AUSTRALIAN
LEARNING
&TEACHING
COUNCIL

Promoting excellence in higher education

2010 GRANTS SCHEME
Projects funded

Note. The data presented in this report is based on the arrangements that existed at the time funding decisions were made. Some changes to data may have occurred since that time, for example in the nominated partners or as a result of movements of staff.

Contents

1.0 ALTC Grants Scheme: Overview

One of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Limited's (ALTC) designated responsibilities is to provide "grants for academics and professional staff to investigate, develop and implement innovations in learning and teaching, and to develop leadership capabilities." (Transforming learning and teaching in Australian higher education ALTC Strategic plan 2010–2013, ALTC 2010, p. 3). The Grants Scheme enables ALTC to realise this responsibility. In 2010, it incorporated four programs:

- Competitive Grants Program
- Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program
- Priority Projects Program
- Strategic Priority Projects Program

Strategic Priority Projects were introduced in 2010 (replacing Investigation and Consolidation projects). Through Strategic Priority Projects, the Board commissioned projects which respond to key issues in the Australian higher education sector, in line with the ALTC's designated responsibilities and overall priorities, as determined by the ALTC's Board.

The priorities for each of the programs reflect the strategic directions of the ALTC.

Program Values
The ALTC's core values and principles for action underpin the Grants Scheme.
- Collaboration – through the programs it funds and in its work practices, respecting the existing strengths of the systems and of the people within the higher education sector nationally and internationally

- Diversity – by recognising and valuing institutional and discipline differences and similarities and by ensuring an appropriate balance between generic and disciplinary approaches to the enhancement of learning and teaching

- Excellence – through the recognition of quality in its programs and awards, through its encouragement of such recognition in all higher education institutions, and through building the reputation of the ALTC as a leading-edge, prestigious organisation

- Inclusiveness – by assisting the development of networks and communities which support higher education staff who have a direct impact on the advancement of learning and teaching

- Long term change – through a focus on systemic change and capacity building

Please refer to the 2010 Grants Scheme report for information on the governance and operation of the programs.

Projects Funded
A total of 70 projects were funded across the four programs in 2010. In addition to these, two additional projects were funded as special projects and another two, as special initiatives. The details of these projects can be found in Section 6.0.

2.0 Competitive Grants Program

Overview

The Competitive Grants Program supports research, innovation and development related to learning and teaching in higher education. The topics covered are more broadly based than the Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program and the Priority Projects Program.

The program had the following priorities in 2010:

- Research and development focussing on issues of emerging and continuing importance

- Strategic approaches to learning and teaching that address the increasing diversity of the student body

- Innovation in learning and teaching, particularly in relation to the role of new technologies.

Project funding was available in the range of $80,000 to $220,000. Applications building directly on previous ALTC or AUTC projects have a funding range of &80,000 to $150,000. Projects could take up to two years, with small projects completed in one year.

Funded projects

Nineteen proposals were approved for funding in 2010. One proposal was approved by the Leadership Standing Committee and transferred with funding to Competitive Grants for management.

Table 1: Competitive grants projects approved in 2010

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
CG10-1490	A national approach to education in advanced microscopic characterisation through integrated learning tools	The University of Queensland	Flinders University, The Australian National University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Sydney and The University of Western Australia
CG10-1687	Adoption, use and management of open educational resources to enhance teaching and learning in Australia	University of New England	University of Southern Queensland and Massey University (NZ)
CG10-1586	An adaptive e-learning community of practice for mechanics courses in engineering	The University of New South Wales	University of Tasmania, University of Technology, Sydney and University of Wollongong

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
CG10-1713	An online writing centre for undergraduate engineering students: a one-stop shop	The University of Sydney	The University of New South Wales
CG10-1549	Bringing the learning home: re-entry programs to enhance study abroad outcomes in Australian universities	Murdoch University	Macquarie University and University of Wollongong
CG10-1566	Building reading resilience: developing a skills-based approach to literary studies	The Australian National University	Charles Sturt University, Flinders University and The University of Queensland
CG10-1545	Creating cultural empathy and challenging attitudes through Indigenous narratives	Edith Cowan University	Curtin University, The University of Notre Dame Australia, The University of Western Australia, Health Consumers' Council of Western Australia and The Combined Universities' Centre for Rural Health
CG10-1541	Developing strategies to address critical teacher attraction and retention issues in Australian rural, regional and remote schools	Curtin University	Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and The University of Western Australia
CG10-1697	Enabling retention: processes and strategies for improving student retention in university-based enabling programs	The University of Newcastle	Edith Cowan University, University of New England, University of South Australia and University of Southern Queensland
CG10-1519	Engineering education for social and environmental justice	The University of Western Australia	Murdoch University, The University of Sydney, Engineers without Borders (Australia) and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (US)
CG10-1678	Enhancing the teaching of medication safety to nursing, pharmacy and medical students through interprofessional education (IPE)	The University of Newcastle	University of Tasmania

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
CG10-1522	Extending the science curriculum: teaching instrumental science at a distance in a global laboratory using a collaborative electronic laboratory notebook	The University of New South Wales	Curtin University, The University of Sydney, Chiang Mai University (Thailand) and University of Southampton (UK)
CG10-1730	Good practice for safeguarding student learning engagement in higher education institutions	Queensland University of Technology	N/A
CG10-1706	I've done a coursework masters, now I'd like to do a doctorate: can I?	The Australian National University	Edith Cowan University, James Cook University, Queensland University of Technology and The University of New South Wales
CG10-1583	Incorporating student experience and transformative learning into curriculum design and planning of undergraduate theological degrees	Melbourne College of Divinity	Adelaide College of Divinity, Australian Catholic University, Avondale College, Tabor College Inc. (SA), Tabor College Inc. (VIC), Australian & New Zealand Association of Theological Schools (ANZATS), Australian College of Theology, Australian Lutheran College, Brisbane College of Theology, Harvestwest Bible College, Moore College, Sydney College of Divinity, University of Otago (NZ), Wesley Institute
CG10-1691	Learning and teaching technical competence in the built environment using serious video game technology	The University of New South Wales	N/A
CG10-1504	Lifelong learning pathways: addressing participation and diversity targets in higher education	RMIT University	Curtin University, University of Technology, Sydney, University of Western Sydney

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
CG10-1582	National interactive online training for Australian universities in the disability standards for education (DSE)	University of Canberra	The Australian National University, Australian Association of Special Education (AASE), The Office of the Disability Discrimination Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission
CG10-1554	Promoting new ways of teaching and learning in science education with student-created digital animations	University of Wollongong	Monash University, Queensland University of Technology
CG10-1718	Supporting future curriculum leaders with embedding Indigenous knowledge on teaching practicum	Queensland University of Technology	N/A

A national approach to education in advanced microscopic characterisation through integrated learning tools (CG10-1490)

Lead institution
The University of Queensland

Partner institutions
Flinders University, The Australian National University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Sydney, The University of Western Australia

Project leader
Dr Bronwen Cribb

Project abstract
This project will lead to a broad transformation of our educational resources. In microscopy based characterisation, national surveys and meetings have established that there are two deficiencies: 1) traditional pedagogies do not optimally serve a growing student body needing this education in Australia; and 2) the diversity of this cohort cannot be adequately addressed within the current educational model. These challenges can be met with a new approach – the development and integration of a flexible and comprehensive blended learning program to create an enhanced education landscape available at a national level. This project brings together a team of experts in research-led teaching from six universities and will harness, extend and harmonise innovations in teaching and learning developed by them individually. The project is large in scope and is designed to complement a major education and e-research focus provided by the Australian Microscopy & Microanalysis Research Facility.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
E-learning, learning modules, blended learning, virtual microscope, microscope characterisation, virtual scanning electron microscopy, virtual transmission electron microscopy, VSEM, VTEM, OMNI

Scheduled completion
May 2012

Adoption, use and management of open educational resources to enhance teaching and learning in Australia (CG10-1687)

Lead institution
University of New England

Partner institutions
University of Southern Queensland, Massey University (NZ)

Project leader
Dr Carina Bossu

Project abstract
Although the open education resources (OER) movement began almost a decade ago, the Australian higher education sector seems to still be resisting this movement. This project aims to develop a feasibility protocol to enable and facilitate the adoption, use and management of OERs for learning and teaching within higher education (HE) institutions in Australia. This project will also explore how OERs will enhance teaching and learning, enable and widen participation for key social inclusion targets in higher education, promote lifelong learning and bridge the gap between non-formal, informal and formal learning in Australia. This is very important for the development of Australian education nationally and internationally because it will support educational institutions that are currently limited by the lack of guidance regarding OERs, speed up the process of appropriate adoption of OERs and provide additional venues for universities to pursue innovative strategies to better support current students, attract new ones and be internationally recognised and competitive.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
OERs, open content, copyright, intellectual property, licensing, teaching and learning with OERs, Australia, higher education

Scheduled completion
November 2012

An adaptive e-learning community of practice for mechanics courses in engineering (CG10-1586)

Lead institution
The University of New South Wales

Partner institutions
University of Tasmania, University of Technology, Sydney, University of Wollongong

Project leader
Dr Gangadhara Prusty

Project abstract
This project will apply artificial intelligence (AI) technology to learning of threshold concepts in undergraduate engineering mechanics in Australian universities. The technology supports interactive virtual laboratory activities (simulations) through which teachers can diagnose common conceptual sticking points in large classes sticking points that are often missed by book-and-board teaching and can only picked up by skilled one-to-one coaching. The software allows the teacher to analyse student decisions and then adapt the activity and the feedback given to students on their actions. Pilots in UNSW have established the effectiveness of the tools and method. This project will involve a diverse group of engineering educators from leading Australian universities in extending, spreading and further evaluating the use adaptive tutorials. Furthermore, this project will focus on fostering a community of practice revolving around the use of such technology through a strong focus on staff training and cross-institutional, cross disciplinary, collaboration.

Project funding
$211,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
Mechanics courses, engineering, community of practice, adaptive tutorials, threshold concepts, educational portal

Scheduled completion
December 2011

An online writing centre for undergraduate engineering students: a one-stop shop (CG10-1713)

Lead institution
The University of Sydney

Partner institutions
The University of New South Wales

Project leaders
Ms Helen Drury, Dr Rafael Calvo

Project abstract
This project will address ongoing concerns about the discrepancy between engineering students' communication skills and those identified as necessary by government and professional bodies. Surveys show that written communication skills are critical for engineering graduates. However, many engineering students find writing difficult and consider it a low priority and this attitude is often reinforced within curricula where many lecturers find teaching writing challenging, especially when faced with a diverse student cohort. The online writing centre (OWC) will provide a comprehensive and systematic approach to the development of student writing in engineering over the undergraduate years through the deployment of innovative technologies. Key genres from first to honours year will be made explicit to students in online support materials. In addition, the e-learning tools in the OWC will support the writing process through peer feedback and scaffolding and enable students to customise their writing via a semi-automated diagnostic tool. In this way, the OWC will also support lecturers through the whole curriculum process.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
Engineering education, online learning

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Bringing the learning home: re-entry programs to enhance study abroad outcomes in Australian universities (CG10-1549)

Lead institution
Murdoch University

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, University of Wollongong

Project leader
Dr Jan Gothard

Project abstract
Bringing the learning home: re-entry programs to enhance study abroad outcomes in Australian universities' seeks both to enhance Australian students' international exchange and study abroad experience and better integrate student educational experience into the home campus. The project team proposes to develop and pilot a module of teaching resources, based on a structured program of experience-based learning and targeted specifically at the distinctive types of study exchange programs typically undertaken by Australian students. The resultant flexible learning and teaching module, designed to develop global and intercultural competence and trialed at three partner institutions, will comprise teaching and learning strategies, reflective online exercises, assessment suggestions, readings, workshop materials and videos. While focussing on all three phases of study abroad (pre-departure, the period abroad and return), the resultant teaching module will particularly capitalise on the re-entry phase as an under-utilised opportunity both to reinforce cross-cultural skills and to embed educational experiences into home curricula, enhancing the benefits to both students and universities.

Project funding
$200,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Student exchange, mobility, re-entry, study abroad, global competence, campus internationalisation, graduate attributes, experiential learning

Scheduled completion
March 2012

Building reading resilience: developing a skills-based approach to literary studies (CG10-1566)

Lead institution
The Australian National University

Partner institutions
Charles Sturt University, Flinders University, The University of Queensland

Project leader
Associate Professor Rosanne Kennedy

Project abstract
This project introduces and trials strategies for assisting tertiary students in literary studies to develop the skill of 'reading resilience': that is, the ability to read and interpret complex and demanding literary texts. The project focusses on the ALTC funding priority area of 'Research and development focussing on issues of emerging and continuing importance'. In phase one, the project team will implement a reading journal that literature students will use to map, reflect upon and improve their reading practices and skills. We will measure the efficacy of the reading journal as a tool for encouraging resilient reading practices. In phase two, the project team will develop and disseminate a toolkit for promoting reading resilience. The reading resilience toolkit, to be used by colleagues teaching literature at tertiary level, will model curriculum and offer guidelines and strategies for promoting confidence and flexibility in students' reading practices.

Project funding
$192,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Reading resilience, reading, literary studies, literary pedagogy, curriculum, reading strategies, skill-based learning

Scheduled completion
May 2012

Creating cultural empathy and challenging attitudes through Indigenous narratives (CG10-1545)

Lead institution
Edith Cowan University

Partner institutions
Curtin University, The University of Notre Dame Australia, The University of Western Australia, Health Consumers' Council of Western Australia, The Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health

Project leaders
Professor Cobie Rudd, Associate Professor Moira Sim, Professor Colleen Hayward

Project abstract
This project responds to the national priority of 'Closing the Gap' between the health outcomes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The goal is to change the underlying attitudes of many health professionals that are known to negatively impact on their treatment of Indigenous people. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of a story-based learning approach that helps students 'walk-in-the-shoes' of others. An expert, multi-professional team of West Australian Indigenous and non-Indigenous people will lead the project, embedding better practices statewide and nationally. The innovative models for learning, resource development and collaboration will be shared with the wider community and it is anticipated that they will be readily adaptable for use in diverse geographical and cultural contexts within and beyond Australia.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Indigenous, narrative pedagogy, health students, attitudes, racism, open-source resources, closing the gap, cultural empathy, stories

Scheduled completion
September 2012

Developing strategies to address critical teacher attraction and retention issues in Australian rural, regional and remote schools (CG10-1541)

Lead institution
Curtin University

Partner institutions
Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University, The University of Western Australia

Project leader
Professor Sue Trinidad

Project abstract
The project aims to produce high achieving pre-service teachers who recognise working and living in rural, regional and remote communities as their first choice of employment on graduation and have a comprehensive understanding of rural, regional and remote education grounded in practical experience and theoretical knowledge. It will develop and extend the variety of rural, regional and remote field experiences and practicums; building effective and efficient working relationships between universities and the wider community. The project aims to build stronger capacity and credibility of universities through effective and sustainable university/community/industry partnerships to promote and support the preparation of teachers for work in rural, regional and remote Australia. This will include the development of opportunities to attract students from regional locations into teacher education programs, especially those who may not otherwise participate in higher education.

Project funding
$217,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Regional education, rural education, remote education, practicums, field-integrated experiences, teacher education, rural, regional, remote research

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Enabling retention: processes and strategies for improving student retention in university-based enabling programs (CG10-1697)

Lead institution
The University of Newcastle

Partner institutions
Edith Cowan University, University of New England, University of South Australia, University of Southern Queensland

Project leader
Dr Barry Hodges

Project abstract
This project will study student retention and attrition processes in five university-based enabling programs across Australia, an increasingly important pathway enabling equity target groups (especially low SES) to gain access to higher education. While extensive study has been devoted to the corresponding processes in undergraduate degree programs, little is known of the distinctive features of student attrition in these programs. This study will address that gap, providing an evidence base for development of appropriately targeted intervention measures to improve student retention in university-based enabling programs along with guidelines for their application. Awareness of our results will be disseminated by means of an extensive program of active and passive measures, including construction of a dedicated website, publication of scholarly articles and the holding of regional workshops.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Enabling education, retention, attrition, web-based resources, intervention strategies

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Engineering education for social and environmental justice (CG10-1519)

Lead institution
The University of Western Australia

Partner institutions
Murdoch University, The University of Sydney, Engineers without Borders (Australia), Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (US)

Project leader
Professor Caroline Baillie

Project abstract
The traditional approach to teaching engineering problem solving, where students are limited to finding purely technical solutions, is beginning to be critiqued in the light of rapid globalisation, and an increasing acceptance of the need for graduate engineers to locate technical requirements within their social, economic and environmental context . Students need to learn to take responsibility for their learning, to develop new ways of questioning the world around them and to apply this to real-world, messy problems. In this project an interdisciplinary team of scholars from four universities, together with an emerging Australian-wide enthusiasts network, and in collaboration with Engineers Without Borders Australia, will develop curriculum maps, implement pedagogical strategies and explore their effectiveness in helping students to pass through a threshold of learning and graduate as Engineers who work towards social and environmental justice.

Project funding
$213,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Engineering education, social justice, environmental justice, threshold concepts, critical pedagogy

Scheduled completion
May 2012

Enhancing the teaching of medication safety to nursing, pharmacy and medical students through interprofessional education (IPE) (CG10-1678)

Lead institution
The University of Newcastle

Partner institutions
University of Tasmania

Project leaders
Associate Professor Tracy Levett-Jones, Dr Helen Bellchambers and Dr Conor Gilligan

Project abstract
Medication incidents are the second most common type of incident reported in Australian hospitals. Communication errors have been identified as the primary issue in the majority of medication errors, adverse reactions, and near-misses. While IPE is critical for preparing nursing, pharmacy and medical students for their roles in the medication team, in Australia, this approach is seldom used for teaching the communication skills inherent in medication safety. Against this background we have designed a project that will: 1. examine the needs of nursing, pharmacy and medical programs in relation to the integration of IPE and medication safety into curricula; 2. develop and implement a range of multimedia resources that will enhance students' communication skills and promote medication safety; 3. examine the impact of the teaching and learning resources on students' communication competence, knowledge acquisition, changes in attitudes toward interdisciplinary co-operation, and satisfaction with the learning experience; and 4. examine the feasibility of IPE when used for teaching medication safety.

Project funding
$217,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Medication safety, interprofessional education, interprofessional communication, patient journey, nursing students, pharmacy students, medical students

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Extending the science curriculum: teaching instrumental science at a distance in a global laboratory using a collaborative electronic laboratory notebook (CG10-1522)

Lead institution
The University of New South Wales

Partner institutions
Curtin University, The University of Sydney, Chiang Mai University (Thailand), University of Southampton (UK)

Project leaders
Professor Brynn Hibbert, Mr Jeremy Frey

Project abstract
The project addresses how, in the coming decade, we will be teaching instrumental-based science, collaborative learning activities, and issues of delivering the curriculum over the web. By permitting virtual access to key equipment, the project will connect students who at present have no opportunity to engage with the practice of modern science. We will deliver a cohesive program of tertiary science experiments using instruments that communicate with the experimenters via an electronic laboratory notebook regardless of the location of the participants (students and their mentors). The program will be actively distributed throughout the sector and will be sustained by a growing community of practice. The project will generate evidence of the efficacy and use of these approaches, which will form the basis of the critical analysis by the project team. It is fitting that the project will conclude during the UN International Year of Chemistry (2011) and will showcase, on a world scale, collaborative teaching and learning in science.

Project funding
$215,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
Science curriculum, electronic laboratory notebook, collaborative learning, e-science

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Good practice for safeguarding student learning engagement in higher education institutions (CG10-1730)

Lead institution
Queensland University of Technology

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Associate Professor Karen Nelson

Project abstract
The perennial issues of student engagement and retention in higher education have attracted recent attention, particularly because of the focus on wider participation and the discussion of teaching and learning funding performance measures. The aim of this project is to lead the design of a suite of resources to guide good practice consistent with the notions of equity and social justice, for monitoring student learning engagement (MSLE). The project will build capacity within the participating institutions to lead key student engagement initiatives through the use of a participatory action research methodology and by harnessing the expertise of key personnel from five Australasian universities in a pilot implementation stage. Three key deliverables and associated outcomes are envisaged: (1) a good practice guide for design and implementation of institutional MSLE policy and practice; (2) a set of principles for good practice in MSLE; and (3) a collection of resources for and exemplars of good practice to be taken up by the sector.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Student engagement and retention, institutional policy and practice, monitoring student learning engagement

Scheduled completion
November 2012

I've done a coursework masters, now I'd like to do a doctorate: can I? (CG10-1706)

Lead institution
The Australian National University

Partner institutions
Edith Cowan University, James Cook University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of New South Wales

Project leader
Dr Margaret Kiley

Project abstract
The aim of this project is to illuminate the poorly understood research education components of coursework masters programs. With the substantial increase in enrolments in coursework masters and with a growing number of applicants seeking PhD entry and scholarships in Australia with qualifications other than Honours, this project examines the extent to which a coursework masters that includes a research project provides effective, supportable entry to a research program in Australia. Given the plethora of Masters programs with extremes of variability, eg one to two years fulltime in length, and with a research project worth less than a quarter of the total credit to those worth up to one half, it is critical that we understand this variability and what it means for students, institutions and funding bodies. The project specifically addresses the ALTC priority of research and development that focuses on issues of emerging and continuing importance, critical in light of the changing demographic of students in graduate education.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Research, supervision

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Incorporating student experience and transformative learning into curriculum design and planning of undergraduate theological degrees (CG10-1583)

Lead institution
Melbourne College of Divinity

Partner institutions
Adelaide College of Divinity, Australian Catholic University, Avondale College, Tabor College Inc. (SA), Tabor College Inc. (VIC), Australian & New Zealand Association of Theological Schools (ANZATS), Australian College of Theology, Australian Lutheran College, Brisbane College of Theology, Harvestwest Bible College, Moore College, Sydney College of Divinity, University of Otago (NZ), Wesley Institute

Project leader
Professor Paul Beirne

Project abstract
The project aims to examine the undergraduate theological education curriculum as it seeks to provide an increasingly diverse population of theological students with a transformative education. The project will: 1. analyse the extent to which the needs and aspirations of students are being met through the current undergraduate theological curriculum. To this end, surveys of students will be conducted at progressive stages of their studies; 2. conduct research on claims by theological colleges of providing transformative learning experiences, and examine how these claims accord with student experience and with modern theories of transformative learning. If disparity is evident between the claims, the theories, and students' experience, individual colleges and the sector as a whole will need to develop a strategic approach to curriculum design and to the incorporation of transformative learning in a theological context; 3. make recommendations for designing such a strategic approach; and 4. disseminate the results and recommendations of the study within the sector, and to other sectors.

Project funding
$150,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Undergraduate degree in theology, student expectations and experience, expectations of major stakeholders, transformative learning, curriculum design, disseminating findings across sectors

Scheduled completion
May 2012

Learning and teaching technical competence in the built environment using serious video game technology (CG10-1691)

Lead institution
The University of New South Wales

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Associate Professor Sidney Newton

Project abstract
The current national initiative to define, implement and assure academic standards in the higher education sector will almost certainly bring a keen spotlight to bear on the identification and testing of competences. This will render effective calibration of the learning and assessment of competences absolutely critical. Whereas knowledge-based learning can quite readily be demonstrated and assessed through written and oral tests, technical skills must be demonstrated and assessed through actual activities. Construction technology is a significant, core component of all undergraduate building and related degrees in Australia. This project will use the sophisticated interactive virtual reality simulation environments found in serious video game technologies to enable students to practice and demonstrate their technical skills in domestic construction technology, through a forensic analysis of the detailed house models represented in the game. Whilst the project is specific to domestic construction technology, the approach has application across all sectors of higher education where technical professional skills are taught and assessed.

Project funding
$213,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
Serious video games, technical competences, learner-centric development framework, learning technology, assessment

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Lifelong learning pathways: addressing participation and diversity targets in higher education (CG10-1504)

Lead institution
RMIT University

Partner institutions
Curtin University, University of Technology, Sydney, University of Western Sydney

Project leaders
Associate Professor Anthony Mills, Associate Professor Patricia McLaughlin

Project abstract
This project will examine existing pathways and articulation models that enhance the participation of under-represented groups in higher education. Using the unqualified, diverse workforce in the economically significant discipline of the built environment, the project will develop a best practice lifelong learning model that will improve the diversity of the student population in higher education. Dissemination of the exemplar processes and procedures of the model will enable adoption by all institutions in the sector, thus enhancing opportunities to satisfy diversity targets and goals.

Project funding
$171,000

Program Priority
Strategic approaches addressing student diversity

Key words
Pathways, diversity, articulation, lifelong learning, dual sector, built environment

Scheduled completion
June 2012

National interactive online training for Australian universities in the Disability Standards for Education (DSE) (CG10-1582)

Lead institution
University of Canberra

Partner institutions
The Australian National University, Australian Association of Special Education (AASE), The Office of the Disability Discrimination Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission

Project leader
Dr Christine Kilham

Project abstract
This proposal aims to enhance the tertiary education experiences of students with and without disabilities through the provision of an interactive online staff training program about the Disability Standards for Education (2005). The project team consists of the University of Canberra (lead institution), the Australian National University, the Australian Association of Special Education, and the Office of the Disability Discrimination Commissioner and the Race Discrimination Commissioner within the Australian Human Rights Commission. Following consultation with the sector, a prototype training program will be developed, using best practice principles for content, technology and pedagogy. The program will be piloted and tested at two Australian universities, and made available to higher education institutions nationwide to customise for their own context and/or complement existing approaches. The materials developed in the project can: assist universities to meet their legal obligations; lead to a more coordinated national approach with a minimum of resource duplication; and foster more inclusive communities.

Project funding
$218,000

Program Priority
Strategic approaches addressing student diversity

Key words
Disability standards for education, student participation, university staff professional development, interactive online staff training, inclusion, human rights

Scheduled completion
July 2012

Promoting new ways of teaching and learning in science education with student-created digital animations (CG10-1554)

Lead institution
University of Wollongong

Partner institutions
Monash University, Queensland University of Technology

Project leader
Associate Professor Garry Hoban

Project abstract
Science education academics need to incorporate new ways of teaching and learning to engage student teachers in science knowledge. 'Slowmation' (abbreviated from 'Slow-motion Animation') is a new teaching approach that encourages students to use their own technologies and create a narrated digital animation to explain a science concept that is played in slow motion at 2 frames/second (Hoban, 2005, 2007). It is a form of stop-motion animation that integrates features of clay animation, object animation and digital storytelling and encourages students to design a multimodal representation of their learning. This ALTC project will embed and upscale the new teaching approach to science education academics across Australia who instruct either early childhood, primary or secondary science teacher education students. New resources in the form of modules demonstrating animation skills and exemplars of implementation in university classes will be designed to support implementation. This will be accompanied by development of a professional learning community of science education academics to enhance dissemination.

Project funding
$143,000

Program Priority
Innovation and new technologies

Key words
Student-created animations, slowmation, science education, pedagogy, science content, professional learning community

Scheduled completion
February 2012

Supporting future curriculum leaders with embedding Indigenous knowledge on teaching practicum (CG10-1718)

Lead institution
Queensland University of Technology

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leaders
Dr Juliana McLaughlin, Ms Mayrah Dreise and Dr Susan Whatman

Project abstract
This project will develop long term, future-oriented opportunities for Indigenous pre-service teachers to develop expertise in Embedding Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives using principles of Indigenous research methodology (privileging Indigenous voices and research). It is a two-year case study catering to three distinct stakeholder groups: pre-service teachers, their supervising school teachers and QUT staff supporting pre-service teachers on practicum. For all stakeholder groups, it will change the discourse on how Indigenous Knowledges are exemplified in e-portfolios, which in turn allow Indigenous pre-service teachers, school teachers and QUT staff to demonstrate leadership in their field through tangible products such as units of work, resources, assessment and reflection tools. A second outcome will be the development and implementation of a model for embedding Indigenous knowledge and perspectives within teaching practice. Finally, with the new DEEWR research code for Indigenous Knowledges, the theoretical development of this field is achieved by disseminating widely throughout the academy, Indigenous education channels and communities.

Project funding
$202,000

Program Priority
Research and development

Key words
Indigenous, pre-service teachers, teaching practice

Scheduled completion
November 2012

3.0 Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program

Overview

The Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program is designed to build leadership capacity in ways that promote and advance learning and teaching in Australian higher education.

In 2010, applications were sought addressing three program priorities:

- Institutional leadership

- Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary leadership

- Consolidating leadership by building on the outcomes of projects funded under this program in previous years.

Institutional leadership

The ALTC expects the major outcome from institutional leadership projects to be a demonstrable enhancement of learning and teaching through leadership capacity-building at the institutional level in Australian higher education.

Funding was available in the range of $150,000 to $220,000 for projects which could be designed to take up to two years.

Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary leadership projects

The ALTC expects the major outcome from disciplinary and cross-disciplinary leadership projects to be a demonstrable enhancement of learning and teaching through leadership capacity-building in discipline structures, communities of practice and cross-disciplinary networks.

Projects should strengthen learning and teaching throughout the higher education sector within a discipline, national community of practice or cross-disciplinary area. Funding was available in the range of $80,000 to $220,000. Projects could take up to two years.

Consolidating outcomes of leadership projects

The ALTC expects the major outcome of projects funded under this priority to be consolidating leadership by building on the outcomes of projects funded in earlier years under the Leadership for Excellence in Learning and Teaching Program.

Funding was available in the range of $80,000 to $150,000 for projects which could be designed to take up to one-and-a-half years.

Funded projects

Ten projects were approved for funding in 2010.

Table 2: Leadership projects approved in 2010

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
LE10-1728	Academic leadership for succession: research and implementation across the arts, social sciences and humanities in Australia	University of Canberra	The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH)
LE10-1726	Building distributed leadership in designing and implementing a quality management framework for Online Learning Environments	Deakin University	Macquarie University, RMIT University, University of South Australia, University of Southern Queensland
LE10-1659	Developing and implementing a leadership capacity building program for teaching and learning in nursing	University of Western Sydney	University of Technology, Sydney
LE10-1734	Identifying, building and sustaining leadership capacity for communities of practice in higher education	University of Southern Queensland	Deakin University, Flinders University, Miami University (Ohio USA)
LE10-1736	'Just-in-time; just-for-me' narrative support for unit coordinators	Murdoch University	Edith Cowan University
LE10-1608	Keeping on track: teacher leaders for Indigenous postgraduate coursework students	Australian Catholic University	James Cook University
LE10-1732	Leadership for future generations: a national network for university languages	The University of Melbourne	Monash University, RMIT University, The Australian National University, University of Wollongong
LE10-1727	Sustainable leadership of teaching and learning initiatives: lessons from the promoting excellence initiative	Deakin University	Murdoch University, Queensland University of Technology, Swinburne University of Technology
LE10-1724	Teaching and learning: the role played by academic boards	University of South Australia	N/A
LE10-1602	Writin' Up: Indigenous women and educational leadership	Australian Catholic University	Queensland University of Technology

Academic leadership for succession: research and implementation across the arts, social sciences and humanities in Australia (LE10-1728)

Lead institution
University of Canberra

Partner institutions
The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH)

Project leader
Professor Monique Skidmore

Project abstract
In the absence of any sector-wide succession planning and in the face of significant impending academic retirements, this project builds upon five earlier ALTC projects to create a robust succession strategy for leadership in the university arts, social sciences and humanities sector. Across this sector the project seeks to: 1. review, summarise and interrogate existing literature on the requirements and capacity for leadership in academia; 2. determine across DASSH's 44 member universities current and impending leadership needs; 3. analyse the existing outcomes and success of previously funded ALTC Leadership projects as they relate to building academic leadership and any succession planning; and 4. consolidate these projects across the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities through: a. an analysis of the coverage of the sector by previous leadership funding leading to an analysis of the gaps in this coverage; and b. creating a transformative leadership succession strategy that will fulfill the remaining existing and expected needs of the sector for implementation by the DASSH Board.

Project funding
$149,000

Program Priority
Consolidating leadership outcomes

Key words
Succession planning, arts, social sciences and humanities,

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Building distributed leadership in designing and implementing a quality management framework for online learning environments (LE10-1726)

Lead institution
Deakin University

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, RMIT University, University of South Australia, University of Southern Queensland

Project leader
Dr Dale Holt

Project abstract
This project will design and implement a framework that uses a distributed leadership approach for the quality management of online learning environments (OLE) in Australian higher education. The distributed leadership approach will enable the development of the framework and in turn contribute to its implementation. The framework will be the vehicle for building leadership capacity. The project will draw upon the combined expertise and strengths of five universities using different learning management systems and approaches to social networking and who are at various stages of deploying their next generation online learning environments. The universities involved represent different groupings of institutions in the sector and each is reliant on disparate leadership groups to successfully implement and sustain their environments. The project will determine the key components of such a quality management framework and the key sources of evidence that need to be collected to ensure that institutional investments generate good student learning experiences.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Institutional leadership

Key words
Online learning environments, distributed leadership

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Developing and implementing a leadership capacity building program for teaching and learning in nursing (LE10-1659)

Lead institution
University of Western Sydney

Partner institutions
University of Technology, Sydney

Project leader
Dr Elizabeth Halcomb

Project abstract
An acute shortage of nursing academics is leading to a rise in the number of new academics entering nursing faculties to service the growing number of student enrolments. Currently, despite the recognition of leadership capacity building as a priority for the nursing profession, there are limited professional development opportunities in the area of leadership development. This project describes an innovative strategy to develop leadership capacity in early career nursing academics (ECNAs) via a combination of workshops, online activities, peer learning networks and academic mentoring. Building leadership capacity amongst early career nurse academics will facilitate their transition into academia, foster the development of communities of practice and enhance scholarly learning and teaching within the discipline. The outcomes of the project will have practical significance by extending our knowledge of the types of support that are effective and sustainable in supporting ECNAs to develop leadership capacity.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary

Key words
Leadership, capacity building, nurse academic, nursing leadership

Scheduled completion
January 2013

Identifying, building and sustaining leadership capacity for communities of practice in higher education (LE10-1734)

Lead institution
University of Southern Queensland

Partner institutions
Deakin University, Flinders University, Miami University (Ohio USA)

Project leaders
Dr Jacquelin McDonald, Dr Cassandra Star

Project abstract
This project focuses on building the leadership capacity of facilitators of communities of practice (CoPs) for learning and teaching. Research into leadership in its various forms in higher education has focused on formal programs for professional development and yet has identified, at best, tenuous links between such programs and student learning outcomes. CoPs provide a context for academics to engage in supportive and sustained learning situated in their teaching practice. However, for such communities to be successful, they need to develop informal leadership structures, often unsupported by the institution, and foster leadership skills that effectively meet the needs of teaching academics, while negotiating the institutional leadership terrain. An increasing body of current literature suggests that well-led and structured CoPs are successful in leading change and transforming teaching and learning practice, but there is little attention to the leadership needs of these groups in the higher education context. This project seeks to fill this important gap.

Project funding
$218,000

Program Priority
Institutional leadership

Key words
CoPs, facilitators, distributed leadership, contingent leadership, leadership capacity building

Scheduled completion
September 2012

'Just-in-time; just-for-me' narrative support for unit coordinators (LE10-1736)

Lead institution
Murdoch University

Partner institutions
Edith Cowan University

Project leader
Dr Susan Roberts

Project abstract
This project builds on a previous ALTC project that clarified the role of unit coordinators as leaders of learning in higher education (UCaLL, LE8-824). The findings of UCaLL revealed that there is little targeted support in place for unit coordinators to handle the many issues that arise from leading a unit of study. Studies that focus on program chairs or unit coordinators are already developing relevant training resources. However, these do not meet the 'just-in-time, just-for-me' criteria recommended by Scott et al (2008) for occasions that demand, more or less, immediate responses. Narratives have been selected as the approach that will address this need because they facilitate the capturing of relational experience and emotions at a particular time and in a similar context. Narratives thus become a tool upon which to base discussions with 'fellow travellers' that may potentially resolve similar problems. Data will be collected by interviews with a range of unit coordinators from universities Australia wide.

Project funding
$150,000

Program Priority
Consolidating leadership outcomes

Key words
Narrative inquiry, unit coordinators, professional development, leaders of learning support, learning leadership, 'just-in-time, just for me' narrative support

Scheduled completion
May 2012

Keeping on track: teacher leaders for Indigenous postgraduate coursework students (LE10-1608)

Lead institution
Australian Catholic University

Partner institutions
James Cook University

Project leaders
Dr Jack Frawley, Associate Professor Nereda White

Project abstract
In 2008 there were 1527 Indigenous postgraduate students across Australian universities out of a total enrolment of 278,323. This represents approximately 0.54 per cent (DEEWR, 2010), a clear shortfall against the accepted benchmark of around 3 per cent (IHEAC, 2007). Undoubtedly more needs to be done to recruit Indigenous students into postgraduate programs, and, importantly, these programs need to be designed and taught with special attention to the needs of Indigenous postgraduate students. While there has been significant work in the area of supporting Indigenous researchers and supervisors (Devlin & James, 2007; Laycock et al, 2009), very little research has focussed on similar issues for Indigenous students and their teachers within postgraduate coursework programs. The project will address this lack of research by focussing on the postgraduate teaching and learning experiences of Indigenous students and their teachers. The project will identify and develop a teacher leadership framework consisting of a series of leadership capability statements informed by the data.

Project funding
$217,000

Program Priority
Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary

Key words
Indigenous postgraduate coursework, teacher leadership, leadership capabilities

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Leadership for future generations: a national network for university languages (LE10-1732)

Lead institution
The University of Melbourne

Partner institutions
Monash University, RMIT University, The Australian National University, University of Wollongong

Project leader
Professor John Hajek

Project abstract
Knowledge of other languages and cultures is crucial to Australia's effective participation in a globalised world. However, over recent decades, the teaching and learning of languages other than English (LOTE) in Australian universities have been the subject of growing alarm. The situation is frequently described as a crisis. This project will promote a stronger languages culture in higher education in Australia, by building strategic leadership across disciplines and institutions through a tertiary languages network. The network will systematise sharing of good practice, and help break down the silo structures that, in many instances, inhibit students' abilities to take up and follow through with LOTE study. Based on recent detailed research, and drawing on the leadership qualities manifest in the dedication, proficiency and inventiveness of languages teachers across the nation, the project will create an enduring structure through which successes can be more readily disseminated throughout the sector. This will produce improved student pathways, greater retention rates and better proficiency outcomes.

Project funding
$215,000

Program Priority
Disciplinary and cross-disciplinary

Key words
Universities, network, leadership, curriculum development, professional development, exchange, advocacy

Scheduled completion
November 2012

Sustainable leadership of teaching and learning initiatives: lessons from the promoting excellence initiative (LE10-1727)

Lead institution
Deakin University

Partner institutions
Murdoch University, Queensland University of Technology, Swinburne University of Technology

Project leaders
Associate Professor Judy Nagy, Ms Georgia Smeal

Project abstract
The purposes of this proposed project are twofold. The first is to distil and highlight the leadership challenges faced by the leaders and champions of promoting excellence initiative (PEI) and to feature as exemplars those initiatives that have had the most positive impact within an institution. We contend that successful initiatives are contingent upon the contextual environment, formal leaders, others within the leadership hierarchy and the expectations of staff they are intended to motivate. The second purpose is to learn from and provide effective leverage for resources already expended by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council in relation to the PEI. Our proposed project will identify what has been implemented and embedded through PEI and examine to what extent initiatives have promoted institutional excellence and engagement in learning and teaching. In essence, we propose a benefit analysis of the PEI, while focussing on the leadership skills required to lead with, through and around formal hierarchical structures to achieve objectives.

Project funding
$235,000

Program Priority
Institutional leadership

Key words
Institutional policy

Scheduled completion
January 2012

Teaching and learning: the role played by academic boards (LE10-1724)

Lead institution
University of South Australia

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leaders
Professor Tricia Vilkinas, Associate Professor Magaret Peters

Project abstract
Academic boards have a central role to play in setting strategic direction and maintaining quality for the teaching and learning programs of universities. To date, there has been no research investigating how academic boards articulate and monitor their university's strategic direction in terms of teaching and learning. What role do they play and what impact do they have on teaching and learning? In each university the teaching and learning agenda is normally defined by a teaching and learning framework that identifies the key parts of a universities activities in this area, and also the relationship between these activities. The framework used by each university varies across the sector, with some universities focusing on internationalisation while others focus on the use of technology or equity issues. The focus for this project is on the role that academic boards play in teaching and learning. In particular, "How should they be structured, managed and equipped to provide effective academic governance in higher education institutions?" (Dooley, 2007; p 5) Also of interest is whether academic boards play an advisory or leadership role in their university.

Project funding
$80,000

Program Priority
Institutional leadership

Key words
Academic boards, governance, leadership

Scheduled completion
January 2012

Writin' Up: Indigenous women and educational leadership (LE10-1602)

Lead institution
Australian Catholic University

Partner institutions
Queensland University of Technology

Project leaders
Associate Professor Nereda White, Dr Bronwyn Fredericks

Project abstract
Within the Australian higher education sector publication rates are increasingly a vital measure of individual and institutional performance and additionally impact on promotion and financial aspirations. Yet, many Indigenous women academics rarely publish or do not publish at all despite undertaking work activities and research which could be turned into publications. At a time when Indigenous issues and the inequities and disparities across all sectors are increasing being discussed under the 'Close the Gap' initiatives and by COAG it is imperative that Indigenous academic women contribute to the dialogue in a range of ways, including via publications that can inform debate. There are few effective strategies to support academic writing and in particular to support Indigenous academic women to write. The workshop, 'Tiddas Writin' Up' seeks to address this gap. The workshop will offer high level information and discussion about improving research outputs and improving the quality of publications along with offering a hands-on approach to build confidence and recognition.

Project funding
$40,000

Program Priority
Consolidating leadership outcomes

Key words
Indigenous women, academic writing, Indigenous leadership, Indigenous knowledge sharing, mentoring, publication, research, workshop

Scheduled completion
June 2011

4.0 Priority Projects Program

Overview

The Priority Projects Program responds to priorities emanating from the ALTC's designated responsibilities and priorities identified by the Board.

The ALTC's designated responsibilities which are supported through this program are:

- Liaison with the sector about options for articulating and monitoring academic standards
- Improvement of assessment practices throughout the sector, including investigation of the feasibility of a national portfolio assessment scheme
- Facilitation of benchmarking of effective learning and teaching at national and international levels.

The funding priorities in 2010 were:

- Academic standards, assessment practices and reporting
- Curriculum renewal
- Teaching and learning spaces
- Internationalisation (new priority in 2010).

Funding was available in the range of $80,000 to $220,000. Applications building directly on previous ALTC or AUTC projects have a funding range of &80,000 to $150,000. Projects could be designed to take up to two years.

Academic standards, assessment practices and student learning outcomes

The ALTC expects the major outcome from this priority to be the improvement of higher education assessment practices and student learning outcomes within one or more disciplines or fields of study at either the undergraduate or postgraduate level.

Curriculum renewal

The ALTC expects the major outcome of this priority to be the development and modelling of contemporary curricula that meet student and employer needs and provide the basis for ongoing personal and professional development for students.

Teaching and learning spaces

The ALTC expects the major outcome of this priority to be the development and sharing of creative solutions and models for new and modified physical learning spaces to enhance learning and teaching in higher education institutions.

Internationalisation

The ALTC expects the major outcome of this priority to be the development and modelling of the effective integration of international and/or intercultural dimensions into learning and teaching practice and address key issues such as curriculum design, learning support, transnational education and intercultural competency.

Funded projects

Thirty projects were approved for funding in 2010.

Table 3: Priority projects approved in 2010[1]

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1771	A holistic model for research supervision of international students in engineering and information technology disciplines	Queensland University of Technology	Curtin University, The University of Western Australia
PP10-1783	Academic integrity standards: aligning policy and practice in Australian universities	University of South Australia	La Trobe University, The University of Adelaide, The University of Newcastle, The University of Western Australia, University of Wollongong
PP10-1812	After standards: engaging and embedding history's standards using international best practice to inform curriculum renewal	The University of New South Wales	University of New England, The University of Queensland
PP10-1785	An implementation framework for OSCE 'best practice guidelines' designed to improve nurse preparedness for practice	Griffith University	Flinders University, University of Technology, Sydney, The Centre for Remote Health Alice Springs
PP10-1817	Assessing professional teaching standards in practicum using digital technologies with Indigenous and non-Indigenous pre-service teachers	University of Western Sydney	Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University
PP10-1612	Australian youth work education: curriculum renewal and a model for sustainability for niche professions	Edith Cowan University	Australian Catholic University, RMIT University, Victoria University
PP10-1784	Authentic assessment of students in practice settings: a participatory design approach	The University of Sydney	Charles Sturt University, Deakin University

[1] Includes two special projects: PP10-1606 and PP10-1751

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1638	Building the culture of evidence-based practice in teacher preparation for mathematics teaching	University of Tasmania	Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Murdoch University, The University of Melbourne, University of New England, The University of Queensland
PP10-1646	Capstone courses in undergraduate business degrees: better course design, better learning activities, better assessment	Griffith University	Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Newcastle, University of Wollongong
PP10-1745	Collaborative building design education using building information modelling	University of South Australia	The University of Newcastle
PP10-1806	Coordinated interprofessional curriculum renewal for ehealth capability in clinical health professional degrees	The University of Melbourne	Curtin University, The University of Queensland, University of Western Sydney
PP10-1774	Creating student-focussed, web-learning resources to support the development of and provide evidence of occupational therapy students' graduating competencies	The University of Newcastle	Charles Sturt University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, University of Western Sydney, Occupational Therapy Australia
PP10-1741	Curriculum renewal and interprofessional health education: establishing capabilities, outcomes and standards	University of Technology, Sydney	Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Griffith University, Monash University, The University of Notre Dame Australia, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney, The University of Western Australia, Australasian Interprofessional Practice and Education Network (AIPPEN), Department of Health WA

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1647	Curriculum renewal in engineering through theory driven evaluation	The University of Queensland	CQUniversity, Charles Darwin University, Curtin University, Deakin University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Western Australia, University of South Australia, University of Southern Queensland, Canterbury University (NZ)
PP10-1769	Curriculum renewal in public health nutrition	University of Wollongong	Curtin University, Deakin University, Flinders University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Newcastle, The University of Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast
PP10-1607	Engineering thresholds: an approach to curriculum renewal	The University of Western Australia	N/A
PP10-1801	Examination of doctoral degrees in creative arts: process, practice and standards	University of Canberra	CQUniversity
PP10-1778	Exploring intercultural competency in engineering	University of Wollongong	Queensland University of Technology, University of Tasmania, University of Technology, Sydney
PP10-1810	Internationalisation at home: enhancing intercultural capabilities of business and health teachers, students, and curricula	University of Canberra	Griffith University

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1789	Internationalising the Australian law curriculum for enhanced global legal education and practice	Curtin University	The Australian National University, The University of Sydney
PP10-1640	Quantitative skills in science: curriculum models for the future	The University of Queensland	James Cook University, University of Western Sydney, Purdue University (USA), University of Maryland (USA)
PP10-1816	Strengthening alignment between secondary and tertiary biology education and enhancing student transitions in the sciences	Flinders University	La Trobe University, Monash University, The University of Melbourne
PP10-1603	Strengthening Australian legal education by integrating clinical experiences: identifying and supporting effective practices	Monash University	Griffith University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University, The Australian National University, The University of New South Wales
PP10-1628	The eOSCE: advancing technology to improve students' learning and assessment reliability	The University of Newcastle	The University of Queensland
PP10-1781	The QUT innovation space: a prototype trans-disciplinary learning environment for entrepreneurship education	Queensland University of Technology	N/A
PP10-1624	The vignette-matching procedure: an innovative approach to assess competencies in psychology and clinical practicum	University of Wollongong	Macquarie University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Newcastle, The University of Sydney, University of Western Sydney
PP10-1802	TKNe: a transnational knowledge network in education that facilitates internationalisation	University of New England	CQUniversity, Charles Sturt University, Monash University, RMIT University, The University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, University of Western Sydney

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1786	Transformational learning in the 'helping professions' as best practice	Tabor College Inc. (VIC)	N/A
PP10-1642	Using professional standards: assessing work integrated learning in initial teacher education	Griffith University	Deakin University, University of South Australia
PP10-1775	VirtualPREX: innovative assessment using a 3D virtual world with pre-service teachers	University of New England	Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, Curtin University, The University of Adelaide, University of Hamburg (Germany)

A holistic model for research supervision of international students in engineering and information technology disciplines (PP10-1771)

Lead institution
Queensland University of Technology

Partner institutions
Curtin University, The University of Western Australia

Project leaders
Professor Yarlagadda Prasad, Professor James Trevelyan, Professor Hema Sharda

Project abstract
A large proportion (over 12 per cent) of international and non-English speaking background (NESB) postgraduate research students enrol in engineering and information technology (IT) programs in Australian universities. They find themselves in an advanced research culture, and are technically and scientifically challenged early in their programs. This is in addition to cultural, social and religious isolation and linguistic barriers they have to contend with. The project team surveyed this cohort at QUT and UWA, on the hypothesis that they face challenges that are more discipline-specific. The results of the survey indicate that existing supervisory frameworks which are limited to linguistic contexts are not fully assisting these students and supervisors to achieve high quality research. The goal of this project is to extend these supervisory frameworks to a holistic model that will address the unique needs and supervisory issues these students face in engineering and IT disciplines. The model will be useable by all other Australian universities.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Non-English speaking background, research, supervision, linguistics, cultural issues

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Academic integrity standards: aligning policy and practice in Australian universities (PP10-1783)

Lead institution
University of South Australia

Partner institutions
La Trobe University, The University of Adelaide, The University of Newcastle, The University of Western Australia, University of Wollongong

Project leader
Dr Tracey Bretag

Project abstract
This project will develop a shared understanding across the Australian higher education sector of academic integrity standards with the aim of improving the alignment of academic integrity policies and their implementation. As academic integrity is fundamental to assessment practices, it is critical that it is dealt with consistently by staff and taught to students. This project will review policies and procedures and the ways that universities educate students and staff about their academic integrity expectations. We will provide an overview of current responses to student breaches of academic integrity by analysing Australian universities' online policies, and collaborating with stakeholders from the six universities represented by the project team, as well as a colloquium of national and international experts. This overview will inform the establishment of exemplars, and the development of teaching and learning resources that align academic integrity policy with good practice. Australian universities will be encouraged to adapt these exemplars/resources to their own contexts to facilitate consistent academic standards.

Project funding
$174,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Standards, academic integrity, policy, practice

Scheduled completion
June 2012

After standards: engaging and embedding history's standards using international best practice to inform curriculum renewal (PP10-1812)

Lead institution
The University of New South Wales

Partner institutions
University of New England, The University of Queensland

Project leader
Associate Professor Sean Brawley

Project abstract
History is currently a 'demonstration discipline' in the ALTC's Learning and Teaching Academic Standards project. The new threshold learning outcomes (TLO) and the new standards environment that TEQSA will oversee, present history with both a significant challenge (navigating the new environment when the discipline has no standards experience) and a unique opportunity (using the TLO's promulgation to drive cognate agendas around curriculum renewal). It is the ambition of this project to build a community of practice through which Australian historians – systematically, universally, collegially, reflectively and effectively – respond to standards implementation and the resulting opportunities for curriculum renewal. The project has the endorsement of the discipline's peak body (Australian Historical Association), the Australasian Council of the Deans of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and the active support of each of the 31 institutions that have history majors. This project will model, demonstrate and evaluate approaches and processes in dissemination and implementation that will be applicable to other discipline communities.

Project funding
$172,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Standards, curriculum renewal, community of practice

Scheduled completion
December 2012

An implementation framework for OSCE 'best practice guidelines' designed to improve nurse preparedness for practice. (PP10-1785)

Lead institution
Griffith University

Partner institutions
Flinders University, University of Technology, Sydney, The Centre for Remote Health Alice Springs

Project leader
Dr Marion Mitchell

Project abstract
Objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs) are a regular component of nursing and midwifery programs in Australia and internationally. OSCEs are a valuable strategy for learning and assessment of 'fitness to practice' in clinical practice, however, there is little pedagogical guidance on how they should be utilised. This project will develop a framework that guides the implementation of best practice guidelines for OSCEs in diverse nursing and midwifery education programs across Australia, to advance students' clinical competence. Four trial sites, featuring simulation laboratories, nursing and midwifery programs and remote clinical learning environments will trial and evaluate the best practice guidelines. Feedback from staff and students will inform the principles generated for the implementation framework. The project will develop a range of learning and assessment strategies. The preliminary evidence of the effectiveness of the best practice guidelines for OSCEs within nursing programs will be used to improve further student confidence and outcomes.

Project funding
$212,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Best practice, guidelines, nursing, OCSE

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Assessing professional teaching standards in practicum using digital technologies with Indigenous and non-Indigenous pre-service teachers (PP10-1817)

Lead institution
University of Western Sydney

Partner institutions
Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University

Project leader
Dr Les Vozzo

Project abstract
More effective support for Indigenous people in higher education is needed. This project will initiate and evaluate strategies supporting Indigenous and non-Indigenous pre-service teachers in self-assessing and documenting their attainment of professional teaching standards in practicum settings. The project will use digital technologies and community engagement as a focus for a virtual, professional learning community for pre-service teachers and academics, where knowledge about self-assessment and teaching Indigenous students is shared. Indigenous and non-Indigenous pre-service teachers in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) degrees at UWS, ACU and CSU will participate in the project as students who will undertake their practicum in rural, remote, urban or regional NSW schools. The outcomes of the project include a suite of assessment procedures (including e-Portfolio use), course modules for addressing professional teaching standards, improved pedagogical (including digital) practice, inter-university collaboration, and the establishment of a virtual professional learning community supporting Indigenous education.

Project funding
$177,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Professional teaching standards, assessment, evidence-based practice, teacher education, practicum, digital technologies, Indigenous education, e-portfolio, virtual professional learning community, collaboration

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Australian youth work education: curriculum renewal and a model for sustainability for niche professions (PP10-1612)

Lead institution
Edith Cowan University

Partner institutions
Australian Catholic University, RMIT University, Victoria University

Project leader
Associate Professor Trudi Cooper

Project abstract
The purpose of this project is to renew the curriculum for Australian youth work professional education, applying the approach to curriculum outlined by Barnett and Coate (2005). The blueprint for the renewed curriculum will anticipate future requirements for the youth work professionals. It will articulate the aspirations, common content, pedagogy, values and guiding principles of Australian university youth work professional education and articulate its relationship with the VET youth worker training curriculum. This will provide the groundwork for cross-institutional sharing of courseware and educational materials and will facilitate future benchmarking, inter-sectoral and inter-professional pathways, and international qualification recognition. The project will promote long-term change through the establishment of a cross-sectoral youth work educators network. Balanced Australian higher education provision requires the sector to offer both high enrolment and specialist undergraduate degree options. The project will provide a starting point for a sustainability model for other niche professions. The project team includes representatives of all Australian youth work professional degree programs.

Project funding
$214,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Articulation, cross-institutional, curriculum, discipline, future requirements, integration, international, pathways, professional practice, professional education, quality, standards, sustainability, youth work

Scheduled completion
October 2012

Authentic assessment of students in practice settings: a participatory design approach (PP10-1784)

Lead institution
The University of Sydney

Partner institutions
Charles Sturt University, Deakin University

Project leader
Professor Peter Reimann

Project abstract
This project will develop an approach to documenting assessment of practicum practices and design an online system to enable continuous review and improvement of such assessment for the professions of teaching and social work. Professional practicum in authentic practice settings, and its assessment, are critical to the education of students in many professions, including teaching and social work; it enables students to move from their intellectual understanding to enacting this in practice. While compliance with professional standards is required, the diverse and variable nature of practice settings, as well as the subjective nature of professional judgment involved, means that consistent and equitable assessment presents both challenge and stress for many practitioners and educators. By using a participatory approach to the design of assessment, this project will develop a design pattern methodology and a number of tools to assist with documenting, reviewing and improving assessment practices. Another outcome will be a compilation of current assessment practices in Australian universities.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Practicum, field experience, assessment, design patterns, e-portfolio, education, social work

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Building the culture of evidence-based practice in teacher preparation for mathematics teaching (PP10-1638)

Lead institution
University of Tasmania

Partner institutions
Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Murdoch University, The University of Melbourne, University of New England, The University of Queensland

Project leaders
Associate Professor Rosemary Callingham, Associate Professor Kim Beswick

Project abstract
This project addresses a key identified need in Australia: the provision of quality teachers of mathematics at all levels of the pre-tertiary system through evidence-based improvement of pre-service teacher education programs. It is timely in view of the recent development of national standards for graduate teachers and calls for greater accountability for tertiary institutions. The project will provide tools for universities to monitor their mathematics education courses in terms of students' outcomes, and processes to bring about changes based on the evidence collected. It will provide guidance to teacher education institutions about effective programs and a model for other disciplines to develop accountability tools. Ultimately, the project will contribute to a national culture of evidence-based tertiary pre-service teacher education programs.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Pre-service teacher education, mathematics education, evidence-based improvement, developing best practice culture

Scheduled completion
August 2012

Capstone courses in undergraduate business degrees: better course design, better learning activities, better assessment (PP10-1646)

Lead institution
Griffith University

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Newcastle, University of Wollongong

Project leaders
Dr Elizabeth Van Acker, Associate Professor Janis Bailey

Project abstract
Capstone courses within undergraduate business degrees are important for learning. However, little is known or understood about the purpose of capstone courses or the best approaches to course design, learning activities and assessment. This project aims specifically to gather and disseminate good practice in course design, learning activities and assessment practices for capstone courses. It will conduct an audit of capstones in the partner universities, interview various stakeholders and survey recent graduates. It will deliver outcomes that benefit employers of business graduates, university business schools and final year business students. It will be of national benefit in enhancing student employability and assurance of learning. It will produce a report of its findings, conference papers, workshops and journal articles. The project's main output will be a good practice guide about how to structure, teach and assess a capstone course. Overall, the project aims to enhance student satisfaction and engagement with their business education and provide business with better, more work-ready graduates.

Project funding
$218,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Capstone courses, student employability, graduate attributes and assurance of learning, academic standards, curriculum renewal

Scheduled completion
October 2012

Collaborative building design education using building information modelling (PP10-1745)

Lead institution
University of South Australia

Partner institutions
The University of Newcastle

Project leader
Associate Professor Julie Mills

Project abstract
Current building design education practice in Australia rarely involves collaboration between students training for the architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) professions. The construction industry worldwide is moving towards collaborative design practices for the majority of projects, but the AEC education sector is falling behind in this respect. The use of building information modelling (BIM) is widely recognised as having the potential to change the way building projects are run by facilitating collaborative working practices that engage all design team members at an earlier stage in the design process, aided by BIM tools. Graduates with collaborative design skills and BIM expertise will be in high demand and will also have a profound effect on the AEC sector, leading industry change by developing innovative and collaborative working practices using BIM. This project aims to address the need for such graduates through the development of a transferable curriculum that can be used by all Australian universities that offer architecture, engineering or construction degrees.

Project funding
$206,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Building design education, building information modelling

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Coordinated interprofessional curriculum renewal for ehealth capability in clinical health professional degrees (PP10-1806)

Lead institution
The University of Melbourne

Partner institutions
Curtin University, The University of Queensland, University of Western Sydney

Project leader
Dr Kathleen Gray

Project abstract
Initiatives in professional education, training, learning and development are required to build the knowledge and skills the Australian health workforce will need to work in a national e-health system. In Australia, very few educational providers in the health professions have developed a systematic approach to teach, assess, accredit or audit this aspect of professional education, and such curriculum initiatives are not widely known. This project aims to encourage and support program coordinators and directors of all Australian undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs in all allied health, nursing and medical professions to include e-health (or 'clinical informatics') curriculum where it is not yet in place, and to engage in collaborative continuing improvement where it is.

Project funding
$209,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Information and communication technology, interprofessional practice

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Creating student-focussed, web-learning resources to support the development of and provide evidence of occupational therapy students' graduating competencies (PP10-1774)

Lead institution
The University of Newcastle

Partner institutions
Charles Sturt University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, University of Western Sydney, Occupational Therapy Australia

Project leader
Professor Susan Ryan

Project abstract
In 2010, a revised set of National Australian Competencies for occupational therapists was published by Occupational Therapy (OT) Australia. In 2012, OT will become a nationally-registered profession in Australia. Students, at graduation, and academic programs will be required to provide evidence that graduates are competent and safe to practise. Currently, competency is presumed at graduation and there is no national framework for evidencing the competency of graduates. This project will develop a student-focussed web-portal to support the development and tracking of professional competencies for OT students across five Australian universities. The acquirement and evidencing of competencies will together satisfy the requirements of the National Registration Board so that academic standards are upheld.

Project funding
$214,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Competencies, occupational therapy, student-centred

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Curriculum renewal and interprofessional health education: establishing capabilities, outcomes and standards (PP10-1741)

Lead institution
University of Technology, Sydney

Partner institutions
Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Griffith University, Monash University, The University of Notre Dame Australia, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney, The University of Western Australia, Australasian Interprofessional Practice

Project leaders
Professor Alison Lee, Dr Roger Dunston

Project abstract
This proposal responds to the urgent need for curriculum renewal in health education – in particular, the need to graduate students from all health professions with well-developed interprofessional practice (IPP) capabilities. IPP capabilities are identified as essential for delivering health services that are safer, more effective, and more sustainable. Significant interprofessional education (IPE) initiatives have occurred internationally. However, within the Australian higher education context, IPE remains relatively undeveloped, and is not well integrated with core elements of the curriculum. In addressing this national challenge, the project will contribute in two areas. Firstly, it will produce and disseminate a range of IPE curriculum resources: a curriculum framework, generic capability statements, learning outcomes and assessment methods. Secondly, it will produce and disseminate resources to guide and support curriculum change. To maximise stakeholder buy-in and uptake, the project will build on existing curriculum development initiatives and utilise participatory methods.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Curriculum renewal, health workforce reform, standards, learning outcomes, graduate capabilities, assessment

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Curriculum renewal in engineering through theory driven evaluation (PP10-1647)

Lead institution
The University of Queensland

Partner institutions
CQUniversity, Charles Darwin University, Curtin University, Deakin University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Western Australia, University of South

Project leader
Professor Caroline Crosthwaite

Project abstract
This project proposes to evaluate a recent and growing innovation in engineering which has been implemented in most of the universities in Australasia, the Engineers Without Borders (EWB) Challenge for first year engineering students. All of the partner institutions have implemented this innovation differently and comparison of these different implementations affords us the opportunity to assemble 'a body of carefully gathered data that provides evidence of which approaches work for which students in which learning environments' which will be of interest to all engineering schools and Engineers Without Borders with respect to future use of this innovation. The analysis will reveal the mechanisms underlying the Challenge's outcomes and understanding of these mechanisms will be used as the basis for subsequent curriculum renewal. This will generate a set of guidelines for embedding these mechanisms curriculum renewal which can be tested across multiple disciplines and will be of interest to the community of educators concerned with higher education and the ALTC.

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Evaluation, project based learning, first year, engineering education, curriculum development

Scheduled completion
October 2012

Curriculum renewal in public health nutrition (PP10-1769)

Lead institution
University of Wollongong

Partner institutions
Curtin University, Deakin University, Flinders University, Queensland University of Technology, The University of Newcastle, The University of Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast

Project leader
Associate Professor Heather Yeatman

Project abstract
This project will use a consensus-based approach to develop academic standards to support the emerging discipline and workforce of public health nutrition (PHN). There is a need for a current academic discipline base and pedagogy for the education of professionals who are able to address contemporary food issues. A modified Delphi methodology will be used to reach consensus on PHN academic standards. The project will develop a competencies framework, including competency units, elements and performance/assessment criteria (consistent with competency frameworks used by professional disciplines). These will codify and make explicit the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to perform effectively the work required of a public health nutrition practitioner, from graduate entry to advanced practitioner at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. A national forum will be conducted to disseminate and operationalise the academic standards. The process will form the first phase in curriculum renewal in PHN, to be articulated at national and international levels.

Project funding
$158,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Professional standards, curriculum renewal, competencies framework, performance, assessment, professional education

Scheduled completion
July 2012

Engineering thresholds: an approach to curriculum renewal (PP10-1607)

Lead institution
The University of Western Australia

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Professor Caroline Baillie

Project abstract
This project will focus on those essential and critical foundational concepts that substantively define the thresholds or portals for engineering students of any discipline. These concepts are the ones that 'open up' the terrain and facilitate learning of students in upper years. A unique opportunity has arisen at UWA to design an engineering program based on an understanding of these concepts. Engineering students will in future take an Engineering Science Major as part of a Bachelor of Science and within this will be a common foundational program. It is proposed to design the new foundation program based on threshold concept theory and the study of foundational thresholds. Workshops will be held with engineering lecturers across Australia to consider these and other thresholds in the basic levels of engineering degrees. A map of introductory level concepts and suggestions for helping students navigate through them will be developed for continual and iterative improvement, accessible to all.

Project funding
$200,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Threshold concepts, engineering education, engineering foundation

Scheduled completion
September 2012

Examination of doctoral degrees in creative arts: process, practice and standards (PP10-1801)

Lead institution
University of Canberra

Partner institutions
CQUniversity

Project leaders
Professor Jennifer Webb, Associate Professor Donna Brien

Project abstract
The creative arts disciplines constitute an important growth area for research higher degrees (HDR) and, in the decades since the Strand Report (1998), they have built a body of knowledge and set of practices associated with research and research higher degrees. However, there is virtually no empirical work in or across the creative arts disciplines that investigates how HDR examiners arrive at the commentary presented in their reports. Based on a process of national benchmarking and through extensive consultation, this project will investigate assessment practices, processes and standards in creative arts HDR, as well as beliefs and expectations of HDR students, supervisors and examiners, in order to establish a shared understanding of standards within this field of study. Outcomes include: contributions of knowledge in the areas of creative arts epistemologies, and pedagogy associated with the 'communities of practice' model of collaborative interaction; and the institution of a National Creative Arts Examinations Board to establish and maintain standards in the disciplines.

Project funding
$149,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Creative arts, research training, assessment policy, examination, examination standards

Scheduled completion
June 2012

Exploring intercultural competency in engineering (PP10-1778)

Lead institution
University of Wollongong

Partner institutions
Queensland University of Technology, University of Tasmania, University of Technology, Sydney

Project leader
Mr Thomas Goldfinch

Project abstract
Awareness of the importance of intercultural competency in practicing engineers is growing. At this point, support for engineering academics to incorporate teaching and learning practices to facilitate students' development of intercultural competency, and knowledge of students' and academics' current competency levels, is limited. The work proposed here incorporates three major components: establishing the current competency of engineering students and staff in dealing with cultural issues; determining exactly where learning outcomes need to be improved; and developing existing interdisciplinary methods for teaching cultural intelligence into learning activities and resources suitable for engineering education. The project will develop these activities and resources into packaged learning modules, including tutor preparation materials and assessment tasks, which can be implemented in existing undergraduate, or postgraduate engineering courses. Finally, the project will produce an e-Book, containing these learning modules, and related materials.

Project funding
$149,000

Program Priority
Internationalisation

Key words
Cultural intelligence, critical pedagogy, learning resources, engineering education

Scheduled completion
July 2012

Internationalisation at home: enhancing intercultural capabilities of Business and Health teachers, students, and curricula (PP10-1810)

Lead institution
University of Canberra

Partner institutions
Griffith University

Project leader
Professor Anita Mak

Project abstract
This project is designed to enhance the intercultural capabilities of tertiary teachers and students in business and health, and develop adaptable curriculum resources for upskilling international and local students to be culturally competent in increasingly multicultural education and work settings. Consultations with teachers, students, and industry professionals will identify critical incident scenarios in intercultural interactions in business and health classrooms and workplaces. These scenarios will be integrated with components of an existing, validated intercultural resource (the EXCELL program), to inform the design of discipline-specific professional development workshops for teachers. Learning circles will support teachers to embed intercultural competencies within curricula. Progressive dissemination of project processes, resources and student outcomes will occur through: ALTC, discipline-based networks and two national showcases. This will engage teaching communities in other disciplines and strengthen national approaches to internationalising the curriculum.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Internationalisation

Key words
Business, culturally inclusive learning and teaching, health, intercultural competence, international students, internationalisation of the curriculum, professionally relevant learning, student engagement

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Internationalising the Australian law curriculum for enhanced global legal education and practice (PP10-1789)

Lead institution
Curtin University

Partner institutions
The Australian National University, The University of Sydney

Project leader
Professor Duncan Bentley

Project abstract
This project will develop a framework for an internationalised law curriculum that aims to prepare law graduates for practise in a global context, significantly enhancing recognition of Australian law degrees. There is an increasing need to improve and facilitate the scope for Australia's legal education and training to meet global demands, and to promote the internationalisation of the Australian law degree. The project thus aims to make a significant contribution to improved legal education practices which will benefit graduates, the legal profession and related disciplines common to law graduates. It is intended that the project should also contribute to increasing professional mobility, assist with the export of legal services, and increase the number of international students studying in Australia. The project will undertake a collaborative, engaged approach through the use of purposefully constructed stakeholder consultative groups and roundtables. The project will also carry out comprehensive literature reviews.

Project funding
$135,000

Program Priority
Internationalisation

Key words
Internationalisation, law, curriculum

Scheduled completion
December 2011

Quantitative skills in science: curriculum models for the future (PP10-1640)

Lead institution
The University of Queensland

Partner institutions
James Cook University, University of Western Sydney, Purdue University (USA), University of Maryland, University of Maryland (USA)

Project leader
Ms Kelly Matthews

Project abstract
Numerous national and international reports have recently called for urgent actions to address the deteriorating quantitative skills (QS) and confidence of students at secondary and tertiary levels. This is particularly true in science, where such skills are essential for graduate competence and preparedness. Addressing the broad decline in QS will require substantial changes to science curricula, but individuals and institutions are struggling to understand how to best achieve this in practice. This project will address the challenge, by: conducting international benchmarking of undergraduate science curriculum structures; identifying proven institutional curriculum change processes in national and international institutions; and developing a framework whereby interdisciplinary collaboration can take place in order to promote and nurture the development of QS in science students and curricula. A particular strength of this project is the active involvement of an impressive team, including presidents and executive members of a number of key stakeholder groups (such as FASTS, ICMI, MERGA, HERDSA and ACDS).

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Quantitative skills, science, mathematics, interdisciplinary, curriculum change

Scheduled completion
October 2012

Strengthening alignment between secondary and tertiary biology education and enhancing student transitions in the sciences (PP10-1816)

Lead institution
Flinders University

Partner institutions
La Trobe University, Monash University, The University of Melbourne

Project leader
Ms Karen Burke Da Silva

Project abstract
It would be unwise to think that implementation of the national secondary school biology curriculum in 2012 will not affect what universities teach. Educators will face challenges, but there is also a unique opportunity for simultaneous curriculum reform at the tertiary level. This project's primary aim is to align the biology curriculums offered in the two sectors. This alignment, and better integration between the two independent sectors, has the potential to improve the opportunities for success in higher education among entry level students with diverse backgrounds. The project intends to foster dialogue between the two sectors, and develop a collaborative network that will inform curriculum development to address the immediate needs arising from the national curriculum. An interactive website that promotes constant dialogue and refinement will, in the long term, help maintain consistency of educational standards. The project's approach will contribute to tertiary educators being poised and ready to welcome the entry-level class of 2013.

Project funding
$217,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Biology, alignment, transition, benchmarking

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Strengthening Australian legal education by integrating clinical experiences: identifying and supporting effective practices (PP10-1603)

Lead institution
Monash University

Partner institutions
Griffith University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University, The Australian National University, The University of New South Wales

Project leader
Associate Professor Adrian Evans

Project abstract
This project seeks to develop standards for effective clinical legal education in their own right and to assist in renewal of University law curricula in Australia. The project will investigate current practices in clinical programs in six Australian jurisdictions with participation from six law schools closely identified with experiential learning in law. Workshops across Australia will explore the disparate and uneven approaches to clinical learning and effective practice. The findings from each jurisdiction will also be workshopped, compared and contrasted among key stakeholders, resulting in these deliverables: the production of recommended standards for current and new clinical programs, a national conference and an edited book. In this way, law deans' and academics' consciousness of the importance of experiential learning to renewal of law curricula will be strongly disseminated across Australia and provide sufficient information for the Council of Australian Law Deans to implement national clinical standards within their projected standards for accreditation of Australian law schools.

Project funding
$211,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Legal education, clinical legal education, clinical standards, clinical supervision and assessment, legal educational renewal, legal ethics, professionalism

Scheduled completion
September 2012

The eOSCE: advancing technology to improve students' learning and assessment reliability (PP10-1628)

Lead institution
The University of Newcastle

Partner institutions
The University of Queensland

Project leader
Dr Suzanne Snodgrass

Project abstract
Assessment of practical skills is essential in the health fields and usually occurs using Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), where examiners assess students performing clinical techniques on simulated patients (actors). Conventionally, OSCEs require considerable time-investment to administer, and restrict timely, accurate, individualised and specific student feedback. This collaborative project will introduce an innovative mechanism for assessing students' practical skills in the health professions. The 'eOSCE' will provide an alternative to paper-based conventional methods with an electronic marking and feedback system utilising Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). The eOSCE is administered via PDAs that have specialised software for recording performance and for providing student feedback. There is evidence from studies overseas that similar electronic marking systems are effective and preferred over conventional methods for practical assessments, but the eOSCE has not been formally trialled in an Australian context. We hypothesise that it will provide a more reliable and timely assessment strategy for assessing the learned skills of physiotherapy and occupational therapy students.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Assessment, OSCE, reliability, student feedback

Scheduled completion
November 2012

The QUT innovation space: a prototype trans-disciplinary learning environment for entrepreneurship education (PP10-1781)

Lead institution
Queensland University of Technology

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Associate Professor Chris Collet

Project abstract
Entrepreneurship education (EE) has become a major policy focus of world governments since the year 2000. Outside business schools, EE in Australian universities remains fragmented across faculties and disciplines. Existing subjects encourage creativity but do not teach the skills necessary to develop innovation into enterprises. There is an urgent need to devise integrated EE programs in the Australian context, to raise the entrepreneurial capacity of graduates and business. This project will implement a university-wide, integrated, student-focussed learning space – the QUT Innovation Space (QIS) – to instil an entrepreneurial mindset in students, capture student innovation and facilitate the development of new ventures. The QIS will comprise parallel, interacting environments – physical and virtual – populated by relationships, learning materials, activities and events, and addresses the fact that EE is a learning-by-doing approach. The QIS model will provide a strategic change in EE in Australia, and exemplify an integrative and true trans-disciplinarity not otherwise afforded by implementation within a single course or faculty.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
Innovation, university-wide, multi-disciplinary, industry engagement

Scheduled completion
December 2012

The vignette-matching procedure: an innovative approach to assess competencies in psychology and clinical practicum (PP10-1624)

Lead institution
University of Wollongong

Partner institutions
Macquarie University, The University of New South Wales, The University of Newcastle, The University of Sydney, University of Western Sydney

Project leaders
Associate Professor Craig Gonsalvez, Professor John Bushnell

Project abstract
The project cuts to the heart of a systemic problem that has plagued supervisors' assessments of student competencies in practicum settings: limitations inherent to the rating method. There is compelling evidence across a range of disciplines that supervisors' ratings of practicum are affected by systematic biases. A recent innovation, the vignette-matching procedure, in which supervisors match a student's performance against vignettes portraying the capabilities of different anchor-persons, has been shown to reduce greatly these biases. The current project is an ambitious, multi-center study that is supported by six partner universities and an eminent team of experts across disciplines. It is designed to improve significantly assessment outcomes in psychology by developing, evaluating, and comparing outcomes from standardised tools: a traditional rating scale and a catalogue of vignettes. Positive outcomes from this project will have direct and high-impact applications for health and non-health disciplines, and flow-on implications for curriculum renewal and the development of professional bench-marks.

Project funding
$105,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Psychology practicum assessment, field supervisor assessments, vignette-procedure, reliability and validity of practicum ratings

Scheduled completion
November 2011

TKNe: a transnational knowledge network in education that facilitates internationalisation (PP10-1802)

Lead institution
University of New England

Partner institutions
CQUniversity, Charles Sturt University, Monash University, RMIT University, The University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, University of Western Sydney

Project leader
Dr Laurence Tamatea

Project abstract
TKNe will develop a transnational network of universities to provide opportunities for domestic and international education students to engage in knowledge production and transfer, facilitating internationalisation through the development of mutual respect and deep understanding of other knowledge traditions. This will address issues of isolation for international students, and ensure all students graduate with the international perspectives needed to teach effectively in culturally diverse local and international contexts. TKNe takes a structurally simple approach to joint delivery of learning activities by developing short and targeted learning modules that can be embedded into existing curricula, delivered using existing communication technologies, and leaving responsibility for assessment with the home institution. Partnerships will be encouraged through development of a network including resources that will facilitate institutions to engage in partnerships for a particular teaching period. An action research approach will ensure the effectiveness of the range of pedagogical approaches, assessment, and student combinations in the project are thoroughly documented.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Internationalisation

Key words
Exchange, sociology of education, pre-service teacher education

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Transformational learning in the 'helping professions' as best practice (PP10-1786)

Lead institution
Tabor College Inc. (VIC)

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Dr Thomas Edwards

Project abstract
The helping professions are a diverse group of disciplines vital to the national interest and to the growth of a compassionate society. Undergraduates being trained for these professions must grow in technical knowledge and in personal development so that they may make wise decisions. Teaching cognitive skills is deliberate within courses but the development of personal qualities is often ad hoc. Novel e-learning environments provide a unique resource to better engage both cognitive and personal growth under the auspices of transformational learning. Noting the funding priority of 'curriculum renewal', the aim of the project is to: (1) develop a transformational learning curriculum for student counsellors; (2) evaluate the ability of narrative therapy tools to enhance transformational learning; (3) adapt the curriculum to a novel e-learning environment; and (4) evaluate the ability of this e-learning environment to further enhance student transformation. This project has value for the training of undergraduates across a number of disciplines and ultimately for the community at large.

Project funding
$142,000

Program Priority
Curriculum renewal

Key words
E-learning

Scheduled completion
December 2012

Using professional standards: assessing work integrated learning in initial teacher education (PP10-1642)

Lead institution
Griffith University

Partner institutions
Deakin University, University of South Australia

Project leader
Dr Cheryl Sim

Project abstract
This proposal draws on very recent national and international literature and related reports that highlight the importance of professional standards and of developing effective strategies for school based professional preparation of teachers. It is specifically focussed on professional learning and assessment practices in the WIL component of teacher preparation. It seeks to contribute to the development of shared understandings of these practices among school teachers, pre-service students and higher education academics in teacher education programs. The value of the proposed approach is its application to higher education programs where WIL is an important component. The approach: 1. establishes through a collaborative, iterative process, strategies that acknowledge the experiences of all stakeholders; 2. creates resources for supporting the higher education student learning informed by the ideas and practices from workplaces within the networks; 3. enables the knowledge and best practice about professional earning to be shared rather than limited to single sites; and 4. addresses the developmental learning trajectories of university students.

Project funding
$218,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Initial teacher education, professional experience assessment, teacher standards, communities of practice

Scheduled completion
August 2012

VirtualPREX: innovative assessment using a 3D virtual world with pre-service teachers (PP10-1775)

Lead institution
University of New England

Partner institutions
Australian Catholic University, Charles Sturt University, Curtin University, The University of Adelaide, University of Hamburg (Germany)

Project leader
Ms Sue Gregory

Project abstract
Pre-service teachers are sometimes not sufficiently prepared to embark on their professional experience placements because of limited practice opportunities. Professional experience does not always provide an adequate range of experiential professional learning opportunities, leaving graduate teachers ill-equipped for professional life. Up to 45 per cent of newly recruited in-service teachers resign or burn out in their first five years of classroom teaching. Can virtual practicum experiences be used to assist pre-service teachers acquire a better range of skills and confidence before being placed in real life situations? Could pre-service teachers practice teaching with robotic primary school students? Can a 3D virtual environment be used to facilitate effective formative assessment of teaching practice? Virtual practicum, robot-students and formative assessment should have the flow-on effect of supporting and enhancing the potential for professional learning during practicum placements. Videos of student performances can be viewed for reflection through self-assessment, and academics can use them for peer, formative and summative assessment tasks.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Second life, assessment, practicum, professional experience, virtual professional experience, VirtualPREX, pre-service teachers

Scheduled completion
December 2012

5.0 Strategic Priority Projects

Overview

Through Strategic Priority Projects, the ALTC funded projects responding to key issues in the Australian higher education sector, in line with the ALTC's designated responsibilities and priorities identified by the Board.

Applications were sought under four topics in 2010:
- Investigating equity and student support in Australian higher education
- External moderation of coursework assessment
- Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes
- Evidence of outcomes from higher education teaching preparation programs.

Funding range was available in the range of $150,000 to $220,000. Projects could be designed to take from 12 months to two years.

Investigating equity and student support in Australian higher education

The ALTC expects the major outcome from this priority to document of successful models for improving access and support for students from regional, low SES and non-traditional backgrounds in higher education institutions and the identify areas in which further development could be support, and provide advice as to how this might be achieved.

External moderation of coursework assessment

The ALTC expects the major outcome from this priority to pilot models of external validation of assessment, outline the factors considered in the external validation and stimulate the development of a range of models for external validation of assessment which will be available for adoption by other institutions.

Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes

The ALTC expects the major outcome from this priority to focus on, provide analysis and critical review of approaches to summative assessment of program-level learning outcomes that have validity in the context of academic quality assurance.

Evidence of outcomes from higher education teaching preparation programs

The ALTC expects the major outcome from this priority to examine the range of approaches for tertiary teaching preparation, and evaluate the impact of these programs on the quality of the student experience.

Funded projects

Ten projects were approved for funding in 2010.

Table 4: Strategic priority projects approved in 2010

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
SP10-1843	A sector-wide model for assuring final year subject and program achievement standards through inter-university moderation	Griffith University	Charles Darwin University, La Trobe University, Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology, The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, University of Western Sydney
SP10-1879	Assessing and assuring Australian graduate learning outcomes: principles and practices within and across the disciplines	The University of Sydney	The University of Adelaide, The University of Queensland
SP10-1869	Developing the foundation for a national assessment of medical student learning outcomes	The University of Queensland	Monash University, Australian Council for Educational Research
SP10-1838	Effective teaching and support of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: resources for Australian higher education	Deakin University	Charles Sturt University, Queensland University of Technology
SP10-1856	Harmonising higher education and professional quality assurance processes for the assessment of learning outcomes in health	The University of Adelaide	Griffith University, Monash University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Queensland
SP10-1862	Hunters and gatherers: strategies for curriculum mapping and data collection for assuring learning.	University of Technology, Sydney	Bond University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, University of Southern Queensland
SP10-1840	Identification and implementation of indicators and measures of impact on teaching preparation programs in higher education	The University of Western Australia	Curtin University, Edith Cowan University
SP10-1845	Measuring and reporting teaching quality	Monash University	Griffith University, The University of Melbourne

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
SP10-1829	Student mental health support and assistance	The University of Adelaide	The University of Queensland, University of Western Sydney
SP10-1828	Thriving in transition	University of Tasmania	N/A

A sector-wide model for assuring final year subject and program achievement standards through inter-university moderation (SP10-1843)

Lead institution
Griffith University

Partner institutions
Charles Darwin University, La Trobe University, Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology, The Australian National University, The University of Melbourne, University of Western Sydney

Project leaders
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, Professor Geoff Scott

Project abstract
This project will produce resources to guide inter-institutional moderation for assuring final year subject and program achievement standards. Eight universities will identify common final year subjects across eight disciplines aligned with the ALTC discipline standards project. Subject convenors will share subject outlines and selected assessment artefacts for review by at least two other project universities. The moderation process includes inputs (eg outlines, assessment tasks, marking criteria) and outcomes (ie, assessment samples). External blind peer review of both inputs and outcomes will determine consistency of subject-level standards against comparable final year subjects in other universities. Where relevant, capstone subjects will be used and program learning outcomes considered to identify approaches for assuring program achievement standards through inter-university moderation. The project addresses the TEQSA imperative to demonstrate sector-level, self-regulated, robust approaches for assuring quality and standards and highlights the role of peer review. Guidelines for practice will be sustainable and owned by academic disciplinary communities.

Project funding
$250,000

Program Priority
External moderation of coursework assessment

Key words
Achievement, assessment, calibration, capstone, coursework, discipline, input, inter-institutional, moderation, outcome, peer review, program, quality, standards, inter-university, subject, course, unit

Scheduled completion
February 2013

Assessing and assuring Australian graduate learning outcomes: principles and practices within and across the disciplines (SP10-1879)

Lead institution
The University of Sydney

Partner institutions
The University of Adelaide, The University of Queensland

Project leader
Associate Professor Simon Barrie

Project abstract
A set of principles for the assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes will be the major project outcome. In addition, examples of authentic disciplinary practice and summaries of key project stages will be produced to serve the dual purposes of project consultation activities and post-project dissemination. A comprehensive and inclusive data-gathering process will ensure that all project outcomes reflect the views and practices of a diverse range of key stakeholder groups – professional accreditation agencies, employers, institutional leaders, coordinators and administrators, and students – and the early focus on consultation will ensure that recommendations are grounded in the practices of the disciplines and generate the vignettes™ that enable generic principles to be illustrated with concrete evidence. The project will incorporate a range of process outcomes to raise awareness of the potential of future quality assurance initiatives to enhance curriculum and assessment at the program level and build capacity for active and informed participation in the national standards agenda.

Project funding
$216,000

Program Priority
Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes

Key words
Graduate attributes, benchmarking, quality assurance, standards, accreditation, assessment, validity, graduate learning outcomes, threshold learning outcomes, performance assessment

Scheduled completion
August 2012

Developing the foundation for a national assessment of medical student learning outcomes (SP10-1869)

Lead institution
The University of Queensland

Partner institutions
Monash University, Australian Council for Educational Research

Project leaders
Professor David Wilkinson, Professor Ben Canny, Associate Professor Hamish Coates

Project abstract
As the recent national study of medical education in Australia has affirmed, growing internationalisation of the medical profession, increasing diversification of programs and curricula, and ever-growing pressure to prove and improve academic standards heightens the need for robust and efficient assessment in medical education (DEEWR, 2008). This project responds to the need to prove and improve the standards of medical education by establishing an Australian Medical Assessment Collaboration (AMAC). The aim of AMAC is to set foundations of a national assessment to monitor the outcomes of later year medical students in Australia. This project will include scoping work, wide-ranging sector engagement, international involvement, faculty training, development of initial criterion-referenced assessment frameworks, and the compilation and validation of sample test items. This ALTC project will provide the foundation for what will be the ongoing development and implementation of an item library that will provide a sustainable and robust means of assuring the standards of medical education in Australia.

Project funding
$218,000

Program Priority
Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes

Key words
Learning outcomes, medical education, assessment, academic standards, graduate

Scheduled completion
August 2012

Effective teaching and support of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: resources for Australian higher education (SP10-1838)

Lead institution
Deakin University

Partner institutions
Charles Sturt University, Queensland University of Technology

Project leader
Professor Marcia Devlin

Project abstract
This project is about enhancing the learning and experiences of LSES students in Australian higher education. The project will identify and document successful initiatives and create a new, easy-to-use and adaptable set of resources to assist institutions to effectively implement policies, programs and practices to facilitate the success of students from low socioeconomic (LSES) backgrounds enrolled in higher education institutions in Australia. A key feature of this project will be the development of a distinctive conceptual framework that embodies an Australian conception of inclusive teaching in higher education. The project will focus on effective approaches to teaching and supporting students who come to university with greater diversity in preparedness and in social and cultural capital and develop new resources to assist Australian universities to better meet the needs of students from LSES backgrounds. The findings will be applicable to a range of higher education contexts and to enhancing the experience of all students, irrespective of background.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Investigating equity and student support in Australian higher education

Key words
Student support, retention

Scheduled completion
August 2012

Harmonising higher education and professional quality assurance processes for the assessment of learning outcomes in health (SP10-1856)

Lead institution
The University of Adelaide

Partner institutions
Griffith University, Monash University, The University of Melbourne, The University of Queensland

Project leaders
Professor Maree O'Keefe, Professor Amanda Henderson

Project abstract
The outcomes of the ALTC Learning and Teaching Academic Standards project have reinforced the importance of ensuring ongoing alignment between threshold learning outcomes and professional accreditation standards. The proposed harmonising project will work across and with higher education institutions and healthcare professional accreditation agencies to identify and match the goals and expectations of education, professional and governmental institutions in relation to quality assurance activities. Within a framework that is organised around the threshold learning outcomes, information will be captured about teaching and learning practices, designs and environments, and assessment approaches that underpin contemporary healthcare professional education. The project will specifically focus on a subset of health professions including medicine, dentistry, nursing and physiotherapy as 'demonstration disciplines'. A detailed analysis within each of these demonstration disciplines will directly inform development of the framework that can subsequently be more widely adopted.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes

Key words
Quality assurance, health care, learning outcomes, professional accreditation

Scheduled completion
March 2013

Hunters and gatherers: strategies for curriculum mapping and data collection for assuring learning. (SP10-1862)

Lead institution
University of Technology, Sydney

Partner institutions
Bond University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, University of Southern Queensland

Project leader
Dr Romy Lawson

Project abstract
Assurance of learning is a predominant feature in both quality enhancement and assurance in Higher Education. It involves making program expectations and standards explicit, then systematically gathering, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations. This benefits the institution ensuring program aims are evaluated and used for program development, and is important for external scrutiny (AUQA, TEQSA, professional bodies). This project aims to investigate two elements of assurance of learning: mapping graduate attributes throughout a program; and collecting assurance data. It will conduct an audit across disciplines subject to accreditation in Australian universities to evaluate current methods of mapping graduate attributes and their impact on the curriculum and also the systems used to collect and store data. This information will be critically analysed to develop strategy on curriculum mapping and data collection. It will draw upon the use of existing software packages (eg, SOS - mapping; ReView, SPARK^{PLUS} collection) to support the efficient and effective implementation strategies.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Principles for assessment and assurance of graduate learning outcomes

Key words
Graduate attributes, curriculum mapping, data collection, assurance of learning

Scheduled completion
February 2013

Identification and implementation of indicators and measures of impact on teaching preparation programs in higher education (SP10-1840)

Lead institution
The University of Western Australia

Partner institutions
Curtin University, Edith Cowan University

Project leader
Winthrop Professor Denise Chalmers

Project abstract
Professional development programs and activities to enhance teaching and learning have been taking place for more than 50 years in some higher education institutions. However, whether these programs and less formal development activities have had an impact on enhancing teaching understanding, teaching practice, student satisfaction, student learning and/or the institutional climate that rewards and recognises teaching has received less attention. This project will identify the range, type and frequency of professional development programs offered by Australian institutions, building on previous ALTC projects and other research. By applying a theoretical and evidence-based model, the project will use this data to identify indicators and measures of effectiveness and impact, develop an evaluation framework that can be applied across a range of professional development activities that take place in higher education, and trial these in different university contexts to test their veracity. This project has been unanimously endorsed by the members of the Council of Australian Directors for Academic Development (CADAD).

Project funding
$219,000

Program Priority
Evidence of outcomes from higher education teaching preparation programs

Key words
Academic development, indicators, impact measures, teaching preparation

Scheduled completion
August 2012

Measuring and reporting teaching quality (SP10-1845)

Lead institution
Monash University

Partner institutions
Griffith University, The University of Melbourne

Project leaders
Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Professor Richard James, Dr Calvin Smith

Project abstract
The changing composition of the education workforce within universities, and increasing demands for universities to report on the improvements in teaching quality have highlighted the need for a robust empirical appraisal of professional development activities in learning and teaching. This collaborative project harnesses quantitative research design and insights from open source product development to produce measures of professional development efficacy that will can be self-administered by a range of institutions. Moreover, it will develop templates and resources that can be used by senior managers to assess professional development provision in learning and teaching in their institutions and to report with confidence on the efficacy of professional development provisions in improving teaching quality.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Evidence of outcomes from higher education teaching preparation programs

Key words
Measurement of professional development in learning and teaching, graduate certificates – higher education, professional development – higher education, quality indicators – higher education

Scheduled completion
February 2013

Student mental health support and assistance (SP10-1829)

Lead institution
The University of Adelaide

Partner institutions
The University of Queensland, University of Western Sydney

Project leader
Associate Professor Ray Peterson

Project abstract
Psychological distress in the tertiary student population is a largely unrecognised epidemic. Recent Australian research has demonstrated particularly high rates of psychological distress amongst tertiary students – four times that of population peers. Previous attempts to provide solutions for tertiary student distress have ostensibly ignored the behaviours and preferences of adolescents and young people, such as their avoidance of formal forms of assistance, a preference for talking to peers, an avoidance of potential confidentiality conflicts, fears of academic jeopardy and a tendency to do more for peers rather than for themselves. This project aims to present not only an alternative paradigm for dealing with student distress but also to trial a new approach and method. Our objective is to develop a prototype online delivered resource which enables students to recognise and support a student in distress. The use of a web content management system (CMS) will enable the resource to be appropriately scalable for throughput, platform releases and resource development.

Project funding
$220,000

Program Priority
Investigating equity and student support in Australian higher education

Key words
Student distress, student mental health, student counselling, student health

Scheduled completion
February 2013

Thriving in transition (SP10-1828)

Lead institution
University of Tasmania

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Dr Martin Harris

Project abstract
Low SES students are significantly more likely to be drawn from a rural background and be entering in to the traditional 'first generation' pathways of health and education. This project addresses the characteristics and processes of successful transition for rural and remotely located students planning a career as a health care professional. The CI's cyclic model (Harris, 2009) identifies the recursive, disjunctive and interdependent qualities at each stage of the transition and a framework for the examination of the transition process. The focus is upon the positive rather than the negative sequels associated with transition, thus the project has adopted the term 'thriving' rather than (for example) 'coping' or 'adjusting' to transition. This project will contribute to our understanding of the pathways and trajectories appropriate for challenging circumstances; and produce guidelines and training to assist with both the nature and timing of interventions to provide students with the best opportunity to thrive.

Project funding
$209,000

Program Priority
Investigating equity and student support in Australian higher education

Key words
Transition, student retention

Scheduled completion
February 2013

6.0 Special projects and initiatives

Special projects

In addition to proposals funded via competitive rounds, the ALTC may seek or consider proposals on issues of national significance. Normally applications are sought in response to a specific project brief.

Guidelines for applications may vary from those of the general funding rounds. The ongoing management and oversight of projects funded rests with the relevant Grants Scheme Standing Committee.

Table 5: Special projects approved in 2010

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
PP10-1606	Designing socially inclusive learning environments and experiences for higher education students	University of South Australia	Deakin University, Queensland University of Technology
PP10-1751	ReMarks PDF Editor – Stage 3	University of New England	Australian Table A and B providers

Special initiatives

From time to time the ALTC also commissions work and undertakes special initiatives.

In 2010, ALTC undertook the initiative of the Teaching Standards Framework Project which is led by Macquarie University. The aim of the project is to test whether the framework designed by Macquarie University can be adopted across the university sector, in relation to the learning outcomes, student performance, institutional policies and procedures.

Table 6: Special initiatives in 2010

ALTC Ref.	Project Title	Lead Institution	Partner Institution(s)
SI10-1820	Teaching standards framework project	Macquarie University	N/A
SI10-1889	Where are our doctoral candidates coming from and why?	The Australian National University	N/A

Designing socially inclusive learning environments and experiences for higher education students (PP10-1606)

Lead institution
University of South Australia

Partner institutions
Deakin University, Queensland University of Technology

Project leader
Professor Trevor Gale

Project abstract
The project will identify principles of socially inclusive learning and teaching in higher education. Informed by these principles, it will identify exemplars of good practice and develop a guide for designing socially inclusive learning environments and experiences for higher education students, particularly for those from disadvantaged groups, in ways that enhance and maximise their learning outcomes. This integrated suite of resources will provide clear advice for five major stakeholder groups within the Australian higher education sector: academic staff; support staff; course/program coordinators; policy makers; and university leaders. The development of these resources will be informed by a range of sources: relevant literature on good practice; the body of existing work in Australia, including recent and current ALTC-funded projects; relevant work undertaken overseas; and data, material and ideas collected as part of the project.

Project funding
$250,000

Program Priority
Teaching and learning spaces

Key words
Teaching and learning spaces, disadvantaged students

Scheduled completion
Project discontinued

The ReMarks PDF Markup Editor Stage 3 (PP10-1751)

Lead institution
University of New England

Partner institutions
Australian Table A and B providers

Project leader
Professor Stephen Colbran

Project abstract
This project will leverage on the outcomes from Stages 1 and 2 to: perfect the ReMarks PDF editor, maintain both the ReMarks PDF and ReMarks XML editors, create and support trials sites for the ReMarks PDF and ReMarks XML editors, develop research projects, build links with other international institutions to market the software in order to make the software self-sustaining, and promote and support the update of the software in the sector through online presentations and training.

Project funding
$250,000

Program Priority
Academic standards,assessment practices and reporting

Key words
Assessment feedback, e-submission, e-portfolio, learning outcome, tracking

Scheduled completion
December 2011

Teaching standards framework project (SI10-1820)

Lead institution
Macquarie University

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Professor Judyth Sachs

Project abstract
Effective learning and teaching depend on institutions adopting clearly articulated standards that enable best practice. Performance data supplied by course evaluation questionnaires, graduate destination studies, student experience surveys and employer feedback provide information about university performance. The role of a standards framework is to provide criteria that can be used to assess this information in a way that contributes to the continual improvement of learning and teaching. Standards must help evaluate university structures and practices in the light of student performance. The key aim of a standards framework is to identify the relationship between institutional structures and practices and improving learning outcomes.

Macquarie University has designed a teaching standards framework (see AppendixTeaching Standards Framework). The framework provides a foundation for decision-making and can be used in policy development, appointments and promotions, and quality assessment at the institutional level, as well as personal and professional development, curriculum design and teaching planning at the level of the individual academic.

Project funding
$296,705

Program Priority
ALTC special initiatives

Key words
Standards framework, learning and teaching, institutional structures and practices

Scheduled completion
March 2011

Where are our doctoral candidates coming from and why? (SI10-1889)

Lead institution
The Australian National University

Partner institutions
N/A

Project leader
Dr Margaret Kiley

Project abstract
The Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research's 2010 paper on Meeting Australia's research workforce needs identifies three national challenges: the provision of sufficient higher degree research graduates to meet workforce demands; the standards and quality of an Australian degree and graduate; and suitable and sufficient career pathways for graduates. This small-scale pilot study aims to provide some answers to questions such as: How and why do students end up enrolling in a doctorate? What is the exit point and qualification if they leave the program without completing, and where do they go after their program? It will outline a more extensive study so that a clearer understanding of the pathways in, through, out of, and from doctoral programs in Australia is gained. The value of such a study is that the findings will help to position Australian higher education to be forward looking with regard to research education.

Project funding
$10,000

Program Priority
ALTC special initiatives

Key words
Pathways, postgraduate, higher degree research

Scheduled completion
April 2011

7.0 Index of projects