriers to success. The role of the pod is to support all course enhancement.
 - Specific *LIVE the Future* funding. In 2014, this is \$500K per faculty, released Q1 and Q3 subject to progress. Faculties use these funds as they see best to make good progress, and provide high-level information to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) as to how the funds are used.

¹ www.deakin.edu.au/learning/course-enhancements

Guiding principles for Stage 1: Scoping

1. The purpose of Stage 1 is to ensure that the course enhancement process is well understood, and that appropriate goals are decided based on evidence. The final evaluation will be based on the goals decided during Stage 1.
2. A **designated leader**² (leader of the course enhancement process for the designated course) is assigned by the faculty from within the faculty: this will normally be a senior staff member such as the head or associate head of school, a head of discipline, the ADTL, a course director, and so on.
3. Stage 1 is preceded by a preparatory period during which the designated leader informs all members of the **course team** (everyone who teaches in a course or major) about the process, the objectives, the resources and the timing.
4. Stage 1 is an early opportunity to identify where the course team might require capacity building. Depending on the requirements, assistance is available:
 - within the faculty or from other faculties
 - from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - from other Deakin Learning Futures teams³
 - from other services including the Library and Deakin Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - strategic funds have been allocated to engage external experts on topics such as assessment, rubrics, work integrated learning.⁴
5. Stage 1 has a firm commencement date, and all members of the course team are engaged from that date.
6. The course enhancement goals are agreed based on:
 - evidence selected from the Course Evidence Portfolio⁵ by those leading the enhancement process. The selected evidence is always presented by those leading the course enhancement with the support and endorsement of an appropriate leader such as the head of school.
 - goals aligned with the *LIVE the Future* agenda that can be achieved within the time and resources available.
7. Formative evaluation commences in Stage 1: an expert, peer or peers are invited to provide feedback to the course team on the clarity and scope of their goals. Faculties may wish to use some of their \$500K to engage an evaluator for all stages. It is not appropriate for pod leaders to undertake formal evaluations.
8. The designated leader notifies the course team upon successful completion of Stage 1.

Guiding principles for Stage 2: Assessment and learning design

1. The purpose of Stage 2 is to ensure that:
 - course learning outcomes and standards are aligned with [Deakin's Graduate Learning Outcomes](#), professional accreditation requirements and standards, and relevant AQF specifications
 - the course has clearly articulated paths of outcome and attainment, with developmental scaffolding
 - unit learning outcomes are aligned with course learning outcomes
 - unit assessment tasks are policy compliant and aligned with unit learning outcomes
 - assessment and feedback are best practice and include an appropriate mix of authentic tasks, work-integrated learning, and peer and self-assessment, to promote evidence for employability.
2. Redesign of assessment and outcomes must be undertaken with some forethought as to how the redesign will be resourced. The following questions are preparatory to Stage 3:
 - what kinds of teaching experiences will be offered in the cloud or on campus, and what are the financial implications?
 - what kinds of learning resources will be offered in the cloud or on campus, and what are the financial implications?
3. It is likely that staff capacity building needs will emerge in this stage. The designated leader can find assistance:
 - a. within the faculty or from other faculties

² Terms in bold are defined in the parentheses following.

³ Contact Associate Professor Kay Souter, Director, Learning Environments, Research and Evaluation within Deakin Learning Futures.

⁴ Contact Siobhan Lenihan, Adviser to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

⁵ The Course Evidence Portfolio will be reviewed in partnership with faculties in 2014 to ensure it provides appropriate information.

- b. from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - c. from other Deakin Learning Futures teams⁶
 - d. from other services including the Library and Deakin Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - e. from external experts engaged by Deakin (see under Stage 1).
4. Formative evaluation continues in Stage 2: an expert, peer or peers provide feedback to the course team on the clarity of the course assessment and learning design.
 5. The designated leader notifies the course team upon successful completion of Stage 2.

Guiding principles for Stage 3: Resourcing

1. The purpose of Stage 3 is to implement the changes, including resourcing new learning models (eg a flipped classroom approach), new learning experiences (eg teaching with video conferencing), or refreshed digital learning resources (eg more digitally engaging learning resources).
2. Ideally, the resourcing stage will include a refreshing of all CloudDeakin unit sites to ensure they meet agreed minimum standards.⁷
3. Where possible, course enhancement resources are sourced from existing open educational resources.
4. Where digital resources are made by Deakin staff, including Deakin Learning Futures, these should be good quality, produced efficiently and designed for better learning outcomes. They must be compliant with copyright requirements, and meet accessibility needs.
5. Staff capacity building continues in Stage 3. The designated leader can find assistance:
 - a. within the faculty or from other faculties
 - b. from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - c. from other Deakin Learning Futures teams⁸
 - d. from other services including the Library and Deakin Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - e. from external experts engaged by Deakin (see under Stage 1).
6. Formative evaluation continues in Stage 3: an expert, peer or peers provide feedback to the course team on the quality of their learning experiences and resources, and their readiness for implementation.
7. The designated leader signs off when Stage 3 is successfully completed.

Guiding principles for Stage 4: Final evaluation

1. The purpose of Stage 4 is to evaluate the course enhancement process formally, based on the goals agreed in Stage 1, and drawing on the formative evaluations in Stages 1 to 3.
2. As per the earlier stages, faculties may wish to fund an expert, peer or peers to conduct a final evaluation.
3. The course team is encouraged to disseminate the outcomes of the course enhancement process through scholarly publications.⁹
4. The final evaluation should be based on evidence, including for example:
 - Part 1 of the Course Evidence Portfolio can provide a pre- and post-enhancement snapshot and will allow course teams to determine whether the enhanced course (or major) meets or exceeds the agreed goals.
 - Leading indicators such as SETU (soon to be eVALUate) can provide some indication as to whether students report improved perceptions of units.
 - Lagging indicators such as the Australian Graduate Survey can provide some indication as to whether graduates report improved perceptions of courses, but the effects of course enhancement will take several years to emerge from these indicators.
 - Staff and student and employer/industry focus groups.
5. The designated leader signs off when Stage 4 is successfully completed.

⁶ Contact Associate Professor Kay Souter.

⁷ A separate project ensuring the quality of unit sites in CloudDeakin is underway. Contact Dr Zosh Pawlaczek, Manager, Digital Learning within Deakin Learning Futures.

⁸ Contact Associate Professor Kay Souter.

⁹ Contact Dr Scott Beattie, Manager, Learning Research within Deakin Learning Futures or Director, CRADLE (appointment in train).

Example course enhancement reporting template.

Reports are due to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) on 1 March, 1 June, 1 September and 1 December. Templates pre-filled with the previous quarter's figures will be sent to the PVC one week before the reporting date. Only columns headed 'updated' will need filling in, with a brief explanation of any substantial differences from the previous report.

FACULTY OF EXAMPLE

SCHOOL	2013	2014 Q1	2014 Q2	2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2014 Q4 updated	2015 Q1	2015 Q1 updated	2015 Q2	2015 Q2 updated	2015 Q3	2015 Q3 updated	2015 Q4	2015 Q4 updated
SCHOOL NAME														
Stage 1	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 2	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 3	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 4	commenced													
	complete													
SCHOOL NAME														
Stage 1	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 2	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 3	commenced													
	complete													
Stage 4	commenced													
	complete													
TOTAL FOR FACULTY														
TOTAL COURSES (MAJORS) IN FACULTY														

Please explain briefly any substantial differences from the previous quarter's figures.

Signed _____

Date _____

Pro-Vice Chancellor