

LIVE the Future

AGENDA 2020

Deakin University
Course Enhancement Guidelines
2015

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

1 Background and purpose of this document

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

Deakin's Course Enhancement Process operates within the parameters of agreed guiding principles which will also guide transition to ongoing course development. The purpose of this document is to communicate these guiding principles.

Deakin's Course Enhancement Process is a University-wide process that is implemented according to the common guiding principles, yet nuanced and contextualised to each Faculty discipline clusters, cultures and needs. In each Faculty. Since 2014, faculties have each embraced a formally-assigned Deakin Learning Futures pod (of 9 to 11 support staff) led by a senior lecturer reporting directly to the respective Associate Dean Teaching and Learning and with an dotted reporting line to the PVC, Teaching and Learning. This approach was strongly endorsed by an external review in Nov 2014 which found the strategy had "been a resounding success from the point of view of the faculties and DLF itself"¹. In 2015, Deakin Learning Futures continues to work with the Faculties to transition course enhancement from a strategic initiative to sustained ongoing curriculum renewal.

2 Overarching guiding principles

1. Courses are enhanced to ensure they comply with the **(Final Proposed) Higher Education Standards Framework**, and specifically improve:
 - Course engagement (intellectually challenging and engaging cloud and located assessment, resources and experiences)
 - Course effectiveness (outcomes such as graduate satisfaction and employability)
 - Course efficiency (ensuring sustainability and affordability)

to ensure employable graduates of the course achieve the Standards.

2. The focus of this process is overall enhancement of whole courses (or majors within courses) rather than single units or sequences of units that do not comprise a major.
3. Deakin's course enhancement process has four major stages, and progress is monitored and reported quarterly to the Executive and Council through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) using these stages:
 - Stage 1: Scoping
 - Stage 2: Assessment and learning design
 - Stage 3: Resourcing and implementation
 - Stage 4: Final evaluation

Reports use the attached template and are due 1 March, 1 June, 1 September and 1 December. Reporting is supported by the Faculty Pod.

4. Timelines are set by faculties, based on completing high quality course enhancement within the scope, resourcing and agreed goals, and ensuring all stages are completed. Course teams enhance courses on a continual basis—even so, this is not to be confused with Deakin's course enhancement process which, within *LIVE the Future*, is a finite process with an agreed commencement and completion date and during which extra resources are available.
5. In addition to faculty and school leadership and support teams, university-wide resources available to provide support to faculties include:
 - Deakin Learning Futures pods which work at the direction of the faculty ADTL. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) monitors progress and issues or barriers to success.
 - Allocated *LIVE the Future* funding; in 2015, this is \$150K per faculty, released Q1 and Q3 subject to progress. Faculties use these funds as they see best to make good progress, and provide high-level information to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) as to how the funds are used.

¹ Browne (2014) Course Enhancement at Deakin University: a snapshot of progress between 2013 and 2014. Deakin University

Guiding principles for Stage 1: Scoping

1. The purpose of Stage 1 is to ensure that the course enhancement process is well understood, and that appropriate goals are decided based on evidence. The final evaluation will be based on the goals decided during Stage 1.
2. A **designated** leader of the course enhancement process (for a specific course) is assigned by and from within the faculty: this will normally be the course director, discipline convener or an alternative senior staff member such as the Head or Associate Head of School or the Faculty ADTL.
3. Stage 1 is preceded by a preparatory period during which the designated leader informs all members of the **course team** (everyone who teaches in a course or major) about the process, the objectives, the resources and the timing.
4. Stage 1 is an early opportunity to identify where the course team might require capacity building. Depending on the requirements, assistance is available:
 - within the faculty or from other faculties
 - from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - from other Deakin Learning Futures teams²
 - from other services including the Library and the Division of Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - through strategic funds allocated to engage external experts on topics such as assessment, rubrics, work integrated learning.⁴
5. Stage 1 has a firm commencement date, and all members of the course team are engaged from that date.
6. The course enhancement goals are agreed based on:
 - evidence selected from the Course Evidence Portfolio³ by those leading the enhancement process. The selected evidence is always presented by those leading the course enhancement with the support and endorsement of an appropriate leader such as the head of school.
 - goals aligned with the *LIVE the Future* agenda that can be achieved within the time and resources available.
7. Formative evaluation commences in Stage 1: an expert, peer or peers are invited to provide feedback to the course team on the clarity and scope of their goals. Proposed changes to courses are subject to normal Faculty and University governance processes. Summative evaluation of the process and outcomes is completed in Stage 4 led by the Faculty.
8. The designated leader notifies the course team upon successful completion of Stage 1.

Guiding principles for Stage 2: Assessment and learning design

1. The purpose of Stage 2 is to ensure that:
 - course learning outcomes and standards are aligned with [Deakin's Graduate Learning Outcomes](#), professional accreditation requirements and standards, and relevant AQF specifications
 - the course has clearly articulated paths of outcome and attainment, with developmental scaffolding
 - unit learning outcomes are aligned with course learning outcomes
 - unit assessment tasks are policy compliant and aligned with unit learning outcomes
 - assessment and feedback are best practice and include an appropriate mix of authentic tasks, work-integrated learning, and peer and self-assessment, to provide information for learners and teachers on the progress of learning, and to promote the curation of evidence for employability.
2. Redesign of assessment and outcomes must be undertaken with some forethought as to how the redesign will be resourced. The following questions are preparatory to Stage 3:
 - what kinds of teaching experiences will be offered in the cloud or on campus, and what are the financial and resource implications?
 - what kinds of learning resources will be offered in the cloud or on campus, and what are the financial and workload implications?

² Contact Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

³ The Course Evidence Portfolio template is maintained by Deakin Learning Futures. Contact Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning). The template will be reviewed in partnership with faculties in 2015 to consider sustainability for the longer term.

3. Redesign may include longer-term goals to guide future course development. Timelines for implementation should take resourcing implications into consideration.
4. It is likely that staff capacity building needs will emerge in this stage. The designated leader can find assistance:
 - a. within the faculty or from other faculties
 - b. from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - c. from other Deakin Learning Futures teams⁴
 - d. from other services including the Library and the Division of Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - e. from external experts engaged by Deakin (see under Stage 1).
5. Formative evaluation continues in Stage 2: an expert, peer or peers provide feedback to the course team on the clarity of the course assessment and learning design.
6. The designated leader notifies the course team upon successful completion of Stage 2.

Guiding principles for Stage 3: Resourcing and Implementation

1. The purpose of Stage 3 is to implement the changes, including resourcing new learning models (eg a flipped classroom approach), new learning experiences (eg teaching with video conferencing), or refreshed digital learning resources (eg more digitally engaging learning resources).
2. Ideally, the resourcing stage will include a refreshing of all CloudDeakin unit sites to ensure they meet agreed minimum standards.⁴
3. Where possible, course enhancement resources are sourced from existing open educational resources.
4. Where digital resources are made by Deakin staff, including Deakin Learning Futures, these should be good quality, produced efficiently and designed for better learning outcomes. They must be compliant with copyright requirements, and meet accessibility needs.
5. Staff capacity building continues in Stage 3. The designated leader can find assistance:
 - a. within the faculty or from other faculties
 - b. from the Deakin Learning Futures pod allocated to the faculty
 - c. from other Deakin Learning Futures teams⁴
 - d. from other services including the Library and the Division of Student Life (academic literacy, study skills and careers)
 - e. from external experts engaged by Deakin (see under Stage 1).
6. Formative evaluation continues in Stage 3: an expert, peer or peers provide feedback to the course team on the quality of their learning experiences and resources, and their readiness for implementation.
7. The designated leader signs off when Stage 3 is successfully completed.

Guiding principles for Stage 4: Final evaluation

1. The purpose of Stage 4 is to evaluate the course enhancement process formally, based on the goals agreed in Stage 1, and drawing on the formative evaluations in Stages 1 to 3.
2. Evaluation is conducted by the Faculty and the Faculty Pods using common processes⁵ for all Faculties. It is inappropriate for formal evaluation to be conducted by individual course teams. As per the earlier stages, faculties may wish to fund an expert, peer or peers to conduct a final or extended evaluation.
3. The course team is encouraged to disseminate the outcomes of the course enhancement process through scholarly publications.⁶

⁴ A separate project ensuring the quality of unit sites in CloudDeakin is underway. Contact Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

⁵ The evaluation manual and reporting templates are maintained by Deakin Learning Futures. Contact Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

⁶ Contact Professor Liz Johnson, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) or Professor David Boud, Director, CRADLE.

4. The final evaluation is evidence- based and considers the processes used for Course Enhancement and its outcomes. Evidence includes a summary of outputs from the implementation phase and feedback from course teams via course directors. Further evidence may be included to explain progress against goals, for example:
 - Part 1 of the Course Evidence Portfolio can provide a pre- and post-enhancement snapshot and will allow course teams to determine whether the enhanced course (or major) meets or exceeds the agreed goals.
 - Leading indicators such as student feedback (eVALUate) can provide some indication as to whether students report improved perceptions of units noting that iteration may improve over time.
 - Lagging indicators such as the Australian Graduate Survey can provide some indication as to whether graduates report improved perceptions of courses, but the effects of course enhancement will take several years to emerge from these indicators.
 - Staff and student and employer/industry focus groups.
5. Faculties may elect to extend evaluation with course team interviews to collect rich data for learning and teaching research or to further inform strategic planning. A joint research ethics approval is held and managed by Deakin Learning Futures.

The designated leader signs off when Stage 4 is successfully completed.

Example course enhancement reporting template

Reports are due to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) one week before the following reporting dates: 1 March, 1 June, 1 September and 1 December, and they include brief explanations of substantial differences from planned progress. Consolidated reports are submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for strategic reporting.

Progress to date is based on:

- Undergraduate courses with at least 30 commencing EFTSL per annum
- Postgraduate courses, or clusters of nested courses attracting at least 10 EFTSL per annum
- Courses not meeting these enrolment loads that are deemed new or strategic by Faculties.

Courses included for reporting are defined in the Course Enhancement Reporting Template.

Recording of progress

- The progress of each course is measured by the most recent stage it has completed.
- Each entry is the total number of courses that have completed that stage at maximum. The data is not cumulative so each course is only represented once.
- Each Faculty Pod will maintain a master list of courses showing progress within each stage annotated with course enrolments and relationship to reporting groups as defined in the Course Enhancement Reporting Template.

FACULTY OF EXAMPLE

	Stages completed					Total
	0	1	2	3	4	
Undergraduate courses						
Postgraduate courses						
Total (% of total Faculty courses)	nn (XX%)	nn (XX%)	nn (XX%)	nn (XX%)	nn (XX%)	

Signed _____ (Faculty Pro Vice-Chancellor) Date _____