

Development of Academics and Higher Education Futures

Prepared by Peter Ling, Swinburne University of Technology and the
Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development



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Support for this report has been provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd.

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ISBN
978-0-9806691-3-8

Citations of this work should have the following format:
Ling, P. and Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development.
Development of Academics and Higher Education Futures, Vol. 1, Report,
Australian Learning and Teaching Council, Sydney, 2009.

Available online at: www.swinburne.edu.au/spl/dahef

Acknowledgements

Project leadership

Associate Professor Peter Ling in collaboration with the Council of Australasian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD).

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Jenny Allen

Special thanks to

Dr Elizabeth McDonald, Australian Learning and Teaching Council
Neridah Baker, Australian Learning and Teaching Council
Professor Owen Hicks, Australian Learning and Teaching Council
All participants who provided data for this project
Members of the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development
Forum participants

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Acronyms and abbreviations

| | |
|----------|--|
| ACODE | Australasian Council of Open, Distance and E-learning |
| AD | Academic Development |
| ADC | Academic Development Centre |
| ADU | Academic Development Unit |
| ALTC | Australian Learning and Teaching Council |
| ASHE | Association for the Study of Higher Education |
| ATN-TALC | Australian Technology Network – Teaching and Learning Committee |
| AUQA | Australian Universities Quality Agency |
| CADAD | Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development |
| Carrick | Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education |
| CPD | Continuing professional development |
| DEEWR | Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations |
| DEST | Department of Education Science and Training |
| EDC | Educational Development Centre |
| EPD | Education Professional Development |
| HEIs | Higher Education Institutions |
| HERD | Higher Education Research and Development Journal |
| HERDSA | Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia |
| IJAD | International Journal of Academic Development |
| IRUA | Innovative Research Universities Australia |
| ISL | Improving Student Learning |
| ISSOTL | International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning |
| L&T | Learning and Teaching |
| LTPF | Learning and Teaching Performance Fund |
| POD | Professional and Organizational Development Network |
| RQF | Research Quality Framework |
| SEDA | Staff and Educational Development Association |
| SHE | Studies in Higher Education |
| SOTL | Scholarship of Teaching and Learning |
| SRHE | Society for Research into Higher Education |
| T&L | Teaching and Learning |
| VLE | Virtual Learning Environment |

Glossary

Academic development

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, education and faculty development will be treated as synonymous. The term 'academic development' 'is used to refer to the developmental activities informed by the discipline of teaching and learning in higher education. This discipline is underpinned by research into university teaching and learning' (Fraser, 2005, p. 5).

Academic Developer

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, educational and faculty developers will be treated as synonymous. The term 'academic developer' and its synonyms typically describe staff in higher education institutions who work in dedicated academic development positions, but will extend to staff in non-dedicated positions who engage in academic development work.

Australian Learning and Teaching Council

'The ALTC promotes excellence in higher education by recognising, rewarding and supporting teachers and professional staff through a suite of award, fellowship and grant schemes. We aim to enhance the student learning experience by supporting quality teaching and practice'. (<http://www.altc.edu.au>). Prior to 2008, the ALTC was titled the Carrick Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

Casual staff

The terms 'casual' and 'sessional staff' are often used interchangeably. Please refer to the definition of 'sessional staff'.

Casualisation of teaching staff refers to a greater increase in sessional teachers at a university in relation to the increase in tenured teaching staff.

Education developer

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, educational and faculty developers will be treated as synonymous. Please refer to the definition of the term 'academic developer'.

Education development

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, educational and faculty developers will be treated as synonymous. Please refer to the definition of the term 'academic developer'.

Faculty developer

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, educational and faculty developers will be treated as synonymous. Please refer to the definition of the term 'academic developer'.

Glossary

Faculty development

For the purposes of this report the terms academic, education and faculty development will be treated as synonymous. Please refer to the definition of the term 'academic development'.

Learning and Teaching Performance Fund

The LTPF was introduced in 2005 to reward higher education providers that demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. The fund uses a set of national performance indicators based on the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) student satisfaction data, graduate outcomes in employment and further full-time study, and student attrition and progression data to allocate funds.

Sessional staff

'[S]essional teachers include any higher education instructors not in tenured or permanent positions. This includes part-time tutors or demonstrators, postgraduate students or research fellows involved in part-time teaching, external people from industry or professions, clinical tutors, casually employed lecturers or any other teachers employed on a course-by-course basis' (Percy *et al.*, 2008, p. 4).

Support staff

The term 'support staff' refers to staff who directly provide teaching and learning support to academics and or students including staff from the library, IT services, and language and learning services.

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Part 1 Executive summary and recommendations

The development of academics as teachers had its origins in Australia in the 1960s. National and international factors such as shrinking resources, increasing student numbers and diversity, quality imperatives and accountabilities, marketisation and competition, globalisation, technology, and the vocationalisation of the curriculum have driven changes in the sector in the intervening years. These drivers have changed the academic role significantly and as a consequence, the organisational arrangements for the development of academics.

In this context of change, emerging challenges and issues, and the increasing national interest in the quality of university teaching, there is a need to examine current arrangements for the development of academics as teachers and to re-evaluate how we organise for and approach academic development more generally. The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD), in collaboration with Swinburne University, applied to the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) to fund a scoping project designed to:

1. Document current approaches to development of academics and related activities in Australian universities including organisational arrangements and development strategies
2. Identify emerging issues and challenges that are likely to influence the development of academics in Australian higher education
3. Provide recommendations to begin to address the emerging issues and challenges

In brief the project methodology comprised undertaking a literature review concerning the development of academics both in Australia and overseas, conducting surveys of both Directors of academic development and academic developers, and conducting a one day Forum on the development of academics with representatives of all Australian universities. The full methodology is detailed in 2.2 of this Volume 1.

The following summary of the findings of the scoping project is presented in order of the three aims of the project outlined above.

Document current approaches to development of academics and related activities in Australian universities including organisational arrangements and development strategies.

Essentially there is no national organisational model of academic development (AD) in Australian universities. Most universities have a central academic development unit (ADU) but these vary in their remits with differing commitments to and provision of learning technology services, student learning services, general staff development and academic research development. ADU missions may also vary in terms of whether they contribute to areas such as institutional planning and policy development, quality assurance, evaluation, curriculum development, the reward and recognition of teaching staff, research, teaching and learning scholarship, the design and production of student learning materials and resources, and the design and provision of professional development materials and resources.

Part 1 Executive summary and recommendations

Over the last decade there has been a move towards hub and spoke models of AD in which there is a central unit complemented by individuals throughout the university who have some responsibility for the development of academics as teachers. These individuals include faculty based Associate Deans (Teaching), Faculty Teaching and Learning Coordinators, Teaching Fellows, Deputy and Pro Vice Chancellors (Academic) and Course Coordinators. The work of academic development is often supported by University and Faculty level Teaching and Learning Committees. While this somewhat distributed model is seen to be a useful and necessary approach to AD, it is not without its challenges as illustrated in the following section.

Identify emerging issues and challenges that are likely to influence the development of academics in Australian higher education

The issues and challenges which emerged from the scoping project are complex and in many cases interrelated. Often the issues identified are not new. Rather, they are known issues that remain unresolved and may constrain progress into the future. They can be summarised into the list below. Section 4.3, Volume 3 discusses the detail of each of the following issues.

1. The changing profile of the academic workforce
2. Academic role stress and role change
3. The changing nature of students
4. The impact of technology on learning and teaching
5. Teaching and learning in a global context
6. Recognising and rewarding good teaching
7. The coordination of academic development across the university
8. Conflicting values and priorities within universities
9. Academic development unit organisational instability
10. The profession of academic development
11. The resourcing of academic development units

Provide recommendations to begin to address the emerging issues and challenges.

Approaches to improving teaching in higher education are contested and highly dependent on the institutional context. This section of the report provides recommendations derived from the literature review and the analysis of data from surveys and from the Forum, all of which are discussed later in this volume of the report. The recommendations are grouped into three categories: those for the sector; those for the institution; and those for academic development units and developers.

A. Recommendations relating to sector-level agencies

On the basis of findings in the report and challenges identified it is recommended that:

- A1. The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funding and status be at least maintained. The ALTC is seen by those surveyed in this project to have raised the profile and status of learning and teaching in universities and to have contributed to the promotion of evidence-based teaching. Those surveyed reported that the ALTC has made a significant contribution to the development of academics as teachers and should be maintained.
- A2. The ALTC consider providing significant funding support (commensurate with the Promoting Excellence Initiative) to enable institutions to implement the metrics and tools developed within the Teaching Quality Indicators Project.
- A3. That a performance-based element of higher education funding relating to learning and teaching performance be maintained after cessation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF).
- A4. The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) consider working to extend its membership among academic developers and strengthen academic development networks.
- A5. The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) be supported by universities and the sector. CADAD has provided a vital network supporting academic development and undertaken important initiatives in surveying the field, defining and sharing good practice in academic development, and providing a voice for national concerns relating to the development of academics as teachers.
- A6. The ALTC consider providing funding for the development of national professional development programs for academic developers. The professional development of academic developers is a new area with programs in both the UK and the USA very recently being provided. The funding of the development of Australian national programs for professional development of academic developers, both early and mid-career, is essential for effective development in the field, particularly in view of the current age profile of academic developers. Such programs are unlikely to be developed at institutional level given the small number of AD staff in each institution.
- A7. That DEEWR consider mandating a higher education teaching qualification of at least postgraduate certificate level for anyone who teaches in government-supported higher education.
- A8. That the ALTC consider supporting the work of CADAD on the development of national key performance indicators for academic development and the associated measurement of impact and effectiveness of academic development activities.
- A9. That the ALTC consider supporting CADAD to identify best practice in the development and implementation of 'hub and spoke' models for academic development.
- A10. The ALTC consider consolidating the curriculum development resources that have already been developed in the sector and making them easily accessible through the ALTC Exchange.
- A11. That peak bodies and professional associations relating to learning, teaching and educational technologies (e.g. CADAD, ACODE, HERDSA, ASCILITE) consider jointly developing best practice approaches to the development of academics' skills in teaching with technologies.

Part 1 Executive summary and recommendations

B. Recommendations relating to institutions

It is recommended that institutions:

- B1. Identify key teaching development leadership roles that are distributed across the institution (Faculty Associate Deans Teaching, Course Coordinators, teaching development project managers, teaching and learning fellows/champions, etc).
- B2. Make explicit the responsibilities, outcomes, resources and support of/for each of the distributed roles.
- B3. Provide professional development in educational leadership for those engaged in educational leadership roles across the institution.
- B4. Articulate the distributed roles with a centrally-based academic development unit.
- B5. Explicitly identify appropriate communication channels between the distributed positions, and the distributed positions and the central academic development unit.
- B6. Take a holistic university-wide approach to professional development in learning and teaching which:
 - involves all providers of professional development within the institution;
 - develops academics across their increasingly diverse roles;
 - includes support staff (such as IT specialists, library staff, and academic skills staff);
 - involves both formal and non-formal professional development opportunities; and
 - pays particular attention to the provision of professional development in educational technologies.
- B7. Mandate a Graduate Certificate qualification in teaching in higher education for academic staff with less than two years teaching experience.
- B8. Act on the recommendations from the RED Report (Percy *et al.*, 2008) related to the support of sessional staff as teachers.
- B9. Incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation in professional development given the workload pressures on academics.
- B10. Provide more organisational stability to the models and arrangements for academic development to maximise long-term impact and efficiencies. In making decisions about change in this area take into account the costs of diverting academic development energy into reorganisation activities.
- B11. Ensure that there are 'academic' appointments in academic development and that research into learning and teaching is included in the role of academic developers to support evidence based-practice.
- B12. Establish and promulgate defined career paths for academic developers.

C. Recommendations relating to academic development units and academic developers

As key staff in the development of the teaching role of academics, academic developers have the potential to significantly influence the quality of teaching within the institution (although the direct relationship between quality teaching and academic development may not be able to be demonstrated in quantitative terms). It is recommended that academic development units:

- C1. Analyse CADAD's national key performance indicators for academic development for adaptation to specific institutions.
- C2. Include support staff in professional development opportunities.
- C3. Coordinate professional development activities with other professional development providers in institutions (e.g. HR, IT, Library).
- C4. Develop continuing professional development opportunities for all stages of the academic career: early, mid, and late career staff.
- C5. Take account of the multiple means and resources that academics employ in their development as teachers to also include informal activities. Therefore increasingly develop, document and evaluate *in situ* supports such as mentoring schemes, peer review, communities of practice, learning circles, opportunities for conversations about learning and teaching amongst colleagues, and sharing of best practice.
- C6. Engage in evaluation to measure effectiveness and impact of academic development activities over the longer term.
- C7. Have a critical involvement in a Graduate Certificate or other credentialed program in teaching in higher education.
- C8. Engage in research and scholarship to support evidence-based practice.
- C9. Provide professional development opportunities for academic developers, particularly in educational leadership and organisational change, and in the use of technologies that may be employed in learning and teaching.
- C10. Contribute to performance review systems where they relate to teaching.
- C11. Act on the recommendations of *The RED Report* (Percy *et al.*, 2008) in relation to sessional staff.
- C12. Academic development units provide professional development for academic staff relating to globalisation and internationalisation including curriculum and learning and teaching approaches issues.

Part 2 Project background

2.1 Rationale and aims

The application for an Australian Learning and Teaching Council funded scoping project was lodged by Swinburne University of Technology on behalf of the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD).

The scoping project was originally intended to identify:

- ▀ current approaches to the development of academics in Australia;
- ▀ scenarios for the future of Australian higher education; and
- ▀ academic development challenges and issues arising from the scenarios and from the present arrangements for the development of academics.

There is a variety of approaches to academic development and many strategies employed in the development of academics as teachers. As Fraser states 'Pivotal to education development is a recognition of the multi-layered context in which we work, the complex structures that both support and constrain our work, and the variety of processes and strategies that we develop to engage university teachers' (Fraser, 2005, p. 1) ¹.

While much research and development work has been written about the academic development of teachers in Australia over the last 15 years, this national study was designed to undertake a comprehensive overview of current approaches to the academic development role and capture emerging issues and challenges (Hicks, 1999; Dearn *et al.* 2002; Fraser, 2005; Lee *et al.* 2007).

However, given the dynamic context of higher education (Marginson and Considine 2000) and the changing nature of academic work (Coaldrake and Stedman 1999), a simple review, risked the charting of academic development for yesterday rather than for tomorrow. Many elements of the context of academic development are undergoing change. The UK report on The Future of Higher Education (Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2003) stated that higher education is under pressure due to the rising need for skills, the gap in social class among those entering university, international economic competition, difficulty retaining the best academics, and the need for stronger links with business and economy. The Horizon Report for 2007 (New Media Consortium and EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2007) states that there are significant shifts taking place in scholarship, research, creative expression, and learning that provide an unusual opportunity to impact the ways in which learners and scholars interact. As Land points out, for academic developers 'the terrain and responses to it are rendered more complex by the fact that both continue to change as the wider higher education environment continually changes, often in a non-linear fashion' (Land, 2004, pp. 191–192).

In this context there is a need not only to examine whether arrangements for development of academics might be improved but to re-evaluate how to organise for academic development and the strategies employed to develop academics in the light of current and emerging challenges for higher education in Australia.

¹ For the purposes of this report the terms 'academic', 'education' and 'faculty development' will be treated as synonymous, as will the terms 'academic', 'educational' and 'faculty developers'. The last group of terms will typically describe staff in higher education institutions who work in dedicated academic development positions, but will extend to staff in non-dedicated positions who engage in academic development work. The term 'academics as teachers' does not describe 'teaching only' academic positions in higher education. Rather it describes those broad and varied aspects of an academic's role that relate to the teaching of students.

The original aims of the project were to:

1. Determine current approaches to development of academics and related activities in Australian universities including organisational arrangements and development strategies;
2. Identify a range of scenarios for the future of higher education in Australia;
3. Identify implications and challenges arising from likely futures for Australian higher education; and
4. Provide some suggestions for response to the emerging challenges.

As the project progressed it became apparent that the complexity of the emerging issues mitigated against the project being able to develop a likely 'range of scenarios' for the future of higher education in Australia. To compensate for this the project documented emerging issues for the future development of academics in Australian higher education and provided recommendations for the challenges and issues. The project therefore has delivered the following:

1. Documented current approaches to development of academics and related activities in Australian universities including organisational arrangements and development strategies;
2. Identified emerging issues and challenges that are likely to influence the development of academics in Australian higher education; and
3. Provided recommendations to begin to address the emerging issues and challenges.

2.2 Methodology

The tools employed in data gathering included:

- ▶ Undertaking a review of literature and internet information on approaches to academic development in Australia and developed countries. This includes data derived from a major 2006 survey of educational development in the UK (Gosling 2008).
- ▶ Using a modified and online form of the UK survey instrument with Australian Directors of Academic Development and their equivalent in the higher education sector and analysing the data derived.
- ▶ Developing a similar online survey for Australian academic developers and others engaged in the development of academics as teachers and analysing the data derived.
- ▶ Conducting a Forum on the development of academics – with over 80 participants representative of all universities in Australia and involving academic developers and other key stakeholders – to assess survey data and provide further input.
- ▶ The use of an expert panel to identify challenges in the next five years for the development of academics as teachers and possible responses to those challenges, as a context for the development of recommendations by the Forum. The panel provided perspectives of various stakeholders, including academic leadership and discipline-based interests.

Part 2 Project background

- Discussion of interim findings with a sample of convenience of delegates at the following international conferences in June/July 2008: International Consortium for Educational Development, Salt Lake City USA; Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Windsor Canada; and Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, Rotorua, NZ.
- Information from the literature review and an analysis of data from the preceding surveys, Forum and discussions, informed the identification and collation of current and future issues and challenges and recommendations for the development of academics as teachers.

2.3 Project leadership, collaboration and reference group

The project was led by Associate Professor Peter Ling, Associate Dean (Academic Liaison), Swinburne Professional Learning, Swinburne University of Technology.

The project was conducted in collaboration with the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD). Dr Sharon Parry, was the President of CADAD during much of the project.

The primary author of the literature review was Ms Jenny Bird, Educational Designer, Teaching and Learning Centre, Southern Cross University. Jenny also contributed to other aspects of the report.

The following provided particular support as members of a reference group for the project and in providing individual advice:

- Professor Kym Fraser, Higher Education Consultant.
- Professor Yoni Ryan, Director of the Institute for the Advancement of University Learning, Australian Catholic University and Vice President of CADAD.
- Dr Allan Goody, Higher Education Consultant.
- Professor Margaret Hicks, Director Learning and Teaching Unit, the University of South Australia.
- Professor Lynne Hunt, Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning and Teaching), University of Southern Queensland.

Other significant contributors to the report were:

- Dr David Gosling, Higher Education Consultant, UK.
- Ms Jenny Allen, Swinburne Professional Learning, Swinburne University of Technology.
- Ms Chantelle Fernando, Swinburne Professional Learning, Swinburne University of Technology.
- Professor Owen Hicks, Senior Consultant, Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

Part 3 Context and Literature review

3.1 The origins of developing academics as teachers

Governments and universities in Australasia, the UK and North America have only in the last 40 years given formal purposeful attention to the development of academics as teachers. Prior to this the primary focus on professional learning for academics was on their development as researchers and scholars within their disciplinary field.

Up until at least the 1960s the prevailing assumption was that academics were appointed on their academic merits and that they would soon pick up the skills of teaching their discipline to their students (Prebble *et al.*, 2004, p. 12).

Most commentators locate the birth of interest in developing academics as teachers during the decade of the 1970s. This is true for North America (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006), the UK (Gosling, 2008) and Australasia (Lee *et al.*, 2007). The birth of academic development as an emerging field of professional practice is also, not coincidentally, located in the same decade:

Academic development emerged at a point of major policy change in the history of the university in the UK, Australasia and elsewhere through significant shifts in the higher education context . . . Small numbers of academics began in the late 1970s, in different places and in different ways, to work together to build knowledge and skill in teaching undergraduate students (Lee *et al.*, 2007, p. 1).

Until recently, in the absence of any national policy frameworks, the organisation of the development of academics as teachers has occurred idiosyncratically within individual institutions, resulting in a diverse, context-specific and volatile set of models and practices. Dedicated academic development positions, and units, emerged between the 1970s to 1990s in the UK, North America, Australasia and Europe, as did other teaching and learning related support staff positions in distance education and educational technology. Research academics, working within early academic development units in Australia, made a significant contribution to the emerging literature on teaching and learning in higher education (Hayden & Parry, 1997). Research from this time provided a common, though contested, theoretical base upon which the fledgling academic development field organised itself. Land (2004, p. 1) describes the growth of educational development 'not as a linear narrative but as a complex tapestry of interwoven developments'.

3.2 National and international drivers for change

The last five years has seen unprecedented interest by governments in the quality of learning and teaching in higher education. New national policy frameworks, funding arrangements and peak organisations are attempting to respond to dramatic, continuous and rapid changes in higher education. Descriptions of the external and internal pressures on higher education sectors in the UK and Australasia (see for example Department of Education, 2002; Dearn, *et al.*, 2002; Ling, 2004; Land, 2004; Ryan *et al.*, 2004), North America (see for example Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006) and Europe (see for example Havnes and Stensaker, 2006), bear striking resemblance: resources failing to keep pace with growth; increasing student numbers; increasing diversity of students' backgrounds and learning needs, particularly at entry to university; international students; managerialism, performativity and associated quality imperatives and accountabilities (Marginson and Considine, 2000); marketisation and competition (Marginson and Considine, 2000); globalisation; the impact of technology

Part 3 Context and Literature review

on teaching and learning; the changing nature of knowledge towards applied and interdisciplinary knowledge production (Gibbons *et al.*, 1994); changing pedagogies associated with contemporary learning theory and new technologies (Laurillard, 2002); the bifurcation of the teaching workforce into permanent and sessional staff; and the vocationalisation of the curriculum. This similarity of sector challenges is a symptom of the globalisation of higher education (Marginson and van der Wende, 2007).

In Australia in 2003, the Federal Government announced, as part of its blueprint for the reform of the higher education sector (Department of Education, 2003), two major national initiatives which aimed to promote excellence in teaching and learning in the Australian higher education sector and redress the lower status of teaching in relation to research. Firstly, the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education was launched in 2004 with the mission of enhancing learning and teaching in Australian higher education providers. The Carrick Institute was renamed the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in 2008. The ALTC 'is dedicated to improving the student learning experience by supporting quality teaching and practice.' It works with 'higher education institutions, discipline groups and individuals as a collaborative and supportive partner in change, providing access to a network of knowledge, ideas and people.' (<http://www.altc.edu.au/who-we-are>).

Secondly, the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF) was introduced in 2005 to reward higher education providers that demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. The LTPF uses a set of national performance indicators based on the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) items – including 'overall satisfaction', graduate outcomes in employment and further fulltime study, and student attrition and progression data to allocate funds. These two initiatives have provided unprecedented funding and attention to learning and teaching in higher education in Australia.

Likewise, the Dearing Report (1997) laid the foundations for a radical reshaping of the learning and teaching landscape in higher education in the UK. The Higher Education Academy (HEA) formed in 2004 replacing two other agencies and, like the Australian Learning and Teaching Council, works with institutions, discipline groups and individuals. The HEA aims to: inform policy related to student learning, support institutions' strategic change, lead research and evaluation, lead and support the professional development and recognition of higher education staff, promote good practice and support the disciplines through disciplinary networks (<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/networks>). Contributing to the reshaping of learning and teaching in higher education in the UK was the development of National Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (The Higher Education Academy, <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/policy/framework>).

Internationally, the Bologna process, with its emphasis on 'student and teacher mobility across national borders' (Havnes & Stensaker, 2006), is forcing universities in Europe in particular, and around the world, to consider common standards in teaching and curriculum. In addition, international and national systems for quality enhancement and quality assurance require institutions to develop and implement processes which demonstrate the continuous improvement of learning and teaching in higher education.

As noted above, a multitude of national and international drivers influence the development of higher education teaching in the 21st century. With the increasing complexity of the teaching enterprise, it is perhaps surprising therefore that the Australian higher education sector has not developed a national professional standards framework for teaching, as has been done in the UK (see below).

3.3 University teaching capabilities, performance and qualifications

One Australian university has attempted to identify the broad capabilities that need to be spread across academic and administrative staff in a faculty or department for quality teaching and learning. The list extends far beyond the traditional pedagogic focus of teaching and gives expression to emerging roles: the global and competitive aspects of teaching; responsibilities in leadership and management; and requirements for evaluation, reflective practice and professional development:

RMIT Capabilities for quality teaching and learning:

- Engagement locally and globally
- Engagement with peers and colleagues
- Equity and pathways
- Leadership
- Engagement with learners
- Entrepreneurship
- Designing for learning
- Teaching for learning
- Assessing for learning
- Evaluation of teaching and learning
- Reflective practice and professional development
- Personal management
- Management of teaching and learning

(summarised from Taylor, 2003 in Radloff, 2005, pp. 76–77)

Despite the complex demands of teaching in the 21st century, academics are most typically employed on the basis of their disciplinary research strengths and knowledge. Academia is an idiosyncratic and unruly profession, by its nature resistant to many of the typical 'markers' of a professional group. To borrow a metaphor, (Becher, 1999; Becher and Trowler, 2001) academics belong simultaneously to one tribe and many tribes, but show primary allegiance to their discipline. In Australia there are no mandatory requirements for either entry level qualifications or systematic accredited continuous professional development in university teaching, despite the recommendations of a government funded investigation of professional development of university teaching in Australia (Dearn *et al.*, 2002). The teaching qualifications issue sits within a complex and to date unresolved (in Australia at least) debate about the professionalisation of teaching in higher education, and the related requirement of articulating a set of professional standards for teaching. In the UK a *Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education* has been developed to guide institutions in their professional development programs and activities. In Australia, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council is currently funding a Teaching Quality Indicators Project that aims to define and develop indicators and

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outcomes of quality teaching in higher education in Australia and provide institutions with tools and metrics to measure teachers' performance. When complete, it may be timely to revisit the contentious issue of mandatory teaching qualifications for university teaching and its potential as a measure of quality.

Sections 3.4–3.7 canvass the literature on the development of academics as teachers. It should be noted that this study aimed at identifying the academic development needs of Australia's higher education teachers in the future. It is also noted that higher education futures can no more be predicted with certainty than financial futures and fiscal imperatives are likely to heavily impact upon government responses to the recommendations of the Review of Australian Higher Education (Australian Government, 2008). Hence this study relies on issues identified as 'top of mind' for Directors, developers and researchers at the present time. It can only be anticipated that current pressures (for example in relation to education technology and constant re-training) will be exacerbated in and over time.

The literature reviewed has been gathered from Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and North America. Studies of the academic development field similar to this have been conducted in North America by Sorcinelli *et al.*, (2006) and in the UK by Gosling (1996; 2001; 2008). A related study was conducted by Dearn *et al.*, (2002) in Australia into the provision of professional development for university teaching in Australia. Prebble *et al.*, (2004) conducted an extensive international literature review of the impact of academic development programs on student outcomes, with particular application to New Zealand. Whilst all these studies offer valuable comparisons, the variations in national higher education contexts limit their application to the contemporary Australian context.

3.4 How the development of academics as teachers is organised

From what is known about the manner in which professionals learn, and accepting the findings of Knight *et al.* (2006) that learning how to teach occurs through a combination of informal 'on the job' learning and formal learning, the whole university is involved, to some degree or other, either formally or informally, tacitly or explicitly, in the development of its academics as teachers.

Within any particular institution, human resource management (HRM) units may contribute to the development of academics as teachers through induction, performance appraisal systems, promotions, rewards, reviews and sometimes professional development in leadership, management and organisational change. Quality Assurance units in many universities may administer and manage student feedback systems and other evaluation and review of teaching and the curriculum activities.

The academic governance structures of universities determine the development of academics as teachers: DVCs and PVCs Academic, Academic Boards, university-wide and faculty-based teaching and learning committees, faculty-based Associate Deans/Directors/Fellows/Champions in Learning and Teaching, Deans, Heads of Schools, academic supervisors and colleagues. IT and flexible learning specialists assist academics to teach into complex flexible learning environments using a variety of teaching technologies. Student learning assistance specialists assist academics in embedding academic skills and graduate attributes into their teaching and curricula. Career advisors contribute to teaching and the curriculum related to work-based learning and preparation for professional practice.

The present study investigates the development of academics in Australian universities through the particular lens of the academic development field and its associated literatures. The study recognises that the academic development field is not the only stakeholder in, nor contributor to, the development of academics as teachers. Nor is it the only lens through which the development of academics as teachers can be described and critiqued, or how its future can be anticipated. However, whilst it is true that many staff and sections within a university contribute to the development of academics as teachers, the manner in which dedicated academic development units – mandated to improve the quality of teaching and learning in their institutions – have been funded and structured within their organisations together with the approaches and activities in which they engage, offer key insights into how higher education sectors around the world, and in Australia in particular, value the development of academics as teachers.

Over the last 40 years, central academic development units have proliferated in universities in the UK, Australia and North America. Gosling (2008) found from his 2006 survey of education development unit (EDU) Directors in the UK that 88 per cent of the institutions surveyed contained either a central EDU service or a stand alone EDU unit. Sorcinelli *et al.* found in the 300 US and Canadian institutions in their survey ‘a dramatic increase during the past 15 years across all institutions in the number of centralized units with dedicated staff.’ (54 per cent in the US and 71 per cent in Canada) (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 37). Clearly, these figures reflect a recognition within the higher education sector of the strategic importance of academic development units, as well as an increased focus on the professionalisation of the teaching role of academics (particularly in the UK). Yet such recognition is often belied by the history of many academic development units.

There are two significant issues in the literature about the formal structural arrangements that institutions make for the development of academics as teachers.

The first issue is the high and sustained incidence of restructuring of units and personnel involved formally in the development of academics as teachers (Ryan and Fraser, 2008). Academic development units have found themselves coupled, and then uncoupled, with human resources, information technology, quality assurance, learning assistance, flexible learning, or library services. The restructuring may occur as complete organisational mergers, the grafting and/or regrafting of individual staff and areas of activity, the establishment or disestablishment of new units, structural arrangements which require greater or less collaboration between units and/or staff towards particular strategic imperatives, dispersal into faculties, and so on. Gosling (2008), for example, found that in the UK, 61 per cent of EDUs had been created in their present form within the last five years, and that this rate of change had not lessened to any extent since 1995. Gosling (2008) found that the most common amalgamations had occurred with: quality assurance units, general staff development, educational technologies and student learning development (including access and disabilities), but that there were no overall trends in any direction across the sector. Speculations about what factors might trigger the perpetual reorganisation of academic development units include:

- ▶ the views of an incoming senior manager (Vice Chancellor or PVC) who is either predisposed towards or against central units, and how far functions should be “integrated”;
- ▶ the commencement, or the ending, of specific funding streams which can either allow for expansion or demand contraction;

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- ▶ the extent to which the head of the Education Development Unit seeks to achieve amalgamation of function either for personal reasons or in order to meet institutional goals more effectively;
- ▶ a change in the head of Education Development function, either a new appointment or a retirement; and
- ▶ the mission and organisational culture of the institution (though this can sometimes change rapidly when a new Vice Chancellor is appointed. (Gosling, 2008, p. 29).

The second issue concerns the relationship between centralised academic development units and decentralised discipline-based academic development, and the relative merits and shortcomings of each. Hicks (1999) explored the provision of academic development in Australian universities by applying two structural dimensions: a 'local-central' dimension and a 'generic-discipline' dimension. He identified four models of academic development at work in Australian universities:

1. The Central Model . . . characterised by a strong central unit with major responsibility for academic development . . . accompanied by little activity and responsibility at the local level.
2. The Dispersed Model . . . departmentally organised and centred professional development.
3. The Mixed Model . . . To some extent aims for the best of both worlds with central generic activities, local discipline-specific activities. . . . Allows for the unrelated pursuit of central and local initiatives with separate resourcing, potential duplication and a significant lack of coordination.
4. The Integrated Model, while including the elements of the mixed model, sees them as interrelated and feeding into one another through a collaborative process (Hicks, 1999, p. 47).

Hicks found that the most prevalent form of academic development in Australia at that time was the generic central unit, but argued that the ideal model is the integrated model, providing a holistic approach which balances central-generic and local-disciplinary learning and teaching issues.

Gosling (2008) reports a clear trend towards what he calls 'distributed' and 'hub and spoke' models of EDUs in the UK. About half of the respondents to Gosling's 2006 survey described staff with a faculty or department teaching and learning role (with titles like Teaching Fellow, Advisors, Coordinators) who were additional to the central EDU staff. He found significant variations in the hub and spoke models described by his respondents, with different secondment arrangements and workload allocations, varying degrees of clarity and formality in the definition of the role, and different types of relationships with central EDUs.

Having determined that the organisation of academic development has varied between universities, it is useful at this point to review the approaches taken to academic development over time.

3.5 Dedicated academic development approaches

A number of authors have identified and described broad approaches to the development of academics as teachers which have emerged over the last forty years (Blackmore *et al.*, 2004; Lee *et al.*, 2007; Ling, 2005; Prebble *et al.*, 2004; Reid, 2002 and Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006). Taken collectively they demonstrate a complex set of approaches ranging from the individual to the institution, and from the practical to the strategic. Four broad approaches are summarised below: Teacher-focused; Learner-focused; Organisation-focused; and Sector-wide focused.

1. Teacher-focused

The early approach to the development of academics as teachers is described as being primarily teacher-focused, providing individual teachers with practical, technical skills about teaching in different teaching contexts (e.g. lectures, tutorials, laboratories and so on), and for assessing students' work. Examples of popular publications from the UK which support this approach include the Habershaw, Gibbs and Habershaw 1993 series of *53 interesting things to do in your . . . lectures/seminars and tutorials*, and so on; and Race (1999) *2000 Tips for Lecturers*.

2. Learner-focused

Drawing on the seminal phenomenographic literature of the 80s and 90s on how students learn (see for example Marton *et al.*, 1984; Trigwell & Prosser, 1991; Ramsden, 1992; Biggs, 1999), the 90s saw a change in the focus of academic development from what the teacher does to how students learn, and the relationship between the two.

A deeper understanding of this interplay of teacher, context, student and curriculum has led to the development of more integrated conceptual models of teaching and learning that now play a major role in shaping the efforts of academic developers (Prebble *et al.*, 2004, pp. 12–13).

3. Organisation-focused

Another shift in the focus of approaches to the development of academics as teachers in the UK, Europe and Australia emerged at around the turn of this century. Ling (2005, p. 14) describes new approaches which operate within organisational change processes and which are 'driven by university mission statements and detailed strategic planning, and evaluated against performance indicators.' Reid (2002) quotes Ramsden's 1998 publication *Learning to Lead in Higher Education*:

Focuses on the quality of organisational leadership, organisational structures that develop quality, scholarship that includes the ideas of reflection, informed critique, evaluation and development . . .
He squarely places the responsibility for academic development onto academic leaders (Reid, 2002, p. 2).

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council has two programs involving multiple projects and initiatives aimed squarely at changing organisational cultures to enhance the quality of learning and teaching: the Promoting Excellence Initiative which aims to 'increase the capacity of institutions to engage with the programs of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council and to assist the Council to improve systems in order to better support those institutions'; and The Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program which 'supports systematic, structured and sustainable models of academic leadership in higher education.' (<http://www.altc.edu.au/grants-funding-available#leadership-program>)

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These trends are common to the UK, Australia and Europe and, to some extent, in North America. Faculty development in North America is distinctive in that as early as the 70s its approach was framed by three interacting dimensions of practice: organisational, instructional, and individual. Sorcinelli *et al.*, (2006) credit this broad framework to two seminal works: Bergquist & Phillips (1975) and Gaff (1975). The Gaff model, for example, emphasised:

Faculty development, focused on the improvement of classroom teaching and learning over the career span; instructional development, focused on the design of courses; and organisational development, focused on the institutional environment that creates the context for faculty work (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 11).

Evidence of the accumulation of these approaches into the current practice of academic development can be seen in the following list of:

purposes for which we [academic developers] may be necessarily accountable:

- ▶ Achieving institutional missions
- ▶ Implementing institutional strategic plans
- ▶ Enhancing student and staff experiences
- ▶ Improving overall student and staff satisfaction
- ▶ Enhancing student learning and research outcomes (Blackmore *et al.*, 2004, p. 24).

In an article for *HERDSA News*, Paul Blackmore asks the 'green field' question: 'Imagine that you had the chance of designing a university from scratch. How would you think of development, and what would you design in to make development happen?' (Blackmore, 2007, p. 3). In answer to this question, Blackmore draws on his recent research study, 'Developing Capability in the University' (2006), to describe a whole-institution approach to development which sees development broadly distributed across the institution. He uses the term 'capability development' to describe:

all of the provision and processes that are designed to enrich the practice, and thus enhance the efficiency, effectiveness and well being of individuals, activities and the organisation. Capability development here includes:

- ▶ Staff skills development;
- ▶ Educational development (development of curriculum and assessment);
- ▶ Academic development (the development of academics' expertise);
- ▶ Faculty development (development of academic staff, usually relating to teaching, in the US); and
- ▶ Organisational development (focused at the institutional level) (Blackmore, 2007, p. 3).

4. Sector-wide focused

In addition to those approaches described in the literature, a fourth approach has emerged in the UK, New Zealand and Australia over the last decade – that of sector-wide initiatives stemming from government investigations into higher education and established and sustained by hitherto unprecedented amounts of government funding. There are four main sector-wide initiatives in Australia at this time.

Previous mention has been made of the establishment in Australia of The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education in 2004 and renamed the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) in 2008. Whilst the ALTC had predecessors (CAUT and CUTSD) which successfully supported the enhancement of learning and teaching to a level commensurate with their funding, the level of engagement with the sector which the ALTC has been able to achieve since 2004 is remarkable. There is a significant level of engagement between ALTC and the academic development field in Australia. Secondly, mention has also been made of the LTPF which rewards institutions for performance outcomes measured against a set of national benchmarks. The LTPF, its performance benchmarks, and the rubrics by which performance is measured, have all proved controversial. Nevertheless for successful institutions it provides injections of funds derived from learning and teaching performance and for some the funds are considerable.

Separate to these two initiatives which specifically target learning and teaching in higher education, is the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA) which audits, on a five year cycle, institutional processes for ensuring quality, including in teaching and learning.

A number of national peak representative bodies and professional associations also contribute to the enhancement of learning and teaching in the Australian higher education sector. Both the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) and the Australasian Council of Open, Distance and E-learning (ACODE) are actively engaged at the sector-wide level. CADAD, for example, been involved in a number of ALTC funded research projects investigating a number of priority concerns to the field of academic development: leadership, the professional development needs of sessional teachers, preparing academics for teaching in higher education, and developing academic futures. ACODE collaborated with the Australian Learning and Teaching Council on the development of The ALTC Exchange, a suite of online services including social networking and a repository which provides a platform for collaboration on learning and teaching in higher education.

Academic development units typically concurrently engage with all four approaches – teaching oriented, learning oriented, organisationally directed, and response to sector-level initiatives – in complex and dynamic configurations and arrangements peculiar to their institution.

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3.6 Contributions of academic developers to the development of academics as teachers

Consistent with the organisation-focused approach described above, the activities in which academic developers engage in order to develop academics as teachers is highly influenced by contextual and institutional-specific factors. Academic development units serve the strategic aims, goals and missions of their parent institutions and must be able to demonstrate their immediate value to that institution. Land cautions that:

There can be no definitive valorised approach to effective practice as chosen strategies must be appropriate to, and are to a considerable extent determined by, specific operational contexts and terrain (Land, 2004, p. 191).

For some, the very exercise of describing a common set of academic development activities is misguided:

In metaphoric terms, it is something like studying an act of communication by assessing the quality of the envelope, the writing paper and the handwriting rather than by analysing what the writer has written (Prebble *et al.*, 2004, p. 25).

There is a limited literature comprehensively describing the activities in which academic developers typically engage. An Australian study into the activities of academic development was conducted in 2002. The Australian Federal Department of Education, Science and Training commissioned an investigation into the provision of professional development for university teaching in Australia. As part of its investigation, the project surveyed directors/managers of central teaching development units (33 responses were received from an estimated total of 34 universities with central teaching development units). The Discussion Paper includes a snapshot of teaching development activities in Australian universities at the time (Dearn *et al.*, 2002 pp. 20–31). Findings included the following:

- ▀ In 19 of the 33 universities which responded, central ADUs administered their university's student evaluation of teaching system. Most institutions had no systematic link between student evaluation of teaching and the improvement of teaching.
- ▀ Only eight universities surveyed deliberately included general (non-academic) staff in their teaching development activities. Human Resource (HR) units were typically responsible for the professional development of general staff.
- ▀ Twenty-eight universities surveyed ran centrally-coordinated, non-award, non-mandated introduction to teaching programs for academic staff, with an average participation rate in 2001 of 45.9 staff per institution.
- ▀ Whilst 21 universities surveyed offered Graduate Certificates related to teaching in higher education, in 2001 less than 0.5 percent of fulltime equivalent academic staff in Australian universities were enrolled in a Graduate Certificate of this type.
- ▀ Few universities surveyed used mentoring programs for the development of teaching.
- ▀ Few universities had a systematic and compensated program of professional development for sessional and part-time staff.
- ▀ Most universities had university-wide teaching excellence awards and teaching development grant schemes.
- ▀ Other activities of ADUs included: support for peer review of teaching, team teaching; individual consultations; visiting fellow schemes; project work; materials development and committee work.

The following table summarises findings from five relevant studies describing the work of academic development.

Table 1: Five recent attempts to describe the work of academic development

| (Dearn <i>et al.</i> , 2002) 'Activities and functions' Australia | (Blackmore <i>et al.</i> , 2004) 'Fields of Practice' (International) | (Prebble <i>et al.</i> , 2004) 'Modes of academic development interventions' (International) | (Gosling, 2008) 'Top 10 Responsibilities' (United Kingdom) | (Sorcinelli <i>et al.</i> , 2006) 'Practices' (USA) |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Administering student evaluation of units and teaching | 1. Interpretation – helping to translate the language of one culture or discipline within a university into the language of another | 1. Short training courses – workshops, seminars and training programs conducted 'outside' staffs' normal work context | 1. Encouraging innovation in teaching and learning | 1. Consultations for individual instructors |
| 2. Induction programs for new staff | 2. Change agent – identifying possible futures, taking a leadership role and facilitating change | 2. In situ training with academic working groups | 2. Implementation of the teaching and learning strategy | 2. University-wide orientation programs |
| 3. Workshop programs | 3. Providing academic practice development – support staff in their professional learning related to their teaching role | 3. Consulting, peer assessment and mentoring | 3. Improve teaching and learning quality | 3. University-wide workshops |
| 4. Postgraduate formal awards, for example Graduate Certificates | 4. Counselling – acting as a reflective sounding board for staff | 4. Student assessment of teaching i.e. managing student feedback | 4. Provide teaching and learning professional development | 4. Intensive programs |
| 5. Mentoring | 5. Institutional evaluation, review and critique | 5. Intensive staff development (certificates, diplomas and degrees) based on a theoretical framework | 5. Promote scholarship of teaching and learning | 5. Grants and awards for individuals and departments |
| 6. Assistance with teaching development grant writing | | | 6. Initial professional development of teaching staff | 6. Resources and publications |
| 7. Support of peer review and team teaching | | | 7. Promote use of learning technologies | 7. Other services, for example student evaluation of teaching, computerised examination and test scoring, programs to assess student learning outcomes, resources in instructional technology, classroom/audio-visual, and distance learning services |
| 8. Individual consulting | | | 8. Training for postgraduates who teach | |
| 9. Provision of visiting fellow opportunities | | | 9. Research in teaching and learning | |
| 10. Working with project team | | | 10. Evaluation of teaching and learning | |
| 11. Development of materials | | | | |
| 12. Working with committees | | | | |

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Note that each set of findings is limited by the nature of the study, its national context, and its research questions. Three of the studies – (Dearn *et al.*, 2002), (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006) and (Gosling, 2008) – were conducted as national surveys and/or interviews of academic developers in Australia, North America and the UK respectively. The findings from (Prebble *et al.*, 2004) emerge from an extensive international literature review, and those of (Blackmore *et al.*, 2004) from a round table conference of international academic developers. Authors variously describe ‘responsibilities’ (Gosling, 2008), ‘practices’ (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006), ‘fields of practice’ (Blackmore *et al.*, 2004), ‘activities and functions’ (Dearn *et al.*, 2002), and ‘modes of academic development intervention’ (Prebble *et al.*, 2004).

3.7 Effectiveness of academic development activities

The evaluation of academic development activities is problematic on many counts. Whilst academic development aims, and claims, to enhance teaching and student learning outcomes in higher education, there is little empirical evidence that it does so. A conundrum lies at the heart of endeavours to evaluate academic development. Prebble *et al.* articulate the problem better than most:

We suggest the relationship [between academic development activities and student learning] is at best an indirect, two-step process where one body of research evidence supports a relationship between teaching and learning, while another body of research explores the relationship between the efforts of academic developers and the performance of teachers. . . . if it is difficult to establish the relationship between cause and effect with either of these two sets of relationships, it has proved almost impossible to establish a causal relationship across the two sets of relationships (Prebble *et al.*, 2004, p. 11).

A number of statements can be made about the evaluation of academic development activities.

1. There is not a great deal of evaluation activity overall (Gosling, 2008; Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006).
2. There is a paucity of impact evaluation literature on this subject (Prebble *et al.*, 2004; Kreber & Brook, 2001).
3. Most of the evaluative data collected by ADUs is descriptive: listing and describing types and incidence of activities, collecting participation and usage rates, and summarising participant feedback from workshops (Gibbs, 2001; Kreber & Brook, 2001).
4. The studies that do exist are methodologically flawed, and are most commonly self-reported case studies by academic developers of their own practice (Prebble *et al.*, 2004).

From their literature review of over 150 studies related to academic development and teaching and student learning outcomes Prebble *et al.* suggest two propositions which might link academic development activities to student learning outcomes: that ‘good teaching has positive impacts on student outcomes; and teachers can be assisted to improve the quality of their teaching through a variety of academic interventions’ (Prebble *et al.*, p. 91).

More specifically they suggest the following sub-propositions:

- ▶ Short training courses tend to have limited impact on changing teaching behaviour. They tend to be most effective when used to disseminate information about institutional policy and practice, or to train staff in discrete skills and techniques.
- ▶ The academic work group is generally the most effective setting for developing the complex knowledge attitudes and skills involved in teaching.
- ▶ Teachers can be assisted to improve the quality of their teaching through obtaining feedback, advice and support for their teaching from a colleague or academic development consultant.
- ▶ Student assessments [evaluations of teaching] are among the most reliable and accessible indicators of the effectiveness of teaching. When used appropriately they are likely to lead to significant improvements in the quality of the teaching.
- ▶ Teachers' conceptions about the nature of teaching and learning are the most important influences on how they teach. Intensive and comprehensive staff development programs can be effective in transforming teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their teaching practice (Prebble *et al.*, 2004, p. 91).

Sorcinelli *et al.* (2006) reported on the major evaluation studies conducted on the activities and effectiveness of faculty [academic] development programs in the USA. Amongst the findings of the first large evaluation study into faculty development in the US (conducted in 1976) was that only 14 per cent of faculty development programs were evaluated. Another study in the USA,

identified key factors influencing faculty development program success, including faculty ownership, administrative support, use of local expertise, sustained or follow-up activities, and programs involving faculty members working together to achieve common objectives (Eble and McKeachie, 1985 in Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 23).

Sorcinelli *et al.* also report on an international study conducted by Wright and O'Neil (1995), who surveyed 331 faculty developers in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australasia. Their findings pointed to:

the critical role of academic deans and department chairs, of employment practices that recognize and reward good teaching, and of institutionalized teaching centres that offer development opportunities such as mentoring programs for new teachers, and workshops (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 25).

Knight *et al.* (2006) conducted a survey on a large cohort of part-time and permanent teaching staff at the Open University in the UK. The survey asked respondents to identify how they learned to teach in higher education, and asked the part-time teachers what their preferences were for additional professional learning. The study distinguished between learning associated with their general professional formation as teachers, and learning associated with specific jobs and roles associated with teaching. Their overall finding was that:

More formal and established methods were reported to be appropriate for learning to take on a specific role, whereas social learning and practice were associated with general formation as a teacher (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 324).

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In ranked order, part-time teachers in the Knight *et al.* study learned to teach by:

1. Simply doing the job.
2. Calling on their own experiences as students.
3. Attending workshops and conferences.
4. Engaging in conversations with colleagues in their department.
5. Completing formal courses.
6. Reading about teaching and learning.
7. Seeking guidance from a mentor.
8. Online learning. (summarised from Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 323).

In response to a question asking with which of these methods respondents wished they could have more engagement:

Roughly half of them wished there had been more conferences and workshops, a similar proportion said that they would have liked more social learning in the form of guidance from a mentor, and nearly 40% wished there had been more conversations with subject colleagues (Knight *et al.*, 2006, p. 323).

Another vein in the literature investigates those academic development activities that relate to policy implementation and broader strategic organisational change related to teaching and learning. Harvey and Kamvounias (2008), for example, report on studies that show that teachers do not respond well to teaching and learning initiatives imposed from above. They discuss the problem of an 'implementation gap' between policy and practice, where academics show resistance to change:

Experience has shown that teaching and learning initiatives are often viewed with scepticism and/or cynicism. Academics in research-intensive universities, in particular, are likely to be strategic in their approach and to engage with teaching and learning initiatives if they are seen to be valued by the professions and fit comfortably with their research ethos (Elton, 2003 in Harvey & Kamvounias, 2008, p. 40).

3.8 Emerging issues, challenges and possible responses for the future

Both institutional leaders and professionals in the field of faculty development must think carefully about what purposes faculty development should serve and what forms it should take as the 21st century unfolds (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 157).

When asked to identify the challenges facing academics and their institutions, respondents to Sorcinelli *et al.* (2006) survey of faculty developers in North America identified the following:

1. Challenges related to faculty roles:
 - Balancing multiple roles and responsibilities
 - Changing faculty roles and conceptions of faculty work

2. Challenges related to student learning:

- Teaching for student centred learning
- Assessing student learning outcomes
- Teaching under-prepared students

3. Integrating technology into teaching and learning

4. Training and supporting part-time and adjunct faculty

5. Departmental leadership and management:

- Working with department chairs
- Interdisciplinary collaborations

When respondents were asked to identify the directions in which the field of faculty development should move in the future, they included:

helping faculty integrate technology meaningfully into the classroom; deepening faculty involvement in pedagogies of engagement; addressing the new, often expanding roles and responsibilities of faculty and helping faculty balance those roles; building interdisciplinary connections and communities of practice among faculty; and attending to issues of diversity at student, faculty and institutional levels (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 130).

In response to their findings, Sorcinelli *et al.* put forward a 'working agenda' as a guide for the future. They anticipate that the agenda will be useful to both the field of faculty development and to institutional leaders in North American universities who 'will find them useful in considering how to best employ faculty development as a strategic lever for enhancing institutional excellence' (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 164). Their seven interrelated agenda items are:

1. Promote professional preparation and development for faculty developers.
2. Inform practice with scholarship and extend into organisational change and transformation in higher education literatures.
3. Broaden the scope of faculty development to support faculty 'as they add roles such as mentoring, advising, grant-getting, technology training, accreditation, outreach activities and entrepreneurship to the traditional "three legged stool"' (p. 167).
4. Link individual and institutional needs to create strategic synergies between the two, such that faculty development becomes a key strategic lever rather than a marginal or optional service to individual staff.
5. Context still matters. Diversity across the sector renders any single vision, model or framework for faculty development inappropriate.
6. Redefine faculty diversity and develop faculty development programs to meet the needs of diverse faculty including non-tenured staff and leaders.
7. Faculty development is everyone's work and must be recognised as an institutional responsibility.

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Based on the findings of their empirical study at the Open University in the UK, Knight (2006) and Knight *et al.* (2006) argue that traditional educational professional development (EPD) activities have not properly taken account of how professionals generally, and academics in particular, learn. They argue that the focus of attention should shift from the individual academic to 'activity systems' where individual attempts at achieving outcomes are affected by rules, tools, divisions of labour and communities of practice. They put forward a raft of suggestions about how EPD could be more effective, including:

1. Be more strategic.
2. Help universities to adapt national policies.
3. Focus on activity systems by supporting the formation of teams within departments, and work with them over the long term.
4. Work with allied (support) non-academic staff.
5. Make a priority of working with team leaders, leaders of departments and other academic managers to prepare them for their role as educational managers.
6. Use national initiatives as catalysts for professional development.
7. Be aware that from a systems perspectives, individuals' reflection on practice and changing conceptions of teaching and learning may have limited outcomes if the activity system within which an individual works does not support change.
8. Make professional development ongoing and supported by mentoring or coaching, not just single event courses.
9. Engage in systematic and rigorous research to demonstrate EPD impact on student learning.

Knight (2006) extends the argument to a complete rethinking of the manner in which institutions effect change, and the expectations that institutions can fairly place on EPD units to champion change:

EPD specialists have limited scope to change activity systems, because so many facets are under others' sway . . . EPD units need to recruit key actors in all of those systems and contribute to the development of environments that favour the general formation of the often tacit practices associated with better student learning. In its weak form the argument is that the specialty of EPD needs to connect with heads of departments (Knight & Trowler, 2001) and other units, such as human resource departments. In a strong form the argument would be that universities should be establishing multi-professional quality enhancement operations that subsume the specialty of EPD as commonly practised (Knight, 2006, pp. 36–37).

Whilst predictions from North American and UK studies about the future of academic development and the development of academics as teachers offer useful insights for the Australian higher education sector, there are no studies investigating this issue in Australia. This project aimed to review current activities and approaches to the development of academics as teachers in Australia, identify emerging issues and future challenges for the sector as a whole and for the field of academic development in particular, and to provide recommendations for response to the emerging challenges and likely futures.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

4.1 Introduction

Prior to lodging the 'expression of interest' for this project, CADAD had an interest in determining the state of play of academic development in Australia and had taken steps toward commissioning an Australian survey based on a 2006 survey conducted by David Gosling (2008) of Heads of Educational Development Units in the UK. This interest overlapped with the interest of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council in scoping the status of the development of academics as teachers. The project undertook a version of the Gosling survey with Directors of academic development in Australia and also used a modified form of this survey with others engaged in the development of academics as teachers. Not all the data derived from the surveys were directly relevant to the project and not all the data derived were utilised in this report of findings. Reports on the full range of survey results may be found in Volume 2.

The findings and discussion that follow then are based on:

- ▀ Data derived from a survey of Directors of academic development in Australian universities, devised and analysed by David Gosling in consultation with the project team (referred to in this report as the *Australian Survey of Directors*).
- ▀ Data derived from a survey of academic developers and others engaged in Australian universities in the development of academics as teachers, which was administered through academic development units (referred to as the *Australian Survey of Developers*).
- ▀ Views expressed by participants in the DAHEF Forum and contributions to the Forum by invited experts.
- ▀ The literature reviewed in Part 3 of this report.

All data thus reflects the perceptions of Directors of academic development units and academic developers and others engaged in the development of academics as teachers.

During the course of this project, the 'Carrick Institute for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education' was renamed the 'Australian Learning and Teaching Council'. The term 'Carrick' appeared in the original survey instruments, case studies etc used in the project prior to the name change. The authors have left this term in the original instruments used. In the reporting of results the term 'Carrick' has been replaced by 'ALTC', often in square brackets, to reflect the current title.

Part 4 of this report is structured to discuss initially the current approaches used and organisation of academic development in the Australian higher education sector, followed by the identification of emerging issues and challenges. It incorporates recommendations. The recommendations take account of matters emerging from the literature and the surveys conducted as well as from the input of participants in the Forum.

4.2 Current organisational approaches to development of academics as teachers

The findings from this project confirm that institutions in the Australian higher education sector employ a variety of organisational approaches to the development of academics as teachers. These include a diverse and dynamic array of formal structural arrangements, informal networks and relationships between staff and organisational units, and relationships with stakeholders external to institutions.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Respondents to the Survey of Developers and participants of the DAHEF Forum identified multiple contributors to the development of academics as teachers. These are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Contributors to the development of academics as teachers

| |
|---|
| Within faculties |
| Other teachers and academics, including sessional staff |
| Senior academics |
| Research supervisors |
| Deans and Associate Deans Teaching and Learning |
| Course coordinators |
| Faculty or School-level Teaching and Learning Coordinators |
| Faculty-level Teaching and Learning Committees |
| Teaching Fellows, award winners and champions |
| Heads of Schools and Directors |
| Senior management/academic governance |
| Deputy Vice Chancellors and Pro Vice Chancellors (Academic) |
| Chancellery |
| Academic Boards |
| University-wide Teaching and Learning Committees |
| Central units |
| Academic development units |
| Quality assurance |
| Information technology |
| Flexible learning |
| Learning assistance |
| Library |
| Career advisors |
| Human resource management |
| External |
| ALTC |
| Professional bodies |
| Industry |
| Accreditation bodies |

Whilst this list is long and suggestive of an army of people involved in the development of academics as teachers, it is unlikely that many institutions have developed or implemented a whole-of-institution approach to the development of academics as teachers. One participant in this project commented on the 'lack of coordination of staff development efforts across institutions (fragmented through HR, ADUs, faculty based units etc.).' Others highlighted the need for systems, processes and policies that involved the whole university.

Central to the organisation's approach to academic development is the organisation of the academic development unit.

4.2.1 The current organisation of academic development units

Most Australian universities have an academic development unit that is typically commissioned with the broad mission of improving teaching and learning within the institution. The Australian Survey of Developers confirms that stand-alone centralised units prevail. Three-quarters of 69 respondents were located in central specialised units with another significant group located in central units with a broader charter such as in human relations, IT services or library services.

The results from the Australian Survey of Directors (Volume 2) confirm that there is no national organisational model of academic development, but that academic development units can be differentiated by a number of key variables:

- Institutional type.
- Size of the unit.
- Whether or not the unit has responsibility for learning technology.
- Whether the unit has an academic or a service orientation.
- The level of confidence the ADU Director has in the senior managers of their institution (Gosling, Survey of Directors of Academic Development in Australian Universities: Final Report, in Volume 2).

Organisational arrangements for academic development are typically dynamic. The Survey of Directors found that only two of the units responding to the survey had been in existence in their present form for longer than 10 years. The evidence in this survey about predecessor units shows that academic development units are likely to be either amalgamated with, or separated from:

- 1 Learning technology units/services: multimedia production, online learning, flexible learning, and web development.
- 2 General staff development linked to human resource departments.
- 3 Distance learning.
- 4 Support for development of research capacity (Gosling, Survey of Directors of Academic Development in Australian Universities: Final Report, in Volume 2).

Despite the high degree of restructuring, in response to the question, 'Compared with five years ago, do you consider that the national higher education environment is more or less favourable towards academic development and its goals?' fifteen of the 17 Directors answered either 'considerably more favourable' or 'moderately more favourable'. In response to the same question, 30 percent of developers responded 'considerably more' and another 30 percent answered 'moderately more'. Fifteen percent answered 'less favourable'.

Similarly Gosling (Survey of Directors of Academic Development in Australian Universities: Final Report, in Volume 2) reports that 'nearly 74 percent of the Directors surveyed felt either 'very' or 'moderately secure' in their funding. Five units felt uncertain or very insecure. The prospect of restructuring, a new VC, likely budget cuts, and the 'attitude of senior managers' created uncertainty. For some the threat to funding comes from faculty managers or deans who 'do not want to see a central unit growing and spending what they regard as their money.' However responses from Directors indicate clearly that whilst they may feel 'secure' about their funding, they 'do not have budgets commensurate with the roles they are expected to fulfil.'

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Of particular interest to this project was the degree to which Australian universities have followed the UK in developing 'distributed' or 'hub and spoke' models for the organisation of academic development. This model was described by Hicks in 1999 as an 'integrated model', providing a holistic approach which balances central-generic and local-disciplinary learning and teaching issues (Hicks, 1999). In his previous study in the UK, Gosling (2008) found a clear shift in the UK towards distributed models of academic development, with institutions, to varying degrees, funding 'teaching fellows' in the faculties, and creating 'hub and spoke' arrangements with central academic development units. This UK model involves faculties committing some resources to learning and teaching leadership by seconding faculty academics to fractional teaching and learning leadership appointments. Some large faculties in both the UK and Australia have established their own learning and teaching units. This is most likely to occur in very large institutions.

Results from the Australian Survey of Directors suggest a move to distributed models of academic development in Australian universities over the last 10 years. While most universities have a central unit, a majority of respondents' institutions had Faculty or School level Teaching and Learning Committees, and many work closely with Faculty Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning). Seven institutions of the 23 surveyed have Faculty-based Teaching and Learning Coordinators (four of whom have full-time roles) and eleven have Teaching Fellows or Award winners. Only one Director said there was no real structure and one said they were working towards the distributed model.

DAHEF Forum participants supported integrated or hub and spoke models that link academic development units to faculty/discipline specific development needs and faculty academic development staff. They saw faculty involvement as providing relevant discipline-based academic development, faculty support and engagement in teaching and learning activities and ready acceptance by academics because of its visibility in their location. They saw this model as particularly valuable in the development of sessional teaching staff.

However, respondents to both the Australian Survey of Directors and the Forum participants identified a number of challenges related to the distributed academic development model and the relationship between central units and faculties. Some of the challenges identified were:

- ▶ Ambiguities regarding responsibilities, funding, and performance expectations, especially in responding to external considerations such as quality assurance, government sector-wide initiatives, and institutional marketing.
- ▶ Difficulty/lack of clarity determining where responsibility lies for responding to an institutional issue.
- ▶ Demands on the central academic development unit to make the activity of the distributed staff coherent.
- ▶ Difficulty with effective communication and networking between central unit and faculty staff, and inter-disciplinary contact between faculty staff.
- ▶ Risk of marginalising academic development units from 'direction setting' at an institutional level.
- ▶ Support and financial backing for faculty-based academic development may be limited and may vary from faculty to faculty.

4.2.2 Current approaches by academic development units to the development of academics as teachers

Whilst those who are involved in the development of academics as teachers stretch across whole institutions, it is typically towards academic development units that researchers look when investigating the strategies and approaches that institutions take in the development of academics as teachers. The only predecessor to this research in Australia is the Dearn *et al.* study (2002) that investigated, by interviewing Directors of academic development units, the professional development of teachers in Australian universities at that time (see Section B above). The criticism can be laid that investigating the activities of academic development units provides information about only one subset of the broad range of activities with which an institution engages in the development of its academics as teachers. However it is academic development units that institutions typically formally commission with the task of improving the quality of teaching and learning, and it is the literature of the academic development field that offers the greatest source of information about the development of academics as teachers.

At the DAHEF Forum, Denise Chalmers reported on the Australian Learning and Teaching Council's Teaching Quality Indicators Project 'Learning and teaching evaluation and metrics'. She identified the following activities as those where academic developers work directly with teaching academics:

- Development of desirable teaching characteristics.
- Development of student-centred learning perspective.
- Relevant teaching experience and qualifications.
- Curriculum development informed by relevant research findings and pedagogic practices.
- Valuing teaching and teachers.
- Recognising and rewarding quality teaching.
- Requiring relevant teaching experience, qualifications, and development.

Both the Director and the Academic Developer surveys asked questions about the activities in which academic development units, and academic developers engaged. Those surveys also asked respondents to rank those activities according to their perceived importance. The questions were clustered within the following broad domains of academic development practice:

- Institutional planning and policy development.
- Professional development of academic staff.
- Quality assurance.
- Evaluation and review.
- Support reward and recognition of staff.
- Support research and scholarship related to teaching and learning.
- Support curriculum development.
- Design and/or production of learning materials and resources (for students).
- Design and/or provision of professional development materials and resources.
- Student services.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

What the Directors reported

Respondents to the Australian Survey of Directors were asked to what extent their units provided various activities. They were also asked about the importance they attached to the provision of particular activities. A full analysis of the data relating to Director responses to these questions can be found in Volume 2.

Table 3: Ranking of top 21 activities, by provision and importance, by Directors of academic development units (n=19). '1' is of equal first rank importance.

| Provided rank | Activity provided to a 'great' or 'moderate' extent | Importance rank |
|---------------|--|-----------------|
| 1= | Participate in university-wide committees and working parties | 1= |
| 1= | Provide leadership for L & T in HE within the institution | 1= |
| 1= | Staff/professional development relating to L & T | 2= |
| 2= | New staff induction programme | 1= |
| 3= | Foundations in teaching courses for new academics | 2= |
| 3= | Promote scholarship of teaching and learning | 2= |
| 4= | Assist in planning and policy development | 1= |
| 4= | Professional development to sessional staff | 1= |
| 4= | Engage in planning and policy development | 1= |
| 4= | Implement university strategic directions | 3= |
| 5= | Produce/maintain good practice website | 2= |
| 5= | Advice to individual staff members | 3= |
| 6= | Engage in the development of institutional systems and processes | 1= |
| 6= | Promote research in learning and teaching in higher education | 3= |
| 7= | Training in the use of ICT/e-learning | 3= |
| 7= | Post-grad course in learning and teaching in HE | 3= |
| 8= | Implement internal quality assurance processes | 6= |
| 8= | Design online learning materials | 7= |
| 9= | Assist in policy implementation relating to quality | 3= |
| 9= | Engage in research in learning and teaching in higher education | 3= |
| 10= | Assist with course/program and/or unit/subject reviews | 3= |
| 10= | Assist in development and design of new courses | 3= |
| 10= | Engage in policy monitoring and review | 5= |
| 10= | Advise on evaluation models and processes | 4= |
| 10= | Produce online learning materials | 8= |
| 11= | Map and embed graduate attributes/generic skills across curricula. | 3= |
| 11= | Administer formative systems for student feedback of teaching and units (subjects) | 7= |

Two sets of data are presented here: those activities which Directors considered were provided by their academic development units to a 'great' or 'moderate' extent, and the ranking of each of these activities according to their importance, calculated by combining responses to 'very important' and 'moderately important'.

There are 21 items listed above that at least 17 out of 19 (90 percent of respondents) Directors agreed were very or moderately important. These results suggest that there is very significant agreement by Directors about what it is important for units to provide, despite the considerable variations in units' size, role and status within their individual institutions.

The activities listed in Table 3 serve as a descriptive list of the activities most commonly provided by respondents' academic development units. However an analysis of the differences in the data between extent of provision of activities and degrees of importance placed upon them offers interesting insights about tensions and priorities in academic development units.

For the six activities which can be broadly grouped as institutional approaches, this data suggests that whilst respondents see themselves as appropriately participating and leading in the teaching and learning related activities of the institution, and in the *implementation* of policies relating to quality and their institution's strategic directions, they reported larger discrepancies between provision and importance in relation to policy *development* and their engagement in the *development* of institutional systems and processes. This data suggests that Directors and their units would like to be more involved in the development of policies and institutional systems rather than just as their implementers. One Director commented that there is a:

'lack of clarity re the role of Directors of learning and teaching centres – they are expected to implement university strategic directions, i.e. manage, and at the same time have little credibility or involvement in setting policy.'

For the eight activities which can be broadly grouped as professional development, this data suggests that respondent Directors were comfortable with the level of provision by their units of entry level professional development through induction and foundation courses, but less so with providing professional development for sessional staff, maintaining good practice websites and providing postgraduate courses like graduate certificates in teaching and learning in higher education, all of which were deemed more important than their level of current provision. The negative discrepancy recorded against the provision of staff/professional development relating to learning and teaching suggests a degree of uncertainty about the importance of this very traditional activity of academic development units. By far the largest discrepancy is related to training in the use of ICT and e-learning, suggesting that Directors perceive that this activity is not being given the priority it deserves.

For those activities that can be broadly grouped as research and scholarship, the least discrepancy occurred in the promotion of the scholarship of teaching followed by promoting research in learning and teaching in higher education. The largest discrepancy however was for engaging in research in learning and teaching in higher education. What this data clearly suggests is that Directors perceive appropriate levels of activity by their units in the *promotion* of the scholarship of learning and teaching and of research *for others* in their institutions, but perceive a great discrepancy in *their own* capacity to engage in research.

However, the greatest discrepancies occurred in a cluster of three activities that can be broadly grouped as curriculum design and review (either at the program or unit level) activities. Clearly Directors perceive that assisting with course/program and/or unit/subject reviews; assisting in the development and design of new programs; and mapping and embedding graduate attributes/generic skills across the curricula are activities that are not being engaged in at a level commensurate with their importance.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

What the developers reported

Respondents to the Survey of Developers were asked to what extent they themselves provided various activities in the course of their work in an academic development unit. They were also asked about the importance they attached to the provision of particular activities. Again, two sets of data are presented here: activities which developers considered are being provided in their work to a 'great' or 'moderate' extent, and the ranking of each of these activities according to their importance, calculated by combining responses to 'very important' and 'moderately important'. The full data sets can be found in the 'Report of the Survey of Academic Developers and Others Engaged in the Development of Academics as Teachers in Australian Universities', in Volume 2 of this report.

As found with the results from the Australian Directors Survey, there is considerable agreement between developers about what activities are important for them to provide. Again an analysis of the differences in the data between extent of provision of activities and degrees of importance placed upon them offers interesting insights.

Developers see themselves as appropriately providing professional development workshops and advice, providing teaching and learning scholarship and leadership in the university and implementing their institution's strategic directions. They reported large discrepancies between the current work they do with policy development, sessional staff, curriculum development and course reviews and the importance of that work.

Formal staff development activities like seminars and workshops, induction and foundation programs and individual advice to academics were carried out to a much greater extent than activities such as peer observation of teaching or peer review of flexible learning materials. The development and support for staff mentoring schemes received particularly low scores. In their study conducted in 2002, Dearn *et al.* (2002) similarly found few mentoring schemes amongst universities surveyed.

When compared with the Directors' responses to the same questions, two broad observations can be made. Firstly both developers and Directors rated as 'very' or 'moderately' important 18 of the 21 highest ranked activities, suggesting a high degree of convergence between staff and Directors' opinions about what academic development units should be doing. The three activities which Directors included but developers did not were:

- ▶ Map and embed graduate attributes.
- ▶ Post graduate courses in learning and teaching in higher education.
- ▶ Training in the use of ICT/e-learning.

Developers replaced these three with:

- ▶ Provide support for staff members who have been identified as experiencing difficulties with their teaching and/or curriculum.
- ▶ Advice on evaluation models and processes for individual projects.
- ▶ Providing peer observation and reviews of teaching.

Secondly, the discrepancies between what activities developers' provide and what they consider to be important were greater overall than the Directors' responses to the same questions, suggesting a greater degree of tension between the activities with which they engaged and the activities which they deem to be important.

**Table 4: Ranking of top 21 activities, by provision and importance, by developers (n=60).
‘1’ is of equal first rank importance.**

| Provided rank | Activity provided to a ‘great’ or ‘moderate’ extent | Importance rank |
|---------------|---|-----------------|
| 1 | Provide staff/professional development relating to learning and teaching in higher ed (workshops, seminars, forums etc) | 1= |
| 2 | Provide advice to individual staff members on learning and teaching practices in higher education | 2= |
| 3 | Promote scholarship of teaching and learning | 1= |
| 4 | Implement university strategic directions | 3= |
| 5= | Provide leadership for learning and teaching in higher education with the institution | 2= |
| 5= | Assist in planning and policy development | 5= |
| 6= | Engage in research in learning and teaching in higher education | 1= |
| 6= | Promote research in learning and teaching in higher education | 2= |
| 7= | Provide foundations in teaching courses for new academics | 4= |
| 8= | Participate in university-wide committees and working parties | 5= |
| 9= | Engage in planning and policy development | 2= |
| 9= | Assist in policy implementation | 8= |
| 10 | Provide professional development to sessional staff | 3= |
| 11= | Assist in development and design of new courses | 3= |
| 11= | Assist with course (program) and/or unit (subject) reviews | 4= |
| 11= | Engage in the development of institutional systems and processes | 8= |
| 12 | Provide new staff induction programme | 6= |
| 13 | Produce/maintain good practice website | 6= |
| 17 | Advice on evaluation models and processes for individual projects | 7 |
| 19 | Provide support for staff members who have been identified as experiencing difficulties with their teaching and/or curriculum | 6= |
| 20 | Provide peer observation and review of teaching | 8= |

Note: The set of rankings for ‘Provided’ is incomplete because only those items ranked in ‘Importance’ between 1 and 8 are included.

Directors’ and developers’ perceptions

Another lens which offers insight into the sorts of pressures impacting on the work of academic development centres and their staff (and therefore how these pressures might impact on the development of academics as teachers) is the data from both Australian Directors and Developers surveys in response to the question: ‘When you consider the last five years, rate which of the following have impacted most strongly on your work’.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Table 5: Australian Director and Developer responses to the question ‘When you consider the last five years, rate which of the following have impacted most strongly on your work’.

The factors are ranked by combining ‘very high impact’ with ‘high impact’ responses. The factors asterisked were not included as choices in the Australian Developer survey.

| Directors | Developers |
|---|---|
| Institutional strategic priorities | Flexible learning/teaching with technologies |
| *Restructuring of your unit/centre | Institutional strategic priorities |
| Australian Learning and Teaching Council | Immediate institutional issues, concerns or problems |
| Flexible learning/teaching with new technologies | Academic professional development (both entry and continuing) |
| LTPF | LTPF |
| Immediate institutional issues, concerns or problems | Australian Learning and Teaching Council |
| Rewarding teaching excellence | Graduate attributes |
| Your unit's strategic plan | Your unit's strategic plan |
| Evaluation and review of teaching and curriculum | Curriculum development |
| Sessional staff development | Evaluation and review of teaching and curriculum |
| Academic professional development (both entry and continuing) | Scholarship of teaching |
| *Staff recruitment | Rewarding teaching excellence |
| *Restructuring of your institution | RQF |
| Graduate attributes | Project management |
| Curriculum development | Professional/teaching portfolios |
| Project management | Sessional staff development |
| Scholarship of teaching | Remediating poor teaching |
| RQF | |
| Professional/teaching portfolios | |
| Remediating poor teaching | |

Even though the day to day work of developers is different from that of their Directors their ranking of factors which impact their work does not appear to differ markedly (although this comparison is constrained in that the Australian Developers Survey did not include the three factors from the Director survey). The top three factors which Directors saw as having a high and very high impact on their work reflected both internal and external pressures. Institutional priorities, the restructuring of their unit, and government initiatives including the instigation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund and the establishment of the ALTC shaped the work of Directors. Directors are obliged to be responsible and responsive to their senior managers. Institutional and national factors drive their work. Developers reported that the top three factors impacting on their work were flexible learning/teaching with technologies, institutional strategic priorities and immediate institutional concerns. It is notable that the top three factors impacting on the work of developers were also within the top six factors impacting Directors.

The only factors which were ranked markedly differently by the two groups were 'sessional staff development' and the 'scholarship of teaching'. It's not clear why these differences would occur although at the time of the survey, Directors from approximately half of the Australian universities were being asked to participate in a national project on the professional development of sessional teaching staff. It is also useful to remember from Table 4 that developers perceived that they needed to be doing more work with sessional staff than they were currently doing. It is interesting to note from table 5 that 'professional/teaching portfolios' was second last on both surveys. The lack of impact of this factor relative to other factors suggests a possible lack of systemic integration of professional development, documentation, recognition and reward in the development of academics as teachers.

Surveys found that both Directors of academic development and others associated with academic development come from a range of backgrounds and turn to a range of professional associations. HERDSA, however, attracts more membership among respondents than other associations.

Related recommendations

Findings discussed in this section identify a number of matters that can be addressed at the sector level that may help to maintain good practice and improve current practice. It is recommended that:

- ▶ *The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funding and status be at least maintained. The ALTC is seen by the those surveyed in this project to have raised the profile and status of learning and teaching in universities and to have contributed to the promotion of evidence-based teaching. Those surveyed reported that the ALTC has made a significant contribution to the development of academics as teachers and should be maintained.*
- ▶ *The ALTC consider providing significant funding support (commensurate with the Promoting Excellence Initiative) to enable institutions to implement the metrics and tools developed within the Teaching Quality Indicators Project.*
- ▶ *That a performance-based element of higher education funding relating to learning and teaching performance be maintained after cessation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF).*
- ▶ *The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) consider working to extend its membership among academic developers and strengthen academic development networks*

4.3 Emerging issues and challenges in the development of academics as teachers

Both the Australian Director and the Developer surveys contained qualitative questions asking respondents about the difficulties and challenges they faced in their work and the emerging issues they foresaw for academic development in the next five years. Similarly the DAHEF Forum participants were asked to discuss a range of related themes.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

The three data sets have been thematically analysed. The key findings are divided into two parts:

1. Academic developers', Directors' and DAHEF Forum participant perceptions of the challenges and emerging issues related to the development of academics as teachers for the higher education sector generally.
2. Academic developers', Directors' and DAHEF Forum participant perceptions of the challenges and emerging issues for the field of academic development in particular.

In many instances the 'emerging issues' identified are not new. Rather, they are known issues that remain unresolved and with which academic developers and others in the sector are grappling. The challenges and emerging issues are presented neither by frequency nor ranking.

The DAHEF Forum participants were asked to identify recommendations in light of the challenges and issues perceived.

4.3.1 Challenges and emerging issues related to the development of academics as teachers for the higher education sector generally

A number of complex and interrelated issues and challenges relating to the development of academics as teachers were identified by respondents in the Developer's Survey and by DAHEF Forum participants. In summary they were:

1. The changing profile of the academic workforce.
2. Academic role stress and role change.
3. The changing nature of students.
4. The impact of technology on learning and teaching.
5. Teaching and learning in a global context.
6. Recognising and rewarding good teaching.
7. The coordination of distributed models of academic development.

Each issue is discussed in turn below and recommendations made.

1. The changing profile of the academic workforce

Two issues related to the profile of the academic workforce were identified by respondents to the Survey of Developers and the DAHEF Forum participants:

1. Meeting the needs of sessional teachers.
2. The aging academic population.

Sessionals

Students in higher education in Australia are taught by two distinct teaching workforces, tenured academics and sessional or casual teachers. The Australian National Tertiary Education Union (2007) reported that increases in continuing appointment contracts between 1995 and 2005 were less than half the 54 percent increase in the casual employment rate for the same period. *The RED Report* (Percy *et al.*, 2008) estimates that between 40–50 percent of teaching in Australian universities is carried out by sessional teaching staff, and that sessional staff carry out the full range of teaching activities, from casual marking to curriculum design and subject coordination. The findings from this project confirm those in *The RED Report*, i.e. that institutions are not meeting the professional development needs of sessional teachers:

The logistics of providing relevant and accessible professional development for diverse and dispersed communities of teachers is a complex challenge for most universities (Percy *et al.*, 2008, p. 14).

The professional development needs of tenured staff and sessional teaching staff are distinct. The tilting of the balance between tenured academic staff and sessional staff has created new administration/coordination/leadership and 'continuity' responsibilities for tenured staff on top of their teaching and research activities. Despite the significance of sessional staffing, the diverse and dispersed army of sessional staff have commonly slipped outside the net of many institutional quality assurance and professional development programs that are designed for tenured staff.

The consequence of not professionally developing sessional teachers '*makes meaningful development of teaching and learning a challenge.*' One respondent commented on the disproportionate concentration of professional development activity and resources on permanent staff, to the exclusion of the army of sessional teachers who carry out much of the frontline teaching in Australian universities.

From the two surveys we can see that both Directors and developers ranked the professional development of sessional staff as highly important (a ranking of 1 and 2 respectively). For the developers there was a significant discrepancy between the provision ranking (10) and the importance ranking (2) suggesting a perception amongst academic developers that the professional development of sessionals is not being given the priority it deserves.

In their survey of faculty developers in the USA, Sorcinelli *et al.* asked respondents to identify the top three challenges facing faculty (i.e. academics) and institutions. Training part-time/adjunct faculty was ranked as one of the most important issues facing faculty and their institutions, particularly in community colleges. Echoing comments from this project, budgetary constraints were identified as the key obstacle to providing professional development to sessional staff:

Healthy institutions should be searching for ways to integrate faculty development into normal, ongoing expectations for all faculty and allocating 5% to 10% to ongoing support and training. Unfortunately, the increasing use of part-time faculty will create enormous and increasing stress on institutional budget priorities . . . especially in community colleges (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, pp. 119–120).

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *Institutions act on the recommendations from The RED Report (Percy et al., 2008) related to the support of sessional staff as teachers.*
- ▶ *Institutions incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation given the workload pressures on academics.*
- ▶ *ADUs act on the recommendations from The RED Report (Percy et al., 2008) in relation to sessional staff.*

Aging

The aging of the academic population, and the ensuing crisis that the higher education sector faces over the next one or two decades in Australia, is well recorded (see, for example: Johnson and Saha, 2002; Hugo, 2005). Hugo found that:

The academic workforce in Australia has a more pronounced [age] heaping than almost any major group in the national workforce. Clearly too, the academic workforce is older than most other groups . . . it is likely to experience a period of substantial loss of workers through retirement over the next decade. Thirdly . . . the Australian academic workforce is still one of the least balanced between males and females (Hugo, 2005, p. 18).

Forum participants identified the pincer squeeze of the pending retirement of the disproportionate number of academics in older age groups, and the dearth of young academics coming through to fill the ranks, as a challenge for the development of academics as teachers. What impact does the ageing profile of academics have on academic development? One participant highlighted the need to recognise 'different demands in learning and teaching expectations over the career of an academic and for academics appointed at different levels', and another called for 'a national matrix identifying what teaching professional development we might expect of academics at different levels A through to E'.

The aging of the academic population also applies to the sub-group of academic development staff. Forum participants commented that one of the challenges for the discipline was in finding staff with AD experience to fill the roles which had increased since the commencement of the ALTC. The lack of a distinct career path for academic development was seen to be a challenge.

The aging demographic and recruitment of a new generation of staff were viewed as challenge while providing new opportunities for academic development. Mandatory graduate certificates in higher education teaching were perceived by some to be necessary for the increasing numbers of new academic staff entering universities. The changing demographic of academics was also seen as an opportunity to further focus on teaching development through more informal activities, such as communities of practice, learning circles and mentoring.

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *The ALTC consider providing funding for the development of national professional development programs for academic developers. The professional development of academic developers is a new area with programs in both the UK and the USA very recently being provided. The funding of the development of Australian national programs for professional development of academic developers, both early and mid career, is essential for effective development in the field, particularly in view of the current age profile of academic developers. Such programs are unlikely to be developed at institutional level given the small number of AD staff in each institution.*
- ▶ *DEEWR consider mandating a higher education teaching qualification of at least postgraduate certificate level for anyone who teaches in government supported higher education.*
- ▶ *Institutions mandate a Graduate Certificate qualification in teaching in higher education for academic staff with less than two years teaching experience.*
- ▶ *Institutions establish and promulgate defined career paths for academic developers.*
- ▶ *Academic development units take account of the multiple means and resources that academics employ in their development as teachers to also include informal activities. Therefore increasingly develop, document and evaluate in situ supports such as mentoring schemes, peer review, communities of practice, learning circles, opportunities for conversations about learning and teaching amongst colleagues, and sharing of best practice.*

2. Academic role stress and role change

Ten years ago, in the conclusion to a report based on a survey of over 2000 academics working in Australian universities *The Work Roles of Australian Academics*, Craig McInnis wrote:

If the results of this survey are any guide, we have possibly reached a limit to the total time academics can reasonably be expected to spend on their work, even with the propensity for altruistic commitment. We are perhaps at a critical point for the academic profession where the amount of hours worked, and the diffusion and fragmentation of tasks seriously threatens the quality of both research and teaching (McInnis, 1999, p. 63).

Participants in this project expressed a related concern that workloads were a challenge to academics accessing professional development. Some spoke of the 'intensification of academics' work' and the 'increasing diversity of academic work' as future challenges. One foresaw 'pressures on academics for research and industry engagement, combined with increasing class sizes and student demands', while another spoke of 'working with academics whose workload keep increasing'.

'Will staff have time to participate [in professional development] given increased demand on time and budget cuts?'

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Others expressed their concern about the fragmentation of the academic role, particularly between teaching and research, calling for a more holistic and integrated approach to academic identity:

'The relationship between teaching and research – we seem to be lurching from a focus on one or the other to the detriment of academic staff morale and workload.'

'It seems that the RQF, in whatever form, will re-focus peoples' energies toward research in a way that could undo some of the good work about the teaching and research nexus.'

'I worry about the continuing separation of teaching and learning from the whole academic identity. Organisationally, we are still arranging our structures in a way which keeps those things separated.'

As in Australia, academics in the USA are not only faced with increasing and competing pressures between their various roles, but the roles themselves are changing. Academics are expected to teach with new technologies, meet the needs of a diverse student body with new learning needs and circumstances, engage with local, regional and international communities, and lead within their institutions. Sorcinelli *et al.* found in their survey that the issue of 'faculty roles' rated high the amongst top challenges identified by faculty developers. They found two aspects of particular concern:

- ▶ Balancing multiple roles.
- ▶ Changing faculty roles. (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006)

One respondent from Sorcinelli *et al.* said:

Faculty development needs to move to a community-based model. The traditional view of workshops, conferences, sabbaticals are still valuable, yet contribute to the sense of isolation on campuses. Faculty development needs to go back to its roots of addressing the 'whole person' rather than the current fragmented approach (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006, p. 106).

Related recommendation, that:

- ▶ *Institutions incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation given the workload pressures on academics.*

3. Students

Several respondents felt that the biggest challenges for academic development come from the changing nature of the student population: 'greater student numbers, diverse student body and diverse learning approaches.'

One respondent to the Survey of Australian Directors was more specific about these changes and spoke of:

'Increasing changes in the kinds of learners coming in to higher education and the future needs of these learners – not just the 'net generation' but also their likelihood of changing careers several times in their lifetime.'

Another thought that the challenge was to 'design systems and structures which attract students whose goals may be quite short term and job focused from a limited/shrinking funding base,' while another considered that there was a need for:

'Development of learning and teaching strategies that suit the needs and learning preferences of the generation of students now entering university who have substantial work and other commitments and whose communication preferences involve a range of technologies'.

Related recommendation, that:

- *The ALTC consider consolidating the curriculum development resources that have already been developed in the sector and making them easily accessible through the ALTC exchange.*

4. The impact of technology on learning and teaching

The issues and challenges associated with integrating technology into learning and teaching, both now and into the future are significant. Technology was provided the status of a dedicated theme at the DAHEF Forum, and technology-related comments were common in responses to survey questions about the challenges. The link between technology and pedagogy, the changing role of teachers and the changing nature of learning were all clear in the data, as were the difficulties in providing professional development to academics which would engender change in their conceptions of teaching and their subsequent practice, and the cautionary need to evaluate the impact of new technologies on learning. Some comments from survey respondents and Forum participants to illustrate these issues and challenges are:

'There is an increasing need to adopt a student-centred approach that makes efficient and effective use of technology, to cater for the demands of Gen X and later students.'

'the role of teacher and how they perceive themselves is changing:

- Students as producers.
- Less emphasis on production of materials by teachers but more management of learning – new focus on literacy.
- Moving towards social software and more interaction.
- New moderator role – will become more important to facilitate.'

'academics are not engaging with new frameworks, just using new technologies as another way to deliver traditional material. Need to re-evaluate the role of the teacher.'

'development of effective blended learning approaches requires a different model of workload allocation with more up-front time needed for development. Doing something different will always take longer the first few times.'

Prensky (2001) labels students recently entering university 'digital natives' and academics 'digital immigrants'. In this context the integration of technology into traditional teaching and learning settings rated in the top five challenges facing faculty members and their institutions in the Sorcinelli *et al.* USA survey (Sorcinelli *et al.*, 2006).

Part 4 Findings and discussion

The following comment illustrates the effect technology may have on the future relationship between academics and professional developers:

'regarding transformations in informal learning, digital literacies etc. – the custodians of knowledge and pedagogies will be completely muddy. E-learning will diffuse as a distinct discipline; blended learning will have become the status quo and by its nature academic staff will need to own their teaching practice once again because educational designers have less influence than in a fully online learning environment. For academics to feel comfortable in blended contexts many will need extended pedagogically focused professional development, ideally in local networks so that context isn't lost.'

In addition, teaching is no longer exclusively the preserve of academics whether tenured or casual. More support staff have become involved in teaching. The 'opening up' of teaching to the input of support staff has occurred in response to demands for flexible learning and flexible delivery models, the needs of under-prepared first year students, the focus on generic skill development, and the graduate attribute movement:

Collaborative team work involves liaison with specialist curriculum designers, instructional designers, graphic designers, programmers, and a host of learning support staff such as librarians, technicians and learning skills advisors, all of whom contribute to teaching quality, and to the complexity of teaching practice (Coaldrake & Stedman 1998). This requires a radical rethink of the professional knowledge related to university teaching, and how this knowledge should be disseminated to university staff (Dearn *et al.*, 2002, p. 6).

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *Peak bodies and professional associations relating to learning, teaching and educational technologies (e.g. CADAD, ACODE, HERDSA, ASCILITE) consider jointly developing best practice approaches to the development of academics' skills in teaching with technologies.*
- ▶ *ADUs provide professional development opportunities for academic developers, particularly in educational leadership and organisational change, and in the use of technologies that may be employed in learning and teaching.*

5. Teaching and learning in a global context

Like technology, working in a global context was provided the status of a dedicated theme at the DAHEF Forum. Comments related to the internationalisation of higher education were common in responses to survey questions about the future.

The DAHEF Forum participants wrote and spoke about globalisation in terms of the increasing complexity of teaching. They identified the challenges associated with supporting staff to internationalise their curricula, the difficulties teaching staff face in supporting international students, and the difficulties which face international students:

'Overcoming the cultural understanding of teaching and learning, both intrinsic and extrinsic, language barriers, different perceptions of reality.'

'Fortress mentality, being challenged by 'difference', discomfort, loss of identity, frustration, fear.'

'Helping staff to see the benefit they gain from diversity for their courses and classes.'

'The global context is not always on peoples' radar. We focus too much on the local and don't see how it fits in the bigger picture.'

'The impact of imbalance, for example, of too many students from overseas or one country; too many in one faculty; lack of understanding by academic staff; English language difficulties of both staff and students.'

'Different expectations, backgrounds, learning and teaching style. Attaining the skills to recognise the potential for different skills for improving teaching and learning and utilising them in programs. Xenophobia.'

'Students come to Australia for an Australian degree but don't think of the context of studying in Australia.'

One participant said:

'We have a very big opportunity to improve the international student experience for all of our students and build regional social, research and professional networks/communities . . . but we must lift our game, and lift our eyes off the bottom line . . . '

Related recommendation, that:

- *Academic development units provide professional development for academic staff relating to globalisation and internationalisation including curriculum and learning and teaching approaches issues.*

6. Recognising and rewarding good teaching

Two main themes are evident in the comments from participants in this project about the recognition and rewarding of good teaching:

1. That organisations need to build a culture which recognises and rewards good teaching through all its systems and processes, such as:

'Establishing/maintaining/developing organisational (including departmental) environments that genuinely value good teaching.'

'Promotion criteria for academics to reward collaboration and value teaching.'

2. That the recognising and rewarding of good teaching should not be a competitive process where there are winners and losers, but rather should be developmental and should focus on improvement.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

On the one hand many comments were made about the positive impact of both the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund and the programs managed by the ALTC on the status of teaching. On the other hand, some made negative comments:

'I do not believe teaching excellence awards are a positive and fruitful way of enhancing teaching and learning.'

'Arbitrary nature of the LTPF (results bouncing around from year to year).'

'DEST rewards performance – smaller institutions cannot compete.'

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funding and status be at least maintained. The ALTC is seen by the those surveyed in this project to have raised the profile and status of learning and teaching in universities and to have contributed to the promotion of evidence-based teaching. Those surveyed reported that the ALTC has made a significant contribution to the development of academics as teachers and should be maintained.*
- ▶ *That a performance-based element of higher education funding relating to learning and teaching performance be maintained after cessation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF).*
- ▶ *Academic development units contribute to performance review systems where they relate to teaching.*

7. The coordination of distributed models of academic development

In 4.2.1 mention was made of the challenges associated with a distributed model of academic development. Over the last decade there has been a move towards distributed models of AD in which individuals throughout the university have some responsibility for the development of academics as teachers. These individuals include faculty based Associate Deans (Teaching), Faculty Teaching and Learning Coordinators, Teaching Fellows, Deputy and Pro Vice Chancellors (Academic) and Course Coordinators. The work of academic development is often supported by University and Faculty level Teaching and Learning Committees.

There are a number of challenges related to model of academic development in which the responsibility for AD is distributed between a central ADU and individuals throughout the university. Communication between the different groups and individuals needs to be exceptionally good in order for the efforts of all to be complementary and coordinated. It is essential for there to be clarity regarding: the responsibilities and outcomes to be achieved by each group/individual, especially in responding to external considerations such as quality assurance, government sector-wide initiatives, and institutional marketing; the nature of working relationships; and the support which can be expected from different groups. It's important for the funding of faculty level academic development to be comparable between faculties for there not to be significant inequities across the university.

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *Institutions identify key teaching development leaderships roles that are distributed across the institution (Faculty Associate Deans Teaching, Course Coordinators, teaching development project managers, teaching and learning fellows/champions, etc).*
- ▶ *Institutions make explicit the responsibilities, outcomes, resources and support of/for each of the distributed roles.*
- ▶ *Provide professional development in educational leadership for those engaged in educational leadership roles across the institution.*
- ▶ *Institutions articulate the distributed roles with a centrally-based academic development unit.*
- ▶ *Institutions explicitly identify appropriate communication channels between the distributed positions, and the distributed positions and the central academic development unit.*
- ▶ *Institutions take a holistic university-wide approach to professional development in learning and teaching which:*
 - *involves all providers of professional development within the institution;*
 - *develops academics across their increasingly diverse roles;*
 - *includes support staff (such as IT specialists, library staff, and academic skills staff);*
 - *involves both formal and non-formal professional development opportunities; and*
 - *pays particular attention to the provision of professional development in educational technologies.*
- ▶ *ADUs undertake professional development activities with other professional development providers in institutions (eg HR, IT, Library).*

4.3.2 Challenges and emerging issues for the field of academic development

A number of complex and interrelated issues and challenges relating to the field of academic development were identified by respondents to the Australian Directors and Developers Surveys and by DAHEF Forum participants. In summary they were:

1. Conflicting values and priorities.
2. Academic development unit organisational instability.
3. The profession of academic development.
4. Resourcing of academic development units.

1. Conflicting values

Academic development as a field is variously perceived as an independent academic enterprise informed by the scholarship of learning and teaching, a service unit responding to the needs of academics, or as an arm of management assisting in the implementation of strategic institutional learning and teaching initiatives.

Part 4 Findings and discussion

Respondents to the two Australian surveys and participants in the DAHEF Forum expressed a number of concerns relating to the values which underpin academic development and the manner in which academic development locates itself within its institutional contexts. The tensions were evident in the comments themselves, which varied.

a. Tensions about the core values and purpose of higher education, for example:

'significant shortfall of money in higher education, leading to a business focus to attract capital in order to survive and grow. Student learning quality must get back on the agenda.'

'complex issues associated with who's in government, the lack of public funding, what role business has in both research and the determination of curriculum – all these come in to a big mix that creates tensions about what universities are for and what directions we need to be heading. These tensions manifest both at institutional level but also in the lived experience of academics and developers.'

b. Tensions about the increasing focus on accountability, 'performativity' and compliance and between quality assurance and quality enhancement:

'continuing increases in the implementation of measures of accountability and compliance'

'The focus on performativity will need to be balanced by consideration of context and the social value of education'.

'Maintaining 'developmental' status against pressure to become more summative and remedial.'

c. Tensions around the degree to which academic development should serve and align with the strategic directions of the university and about balancing the central needs of the institution and the individual needs of academics. Gosling (Volume 2, p.13) reports from the Australian Survey of Directors that 'at the risk of overgeneralising, it would seem that some Directors of [ADUs] relish taking a role that places them at the centre of their institution's development, whereas others are much less comfortable with being absorbed into the managerial process.'

'Conflicting values of AD between capacity building and strategic planning – how to make overt the benefits of capacity building in a way that fits with the strategic plans of our university managers?'

'Developing broader conceptions of academic development capacities and networks . . . which will contribute strongly to advancing teaching and learning as shaped through university strategic commitments and directions. To achieve this, academic development must be and contribute to strategic educational leadership in the institution.'

d. Tensions between a focus on the specific development of academics as teachers or the more holistic and broad development of academics and institutions.

'Can academic development support learning for institutions and academics in all areas of work (for example developing community or industry engagement, contributing to policy formation) or do we continue to focus mainly on learning and teaching issues?'

Related recommendation, that:

- *Institutions incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation given the workload pressures on academics.*

2. Academic development unit organisational instability

Repeated mention was made in the DAHEF Forum comments about the importance of leadership, commitment and support from senior management towards academic development. Calls were made for institution-wide 'systemic processes, procedures and policies' to support academic development and teaching and learning.

'Commitment of senior management.'

'Philosophical and practical support from top.'

'Need leader(s) to represent academic development/teaching and learning in university.'

Concerns relating to the senior management support of AD reflected comments made in the Australian Directors Survey. The results of this survey showed that 16 of the 22 responding Directors had been in post for 4 years or less and that 5 of the 16 had been in post for less than one year. Only one Director had been in post for ten or more years. Ten out of 19 respondents indicated that their centre had existed in its present form for five years or less and since the survey, several more centres were restructured. Only two centres have been in existence (in their present form) for more than ten years. Similar findings in the UK (Gosling, 2008) and North America (Sorcinielli *et al.*, 2006) suggest that centres are continually being formed and re-formed. Approximately 26% of responding Directors reported feeling 'insecure' with respect to their centre's funding.

These findings reflect the high organizational volatility that continues to be a feature of [ADUs] . . .

The regular reorganization of [ADUs] both here and in the UK means that Directors spend a considerable amount of their time on organizational matters resulting from restructuring. It also means that directors have to be very political animals, quick to respond to changes in structures and active in defending their organizational place (Gosling, Volume 2, p. 5).

Ryan and Fraser in their forthcoming publication 'Education Development in Higher Education' (2009), report that regular restructuring of ADUs has resulted in instability in learning and teaching leadership. They argue that leadership at the DVC/PVC level is critical to the institutional success of AD and in their conclusions recommend that 'Further research is needed to determine ways in which leadership at this level can be most effective'.

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Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *The ALTC consider supporting CADAD to identify best practice in the development and implementation of 'hub and spoke' models for academic development.*
- ▶ *Institutions provide more organisational stability to the models and arrangements for academic development to maximise long-term impact and efficiencies. In making decisions about change in this area take into account the costs of diverting academic development energy into reorganisation activities.*
- ▶ *Institutions ensure that there are 'academic' appointments in academic development and that research into learning and teaching is included in the role of academic developers to support evidence based-practice.*
- ▶ *Institutions establish and promulgate defined career paths for academic developers.*

3. The profession of academic development

Respondents to the Australian Director and Developer Surveys and participants at the DAHEF Forum identified a number of issues and challenges facing the field itself:

a. The need to define the field.

'We should consider the dimensions of academic development. This includes research.'

'multiple understandings of what constitutes 'academic development', which potentially weakens the collegiality of the profession. Creates constant restructuring and thus stress.'

'need for clear theoretical foundations underpinning academic development work. Need to be based on how professionals learn.'

b. The need to renew and refresh the field:

'loss of accumulated wisdom and experience amongst current academic developers as they reach retirement age.'

'insufficient numbers of individuals entering the profession'.

'The diminishing availability of appropriately skilled academic development staff is already emerging as an issue for us.'

'Address the evident shortage of experienced staff in the profession by the creation of career opportunities and mentoring etc.'

c. Issues related to professionalisation: qualifications and professional development:

'Need professional development for Directors and academic developers'.

'Should all academic developers have minimal level of qualification – PhD? Teaching qualification? Research expertise? Should they have an academic position (appointment) for credibility?'

d. Issues related to performance and evaluation:

- 'Urgent need to identify performance indicators for academic developers'
- 'The identification and evaluation of the output and outcomes of the work of academic developers'
- 'Identify the role of the Graduate Certificates in Higher Education and the influence graduates have.'
- 'Be able to more effectively demonstrate how we add value to the student learning experience.'

e. Issues relating to the intensification of academic development work.

Participants at the DAHEF Forum identified a number of pressures intensifying work in the field of academic development. These included institutional expectations arising from:

- ▶ ALTC programs;
- ▶ The Learning and Teaching Performance Fund rankings;
- ▶ Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) audits; and
- ▶ Performance on the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ).

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) be supported by universities and the sector. CADAD has provided a vital network supporting academic development and undertaken important initiatives in surveying the field, defining and sharing good practice in academic development, and providing a voice for national concerns relating to the development of academics as teachers.*
- ▶ *The ALTC consider providing funding for the development of national professional development programs for academic developers. The professional development of academic developers is a new area with programs in both the UK and the USA very recently being provided. The funding of the development of Australian national programs for professional development of academic developers, both early and mid career, is essential for effective development in the field, particularly in view of the current age profile of academic developers. Such programs are unlikely to be developed at institutional level given the small number of AD staff in each institution.*
- ▶ *The ALTC consider supporting the work of CADAD on the development of national key performance indicators for academic development and the associated measurement of impact and effectiveness of academic development activities.*
- ▶ *The ALTC consider supporting CADAD to identify best practice in the development and implementation of 'hub and spoke' models for academic development.*
- ▶ *Institutions establish and promulgate defined career paths for academic developers.*
- ▶ *ADUs develop continuing professional development opportunities for all stages of the academic career: early; mid; and late career staff.*
- ▶ *ADUs engage in evaluation to measure effectiveness and impact of academic development activities over the longer term.*
- ▶ *ADUs engage in research and scholarship to support evidence-based practice.*

Part 4 Findings and discussion

4. Resourcing and staffing of academic development units

Forum participants and survey respondents conveyed a clear perception that there are insufficient resources, in particular to staffing, to meet the expectations placed on the centre.

Directors responding to the Australian survey reported difficulties associated with the breadth of centre responsibilities and the increasing range of expectations for the work of the centre, without commensurate increases in staffing. Some Directors reported 'fighting rear-guard actions against Faculty managers who do not want to see a central [ADU] growing and spending what they regard as their money'.

An emerging issue . . . is a concern about recruitment to [ADU] posts. There appears to be a growing shortage of developers internationally and no country has a strategy for increasing the numbers of staff willing to put themselves forward to join the 'profession' of academic development. Although higher education is an increasingly popular area for research, this has not translated into an equivalent interest in supporting development of teaching and learning. The responses to this survey suggest that induction into the role was predominantly achieved through informal peer contact, previous experience and reading. No formal, or even standard, career pathway existed then or now. This is a pressing issue for the AD community globally (Gosling, Volume 2, p. 27).

Related recommendations, that:

- ▶ *Institutions incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation given the workload pressures on academics.*
- ▶ *Institutions provide more organisational stability to the models and arrangements for academic development to maximise long-term impact and efficiencies. In making decisions about change in this area take into account the costs of diverting academic development energy into reorganisation activities.*
- ▶ *Institutions ensure that there are 'academic' appointments in academic development and that research into learning and teaching is included in the role of academic developers to support evidence based-practice.*

4.3.3 Resources relating to challenges and emerging issues

A set of questions relating to challenges and emerging issues in arrangements for the development of academics as teachers is provided on the project website: www.swinburne.edu.au/spl/dahef

The questions are designed to support professional development and workshop activities relating to the development of academics as teachers.

Part 5 Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Project outcomes

The Development of Academics and Higher Education Futures project was a scoping project funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council. The project has:

1. documented current approaches to development of academics and related activities in Australian universities including organisational arrangements and development strategies;
2. identified emerging issues and challenges that are likely to influence the development of academics in Australian higher education; and
3. provided recommendations to begin to address the emerging issues and challenges.

In the original application to the ALTC, this project was conceived of as the first of a two phase project. Having completed the first phase, the work that now needs to be done is to:

1. develop models and supporting resources for the development of academics; and
2. evaluate the effectiveness of various models for the development of academics as teachers, including the effects on student learning.

5.2 Recommendations arising

This section of the report compiles the recommendations made in Part 4 of the report. The recommendations are grouped into three categories: those for the sector; those for the institution; and those for academic development units and developers. Some recommendations fit under several categories and have been repeated where appropriate.

A. Recommendations relating to sector-level agencies

On the basis of findings in the report and challenges identified it is recommended that:

- A1. The Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funding and status be at least maintained. The ALTC is seen by the those surveyed in this project to have raised the profile and status of learning and teaching in universities and to have contributed to the promotion of evidence-based teaching. Those surveyed reported that the ALTC has made a significant contribution to the development of academics as teachers and should be maintained.
- A2. The ALTC consider providing significant funding support (commensurate with the Promoting Excellence Initiative) to enable institutions to implement the metrics and tools developed within the Teaching Quality Indicators Project.
- A3. That a performance-based element of higher education funding relating to learning and teaching performance be maintained after cessation of the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF).

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- A4. The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) consider working to extend its membership among academic developers and strengthen academic development networks. Surveys found that both Directors of academic development and others associated with academic development come from a range of backgrounds and turn to a range of professional associations. HERDSA, however, attracts more membership among respondents than other associations.
- A5. The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) be supported by universities and the sector. CADAD has provided a vital network supporting academic development and undertaken important initiatives in surveying the field, defining and sharing good practice in academic development, and providing a voice for national concerns relating to the development of academics as teachers.
- A6. The ALTC consider providing funding for the development of national professional development programs for academic developers. The professional development of academic developers is a new area with programs in both the UK and the USA very recently being provided. The funding of the development of Australian national programs for professional development of academic developers, both early and mid career, is essential for effective development in the field, particularly in view of the current age profile of academic developers. Such programs are unlikely to be developed at institutional level given the small number of AD staff in each institution.
- A7. DEEWR consider mandating a higher education teaching qualification of at least postgraduate certificate level for anyone who teaches in government supported higher education.
- A8. The ALTC consider supporting the work of CADAD on the development of national key performance indicators for academic development and the associated measurement of impact and effectiveness of academic development activities.
- A9. The ALTC consider supporting CADAD to identify best practice in the development and implementation of 'hub and spoke' models for academic development.
- A10. The ALTC consider consolidating the curriculum development resources that have already been developed in the sector and making them easily accessible through the ALTC exchange.
- A11. Peak bodies and professional associations relating to learning, teaching and educational technologies (e.g. CADAD, ACODE, HERDSA, ASCILITE) consider jointly developing best practice approaches to the development of academics' skills in teaching with technologies.

B. Recommendations relating to institutions

It is recommended that institutions:

- B1. Identify key teaching development leaderships roles that are distributed across the institution (Faculty Associate Deans Teaching, Course Coordinators, teaching development project managers, teaching and learning fellows/champions, etc).
- B2. Make explicit the responsibilities, outcomes, resources and support of/for each of the distributed roles.
- B3. Provide professional development in educational leadership for those engaged in educational leadership roles across the institution.

- B4. Articulate the distributed roles with a centrally-based academic development unit.
- B5. Explicitly identify appropriate communication channels between the distributed positions, and the distributed positions and the central academic development unit.
- B6. Take a holistic university-wide approach to professional development in learning and teaching which:
 - involves all providers of professional development within the institution;
 - develops academics across their increasingly diverse roles;
 - includes support staff (such as IT specialists, library staff, and academic skills staff);
 - involves both formal and non-formal professional development opportunities; and
 - pays particular attention to the provision of professional development in educational technologies.
- B7. Mandate a Graduate Certificate qualification in teaching in higher education for academic staff with less than two years teaching experience.
- B8. Act on the recommendations from the RED Report (Percy *et al.*, 2008) related to the support of sessional staff as teachers.
- B9. Incorporate time and funding for professional development in academic workloads, including the workloads of sessional staff, to allow participation given the workload pressures on academics.
- B10. Provide more organisational stability to the models and arrangements for academic development to maximise long-term impact and efficiencies. In making decisions about change in this area take into account the costs of diverting academic development energy into reorganisation activities.
- B11. Ensure that there are 'academic' appointments in academic development and that research into learning and teaching is included in the role of academic developers to support evidence based-practice.
- B12. Establish and promulgate defined career paths for academic developers.

C. Recommendations relating to academic development units and academic developers

As key staff in the development of the teaching role of academics, academic developers have the potential to significantly influence the quality of teaching within the institution (although the direct relationship between quality teaching and academic development may not be able to be demonstrated in quantitative terms). It is recommended that academic development units:

- C1. Analyse CADAD's national key performance indicators for academic development for adaptation to specific institutions.
- C2. Include support staff in professional development opportunities.
- C3. Coordinate professional development activities with other professional development providers in institutions (e.g. HR, IT, Library).
- C4. Develop continuing professional development opportunities for all stages of the academic career: early; mid; and late career staff.

Part 5 Conclusion and recommendations

- C5. Take account of the multiple means and resources that academics employ in their development as teachers to also include informal activities. Therefore increasingly develop, document and evaluate *in situ* supports such as mentoring schemes, peer review, communities of practice, learning circles, opportunities for conversations about learning and teaching amongst colleagues, and sharing of best practice.
- C6. Engage in evaluation to measure effectiveness and impact of academic development activities over the longer term.
- C7. Have a critical involvement in a Graduate Certificate or other credentialed program in teaching in higher education.
- C8. Engage in research and scholarship to support evidence-based practice.
- C9. Provide professional development opportunities for academic developers, particularly in educational leadership and organisational change, and in the use of technologies that may be employed in learning and teaching.
- C10. Contribute to performance review systems where they relate to teaching.
- C11. Act on the recommendations of the RED Report (Percy *et al.*, 2008) in relation to sessional staff.
- C12. Provide professional development for academic staff relating to globalisation and internationalisation including curriculum and learning and teaching approaches issues.

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