Building Academic Leadership Capability at the Course Level: Developing Course Coordinators as Academic Leaders

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1 Rationale for the project

The Higher Education reforms that have occurred Australia in recent years have made quality teaching and learning an institutional priority for universities. Whilst quality is often measured at the unit level by examining student feedback and performance, course level feedback is equally as important. Course coordinators carry much of the leadership responsibility for ensuring their courses are of high quality and relevant to industry. However, there are few initiatives in universities to support course coordinators to develop their skills as academic leaders. Hence, the rationale for this project is to provide an experiential academic leadership program for course coordinators. This will enable universities to meet their strategic priorities for improving the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring academic staff have the opportunity to develop their leadership capabilities.

In the development of its academic leaders, the Australian higher education system has tended to rely upon the ‘wisdom of experience’ in relation to teaching and learning (Southwell et al 2005). Course coordinators (also known as program or degree coordinators), are one such group of academic leaders who tend to be highly competent and qualified senior academics who, by virtue of their academic accomplishments, advance to the role of managing and leading a university course (Yielder and Codling 2004). Frequently, however, they are ill-prepared for this leadership role, given that they have often focused their academic pursuits on developing their discipline expertise rather than on leadership and the scholarship of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, course coordinators require leadership skills that will enable them to create a vision of what a course might be, and then to foster a culture that supports and achieves that vision (Yielder and Codling 2004). Also, they are vested with considerable academic, managerial and administrative responsibility for achieving the desired quality and credibility of course teaching and learning outcomes. This responsibility, however, is often accompanied with limited line management or staffing authority. Regularly the position is viewed as all-consuming and as having an adverse impact on personal teaching, research and scholarly activities (Carroll and Wolverton 2004). Currently there is little support within Australian universities to prepare, support and recognise academics in this crucial academic leadership role.

The transition to a course leadership role is often difficult given the size and complexity of higher education courses, and the teaching and learning environments in which they exist. A diverse set of leadership capabilities is required (for example interpersonal and communication skills; problem-solving; conflict-resolution; cultural management; coaching, and change management skills). An ill-prepared course leader can jeopardise the quality of a course and therefore have a detrimental effect on institutional teaching and learning effectiveness (Wolverton et al 2005), resulting in lowered university reputation.

Course coordinators often focus on the managerial or transactional aspects of their role (Antonakis and House 2002), which include planning and budgeting, organising and staffing, course control and monitoring and solving problems. Unfortunately, the academic leadership or transformational aspect of the role (Antonakis and House 2002) is often subsumed by the managerial role. Ramsden (1998) has noted similar findings in situations where academic
leadership is lacking resulting in an absence or neglect of strategic functions such as setting future directions and aligning people and groups with departmental and organisational goals. Developing and enabling academic teams to achieve a common direction for facilitating student-focused learning is often impoverished as is motivating and inspiring the academic team to ensure scholarly and professional learning. Teaching quality improvement programs which focus on improving the quality of academic courses are frequently absent or neglected.

2 Aim of the project

The aim of this project is to design and implement an academic leadership development program for course coordinators which enhances their leadership capabilities, enables them to improve course quality, strengthens peer relationships, and ultimately improves the students’ experience of learning. One of the strengths of this project is its capacity to enhance teaching and learning outcomes through the development of leadership capabilities of course coordinators who are in turn, responsible for managing a team of academics who strive to deliver high quality teaching programs.

The program will be based on a theoretical review of leadership but will also be practical, applied and experiential. Its design and outcomes will be transferable to all Australian universities. It is envisaged that participation in this academic leadership program, with its concomitant assessment will enable transfer of credit towards a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching or similar leadership course such as a Master of Business and Administration or Masters in Leadership and Management. While this leadership program will be designed for course coordinators, unit coordinators and those interested in moving into the course coordinator role will also find the program helpful. Heads of Schools may similarly find the program useful for their personal academic leadership development, as well as for developing a cohort of course coordinators within their Schools.

The anticipated project outcomes are:

1) a review of national and international academic leadership research and current best practice, and the publication of reports and journal articles;

2) clearly defined roles and responsibilities for course leaders recognising their critical role in achieving excellence in teaching and learning at the course level;

3) a “Course Leader Development Program” and package of flexible learning resources which can be adapted for implementation in cross-discipline and wide ranging university contexts for current and prospective course coordinators;

4) identification of systems level outcomes which have implications for university academic career pathways, promotion processes, University staff profiles, Staff Professional Development programs for current and prospective academic leaders; and change management in higher education; and

5) upscaling of the project through a national network of users (Australian Technology Network [ATN]) who have been involved in the development of the program through their involvement with the Project Reference Group, and more broadly across the Australian University sector as a whole through the Carrick network to achieve cross-sectoral impact.
3 Leadership development philosophy

The literature suggests that sound academic leadership ultimately improves student learning. Gibbs (2006) found that if department leaders facilitate a good teaching environment, then teachers are more likely to use a student-focused approach to learning, which in turn results in far superior learning outcomes due to a deep approach to learning (Prosser and Trigwell 1997, Martin et al 2003). This approach was proposed by Ramsden (1998) who indicated that teaching which focuses primarily on student learning, rather than teacher activity, is best supported by academic leaders who provide clear goals and enable people to embrace change. Martin et al (2003) also found that teachers are more likely to adopt a student focused approach to teaching when they experience: transformational and transactional leadership; clear goals and contingent rewards; and teacher involvement in decisions about curriculum and collaborative management. More effective student performance is achieved when teachers are encouraged to discuss curriculum and teaching issues, and where management is open and collaborative (Prosser and Trigwell 1997).

When course leaders operate within a transformational and transactional leadership framework, the effect on the course team is to increase the student focus, resulting in improved learning outcomes for students. Course leaders require support and development to incorporate both transformational and transactional leadership capabilities into their personal repertoire, and to develop a contemporary pedagogical framework for improving curriculum design, development, assessment and evaluation. Such support is most effective when leadership development includes opportunities for feedback, discussion and support, enhancing the impact of management and leadership development (Bolden et al 2006).

Baldwin and Ford (1988) note that by shifting away from the traditional didactic approach to one that employs strategic learning drivers it is possible to extend learning into the workplace. The strategic learning drivers in this proposed program are: goal setting, reflective journaling, peer coaching and assessment. Collectively they are embedded into an experiential learning framework. The peer coach supports the learner by encouraging them to self-monitor their performance by maintaining a reflective journal and framing their learning using an experiential learning cycle (Kerka, 1996; Kolb, 1984).

Brown et al (1989) describe this type of learning, which encompasses both the physical and social contexts, as situated learning. The learner’s experiences in transferring academic content to the workplace are discussed with their peer coach during the reflective stage of the experiential learning cycle. The learning journal is used as the data bank to find information that is facilitating or blocking transfer. Conclusions are then drawn from this reflective stage as part of a collaborative process that involves questioning, active listening and academic debate. Application ensues with learners taking their new ideas and insights back to the workplace for further application and grounding. Leonard and Swap (2004) emphasise that guided practice, with reflection and feedback based on assessments by the coach, help to strengthen developing competency. This occurs because the learner engages with their own thinking such that an experience ‘repertoire’ is created which then can be built upon.

Bubna-Litic and Benn (2003) argue that traditional models of education assume rationality and positivism and ignore the need for more reflexive thinking in business education. More learner engagement and critical reflection is needed to assist leaders/managers in transferring their learning to their work and practice experiences (Bubna-Litic and Benn 2003). This is certainly in keeping with the views of Leonard and Swap (2004) who emphasise the importance of coaching for transfer of training. They argue that experience is the critical factor for building performance as it provides a context in which to apply the learning. The experience provides a domain for the learner and enables this experience to be built upon as a
location in the memory where it contextualises the theory to practice. This provides some explanation for why a lot of training is wasted and never gets transferred to the workplace because domains are not established in the memory system because they are not aligned to work practices in an experiential manner.

It is for these pedagogical reasons that this academic leadership program will take place in modules which run over a semester (or equivalent). This enables participants to embed their learning within current practices and to engage in a rich dialectic with their peers as they transfer concepts into practice. This experiential learning focus requires time and support and is a critical component of the curriculum design.

A distributed leadership model in which course coordinators are the focus of academic leadership development is one which is likely to impact upon Heads of Schools, a large number of teaching staff, and ultimately students. Within Curtin University of Technology, for example, there are several hundred course coordinators who in turn are in a position to influence the learning outcomes of many students through enhancing the student-focused approach of the teaching staff within their team. In addition, Heads of Schools will be freed up to focus on strategic directions if course coordinators assume responsibility for academic leadership at the course level. Academic leadership will be distributed widely with uptake of the program across the ATN universities, and more broadly across the higher education sector. All Australian universities have developed similar distributed leadership and management models to implement their degree programs (ie undergraduate coordinator, course coordinator, unit coordinator and teaching staff). The proposed academic leadership program therefore has the potential to influence academic leadership across all degree programs.

4 Proposed approach and methodology structured in terms of year-long phases

This project will employ a distributed leadership model with its focus on developing and implementing an academic leadership program for course coordinators. The aim of the program is to build leadership capacity in current and prospective course leaders across the range of academic discipline areas, initially within the lead partner university. Course coordinators are therefore the key focus of this project as they have a significant role in leading and influencing teams of academics teaching within a course, and are accountable for delivering high quality teaching and learning outcomes. The academic leadership development model will be based on an adaptation of models of education developed by Wolverton et al (2005), Ramsden (1998), and from the broader leadership field (Antonakis and House 2002). The developmental needs of course leaders will be targeted at three levels:

- personal leadership development,
- conceptual understanding, and
- skill development.

**Personal leadership development** will include: learning to lead through understanding leadership theory and development; emotional intelligence (enabling, inspiring and motivating others); personal management; creating vision and focusing on strategic action; encouraging participants to learn from past experiences through reflective journaling of leadership experiences; observations and reflections of effective and ineffective practice; and
writing development outcomes incorporating a peer-coaching approach to implement performance targets (Ladyshewsky and Varey 2005, Ladyshewsky 2006).

**Conceptual understandings** will include: application of key leadership theories and principles to practice; current teaching and learning theory and practice in higher education; understanding and application of pedagogical concepts in curriculum design, implementation, assessment and evaluation; and the roles and responsibilities of course leaders within a local (university) system and the national higher education context.

**Skill development** will include those group academic leadership skills at a department/school level necessary to achieve the desired results when working with staff, students, external stakeholders and other managers, for example: communication, team building, conflict-resolution, planning and managing resources; recognising, developing and assessing course performance; quality improvement; and change management.

Some of the unique features of the proposed program are: the clarification of the concept, roles and responsibilities of academic leadership for course coordinators; the incorporation of peer-coaching to support implementation; a focus on experiential learning; use of a blended learning model (incorporating e-learning) to enhance course coordinator knowledge and skills, and act as change agents for learning through flexible delivery; and goal setting and reflective journaling to extend learning and increase transference into the academic setting (Ladyshewsky 2005).

The integrated learning approach is essential to promote reflective practice and continuous growth in participants. Through finding time and opportunity to obtain non-evaluative feedback from peers, and engaging in continuous self-improvement based on that feedback, more positive outcomes can be expected (Raines and Alberg, 2003). The academic leadership program will also be designed with a view to enabling articulation with a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education/Tertiary Teaching, or alternatively a Master of Business and Administration or Master of Educational Administration within a broad range of university contexts to enhance the career pathways of participants.

The course leader development project will be conducted over a two year period to provide sufficient opportunities for dialogue, debate, reflection and the development of communities of practice in areas (Divisions) across the participating universities. A series of professional development resources and tools applicable to academic leaders in a broad range of cross discipline contexts will be developed, which will provide support for current and future course leaders.

Key learning outcomes of the program for participants will include:

- Understanding academic leadership in a higher education institution (leadership capabilities required, what best practice looks like, the nature and level of commitment required, extending views of leadership)
- Knowledge of contemporary learning theory in higher education, how it differs from learning in other contexts, and the implications for practice
- Identification of participants’ leadership skills against those required for academic leadership
• Implementation of a personal development program and life long learning skills to enhance leadership
• Review of curricula, learning experiences and assessment appropriate for university learning within a framework of outcomes focused education and evidence based teaching
• Knowledge of course management and administrative requirements within the context of university policies and procedures
• Application of a course review process for continuous quality improvement
• Development and implementation of an action plan for improvement of teaching and learning within their own course(s)

The methodology for the program will include participation in: pre-course activities (which are delivered in modular format through flexible learning provision and support); the academic leadership program; and post-course activities. Pre-course activities will include individual participant assessment of their leadership style using a questionnaire, data collection for 360 degree feedback (Quinn et al 2003), self-assessment of strengths and development needs, and the identification of leadership issues within their courses.

The program itself will be developed as a series of modules around the three key themes of personal leadership development, conceptual understandings of academic leadership and the knowledge required, and skill development. A blended learning model approach will be adopted using flexible delivery provision to increase the program’s ability to involve staff in regional and off-shore campuses. A review of the academic achievement of post-graduate business students in e-learning versus face-to-face delivery environments found that adult learners who had experienced both learning modes performed better in an e-learning mode (Ladyshewsky 2003). Hence there is some evidence to suggest that well designed online experiences, alone or in combination with supplementary face-to-face learning experiences can deliver positive learning outcomes.

Each module will incorporate e-learning educational activities in the form of learning objects which will be situated within a learning management system (eg WebCT, Blackboard or Moodle) as demonstrated in Figure 1. The design and development of the program will be based on an award winning model currently used in the Graduate School of Business at Curtin (Ladyshewsky 2003; [www.cbs.curtin.edu.au/gsb](http://www.cbs.curtin.edu.au/gsb)). This will include:

• An overview - course notes, diagrams, figures, tables, illustrations, leadership and management i-lectures which can be podcast or videostreamed
• Readings and internet links - suggested readings, links to scholarly databases, links to websites, information eg policies/procedures
• Practical activities for self assessment - quizzes, short answer tests, web-based exercises, questionnaires, personal journals, case studies, group projects etc (including lesson plans for conducting any activities)
• Discussion activity - questions and exercises, case-studies and problem scenarios using asynchronous web discussion, moderated by the program convenor and designed to integrate material from the program.

Learning objects will be prepared in a format for adaptation to any learning management system, ensuring the resources can be utilised across the Australian higher education sector.

Development of the program as a series of modules with supporting learning objects will enable it to be packaged in a variety of ways to suit participating universities, and the
professional learning needs of staff. For some, weekly face-to-face modules will be the preferred model, while for others, fewer combined module sessions with asynchronous web discussions may be appropriate. Other academic staff may prefer to be offered the entire program in an on-line mode. Flexible program delivery will be a key consideration in the design and development of the program, although it will be trialed in a face-to-face with online supplementation mode in the first instance. However, learning objects to support fully on-line delivery will be developed at the same time to ensure prospective users have the opportunity to choose the mode of delivery that suits their professional development program needs.

The post-course phase will include participant reflection on their experiences and the learning outcomes, a review of their personal development plans and preparation of next steps of their academic leadership responsibilities.

Program design, implementation and outcomes will be undertaken with a view to enabling its articulation with a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education or other qualification as indicated earlier depending on the host institution. Appropriate assessment activities will be developed for participants to complete if they wish to apply for credit for their participation in this academic leaders program.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Diagram for Course Coordinators Leadership Program**

The project will be conducted in four phases over two years as shown in detail in the timeline in Attachment 3. Phase 1 will focus on employment of the project manager, establishment of the project management group, review of the literature and determining course coordinator development needs. Phase 2 involves design and development of the academic leadership program in conjunction with the Project Reference Group and preparation of course materials. Phases 1 and 2 are conducted within the first year. Piloting of the program and initial
evaluation of participant perceptions of the program form the basis of phase 3 which commences toward the end of the first year. Phase 4 incorporates preparation of a revised program package ready for dissemination, embedding of the program within staff development organisational units, external review of the project and preparation of the final report for the Carrick Institute.

5 Human resources and infrastructure required
The key resources required for this project are human resources.

- A project manager to oversee all phases of the project is required.
- A consultant with expertise in leadership and peer coaching will develop the course materials with respect to developing transformational and transactional leadership. Additional program content will be provided by staff in the Teaching Development Unit at Curtin, and through the Project Reference Group.
- The Project Team will liaise with the project officer, ATN team, and will have involvement with delivery of the program to determine which aspects were successful and changes which need to be made, and to work with the e-learning instructional designer.
- An e-learning instructional designer for development of the learning objects within a learning management system (a significant proportion of the infrastructure required is already available with the Curtin Business School).
- Access to the learning management system will be supplied by Curtin.
- Financial and staff management of the project will be coordinated through the Learning Support Network at Curtin.
- An independent evaluation of the project will be conducted by a person with project evaluation expertise and will come from outside the ATN group.

6 Resource/support that institutions will contribute to the project
The following resources and support will be contributed to the project by institutions:

- time release for current course coordinators to attend the program
- the facilities, equipment and resources for designing, developing and piloting the program
- appropriate staff within academic staff development units to implement the program (utilising the materials prepared as part of the project)
- access to an institutional learning management system and implementation of the online components of the program
- access to internal online teaching evaluation system and results
- time contributed by the Project Team and Project Reference Group members.

7 Processes and structure underpinning management of the project
The Project Team and Project Officer will manage the project and will meet regularly to: review progress; identify key issues and directions; develop program design and materials, and implement and evaluate the pilot. Communication of meeting minutes, actions and outcomes will be circulated to the Project Reference Group. The Project Team will work with
the Deans of Teaching and Learning and a representative group of course coordinators from each division to ensure their needs are identified and that program design and content reflects their needs.

A Project Reference Group (consisting of the Directors of the ATN Teaching and Learning Centres (TALC)) will be an integral part of the project during each of its phases to ensure that program design and materials meet the desired outcomes; and that the flexible delivery implementation strategy is readily adaptable to meet the needs of each of the stakeholder universities. The key role of the Project Reference Group will be to: participate in the needs analysis; provide critical feedback, analyse the program content and design, structure and process throughout each stage; and evaluate the outcomes. Consideration of how the program will articulate with Graduate Certificates in Higher Education and other programs will also be important. Members of the Project Reference Group will also liaise with key personnel in their institution regarding pilot program implementation. It is anticipated that the Project Reference Group will have two face-to-face meetings which will occur at the time of the Evaluation and Assessment Conference (Nov/Dec each year), and communicate regularly through a series of teleconferences. Regular email communication will occur as issues arise.

Mechanisms for communication will include circulation of minutes of meetings; teleconferences; a quarterly newsletter updating all parties on progress (managed by Project Manager) and circulated to ATN partners on each of the project phases; a website which updates interested parties in progress; and Project Reference Group access to a learning management system to enable members to access resources and provide feedback.

Management of staff employed for the project will be coordinated through the Project Team, while financial management will be undertaken by the Administrative Officer in the Learning Support Network at Curtin University of Technology.

**Project Evaluation**

Several methods of evaluation of the project will be undertaken which align with the anticipated project outcomes. Evaluation of the project will have internal and external components. The outcomes and their evaluation methods are outlined below.

1) A review of national and international academic leadership research and current best practice, and the publication of reports and journal articles – the literature review and final report will be made available on the project website; journal articles will be available in peer reviewed journals (however this will occur in the year following completion of the project)

2) Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for course leaders recognising their critical role in achieving excellence in teaching and learning at the course level - role statements and responsibilities are agreed upon and meet the needs of collaborators are defined, and made available through the project website

3) A ‘Course Leader Development Program’ and package of flexible learning resources which can be adapted for implementation in cross-discipline and wide ranging university contexts for current and prospective course coordinators. During the package design phase, feedback from the Project Reference Group will be sought on course content, structure, design and materials/resources. Several levels of evaluation of the program itself will be utilised as proposed by Mountford and Doidge (2005). Participant response and learning from the program will be evaluated through survey feedback. Changes in participant behaviour in their course coordinator role, learning which has been applied in the workplace, and use of a transformational and transactional leadership approach will be evaluated quantitatively and qualitatively at
3-6 months post program completion. For example, changes in leadership capabilities will be measured through completion of the Competing Values Framework Leadership Model or equivalent prior to the program and at 3 months following completion of the program. The extent to which communities of practice have developed as a consequence of the program will be evaluated qualitatively. The final evaluation component of the course leaders program considers the return on the investment in developing leadership capabilities within this group of academics. It is anticipated that it will take some time for the results of the investment to become apparent, but this would include identification of the number of staff with whom the course coordinator works who have moved from a teacher-focused approach to a student-focused approach (which has been found to enhance student learning). In addition, changes in student feedback at the course level over time will provide an indication of the success of the program. The impact of the program will form part of the external review of the program.

4) Identification of systems level outcomes which have implications for university academic career pathways, promotion processes, University staff profiles, Staff Professional Development programs for current and prospective academic leaders; and change management in higher education. These will form part of the external evaluation.

5) Upscaling of the project through a national network of users (ATN) who have been involved in the development of the program through their involvement with the Project Reference Group, and more broadly across the Australian University sector as a whole through the Carrick network to achieve cross sectoral impact. Ultimately this will be evaluated by the number of universities which adopt the program, and the extent to which it meets their needs. However, this is beyond the scope of this project.

8 Key policy and practice audiences

The project aims to develop academic leadership in course coordinators to improve the quality of teaching and learning within courses, and ultimately enhance student learning. Potential benefits and intended outcomes of the project apply to ATN course coordinators who will increase their academic leadership capability. In addition Heads of Schools will also benefit as they have staff with increased expertise to facilitate improvement in teaching and learning to ensure high quality courses. The wider higher education network stands to benefit from the project through the academic course leader “package” being available for use and adaptation to each institution’s requirements through its flexible delivery design. Not only are staff and courses the beneficiaries of this program, but ultimately students are impacted through an increased student-focused approach to teaching as a result of the course coordinator developing a transformational and transactional approach to course leadership.

It is envisaged that the Project Reference Group through their involvement at all stages of the project will consider key policy initiatives, development or reviews which may be necessary to embed the project outcomes within their institutions. For example, whether staff policies: enshrine participation in academic course leadership programs as an essential requirement for people undertaking this role; support participation in the program through staff development; consider enhancing the role of the course coordinator and give adequate recognition through remuneration and the promotions process.

At a national level, the key contribution is the development of an academic course leadership ‘package’ which can be adapted and delivered using a flexible approach to meet the needs of
any university. As a result, the program will be upscaled through implementation in all universities within Australia.

The outcomes of the program, as determined by the independent evaluation should assist in identifying key areas for policy review to ensure the value of the program is recognised and upscaled to develop academic leadership capability across all current and potential course coordinators.

9 Procedures for facilitating dissemination and uptake of the project outcomes

Building institutional academic leadership capacity at the course coordinator level is the cornerstone of this project. As the program is relevant for current and future course coordinators, unit coordinators and heads of schools to improve their academic leadership, it provides wide-scale reform. This is particularly the case, given the project will be implemented through the Project Reference Group which will provide organisational leadership to ensure implementation across the ATN group of universities. As the course coordinator academic leadership ‘package’ will be designed for flexible delivery it can be readily adapted to meet each higher education institution’s needs. Upscaling of the academic leadership program for all course coordinators (current and future) will provide the mechanism for embedding change and second generation innovation (Southwell et al 2005).

This project specifically targets middle-level leaders, distributing academic leadership across a large number of course coordinators, thereby facilitating wide-scale reform. The program is evidence-based and develops course coordinator leadership capacity through a peer-coaching approach, knowledge of educational pedagogy and influences on teaching and learning, and encourages reflective practice. Addressing the development of leadership capacity in this large group of academics supports a culture of high quality teaching and learning and improved student learning outcomes. As the program will be available as a flexible delivery package it can be adapted for each institution, enabling upscaling across the higher education sector.

While the program will be piloted in the lead university in the first instance, it is envisaged the final ‘package’ will be implemented across the ATN group, and offered to other universities. Involvement of the Project Reference Group throughout each stage is designed to facilitate embedding of the program through review of policies and procedures to accommodate the program.

Other forms of dissemination of the project outcomes will occur through the final report for Carrick Institute, national conference presentations eg HERDSA, and through publication in national and international peer-reviewed journals. A website will also provide information to the wider higher education community at a national and international level.

10 Relation with other work/research in the area

The proposed academic leadership program for course coordinators builds on the work currently being undertaken in the Graduate School of Business at Curtin with respect to e-learning, peer-coaching and the transfer of training and leadership development (Ladyshewsky 2004, 2006). Strengthening the role of quality improvement in teaching and learning relates to Curtin’s teaching and learning priorities and builds on: implementation of a system of course review utilising institutional unit and teaching evaluation data (eVALUate), internal and external benchmarking data; an outcomes focused education framework; all of
which are part of the initiatives within Curtin’s Teaching and Learning component of its strategic plan.

The project builds on the ATN collaborative priorities for improving teaching and learning and leadership and career development opportunities for academic staff in Australia.

This project also compliments the project being undertaken by Southwell et al (2005), that is examining the roles of associate deans of teaching and learning and course coordinators.

11 Project collaborators and their anticipated contributions

The collaborators on this project are the five ATN universities which will be represented on the Project Reference Group. Their key contributions will be through the Reference Group in providing input into the design and development of the program, critical feedback, analysis of content, structure and process throughout the project. They will also be responsible for ensuring that each partner university provides the institutional support outlined earlier in this document.

In addition, Curtin as the lead university, will provide an office and IT support for the project manager and e-learning instructional designer and consultant.

The project has high level support through the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic Services) and the intent of the project is supported through the Teaching and Learning component of the strategic plan.
References (Attachment 1)


Southwell D, Scoufis M, and Hunt L (2005) ‘Caught between a rock and several hard places’: Cultivating the roles of the Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning) and the Course Coordinator: Proposal for a Carrick Institutional Leadership project.


Budget (Attachment 2)

The timeframes for employment of the personnel are as identified in Section 4

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<th>Year 2</th>
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### Timetable (Attachment 3)

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<tr>
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<td>• employ project manager&lt;br&gt;• establish project management group and consult with project reference group&lt;br&gt;• review national and international literature to determine current best practice in academic leadership development and to assist in defining the roles and development needs of course leaders&lt;br&gt;• meet with current course coordinators to determine their development needs (including academic management, current pedagogy in higher education; curriculum design, implementation and evaluation; leading and managing teams; communication, managing conflict; change management)</td>
<td>July 06 – Sept 06</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>• design the academic leadership program through consultation with ATN colleagues and current course coordinators&lt;br&gt;• employ consultant and e-learning instructional designer&lt;br&gt;• prepare the academic leadership program course materials and learning objects with input from ATN colleagues</td>
<td>Oct 06 – Mar 07</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>• commence pilot of academic leadership program in a face-to-face mode using supplementary online learning resources with a representative sample of course leaders from within the five Teaching Divisions at Curtin University of Technology to ensure cross-disciplinary representation&lt;br&gt;• offer the pilot academic leadership program to the ATN collaborative partners to review, trial, critique and provide feedback to the lead partner University&lt;br&gt;• course coordinators develop peer-coaching partnerships and conduct self-reflective journaling&lt;br&gt;• course coordinators develop as a community of practice&lt;br&gt;• evaluation of participant reactions to course and learning outcomes (changes in knowledge, skill and attitudes)</td>
<td>April 07 – Aug 07</td>
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### Year 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>• continue pilot of academic leadership program in a face-to-face mode using supplementary online learning resources with a representative sample of course leaders from within the five Teaching Divisions at Curtin University of Technology to ensure cross-disciplinary representation&lt;br&gt;• course coordinators continue peer-coaching partnerships and conduct self-reflective journaling&lt;br&gt;• course coordinators continue to develop as a community of practice&lt;br&gt;• evaluation of participant reactions to course and learning outcomes (changes in knowledge, skill and attitudes)</td>
<td>Aug 07 - Oct 07</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>• contract an external evaluation by an independent reviewer of the program [changes in behaviour on the job, learning applied in the workplace, transformational and transactional leadership approach (qualitative)]&lt;br&gt;• prepare revised “academic course leaders package” ready for</td>
<td>Oct 07 – April 08</td>
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<td>distribution within Australian higher education sector</td>
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<td>• embed program within staff development organisational units in ATN universities</td>
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<td>• review university policies to support ongoing implementation, recognition and reward for course leaders eg promotional policies</td>
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<td>• prepare and submit final report to Carrick Institute</td>
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<td>• disseminate academic course leaders’ package and resources through a cascade model, initially across the ATN universities, and then through the Carrick network. This program will also be presented through State Teaching &amp; Learning Networks (eg. WA Teaching &amp; Learning Forum; Queensland Annual Teaching &amp; Learning Conference). It is anticipated that the final leadership program package will be up-scaled enabling implementation for all course leaders across the Australian university sector</td>
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Project Team (Attachment 4)

Ms Sue Jones is the Dean of Teaching and Learning for the Division of Health Sciences, and chairs Curtin’s Courses Committee. She recently conducted a project which benchmarked the quality of teaching and learning within a large division, and has developed a course review quality improvement process which is currently being implemented. Sue has also been the Clinical Coordinator in the School of Physiotherapy where she successfully managed external stakeholder relationships to deliver quality clinical programs for large numbers of students.

Professor Bruce Shortland-Jones is the Director of the Learning Support Network (LSN) at Curtin University of Technology. The LSN provides academic services and support for the University Teaching and Learning Plan and priorities to all academic Divisions with the University. He has worked extensively in higher education over many years in the areas of curriculum design and development, teaching and learning pedagogy, and professional development to improve the quality of teaching and learning outcomes.

Dr Beverley Oliver is a Senior Lecturer and the Manager of the Teaching Development Unit at Curtin University of Technology. Apart from overseeing teaching development initiatives, Beverley is the successful project manager for implementation of an innovative university wide, on-line unit and teaching evaluation system (eVALUate). This system includes reporting functions at the unit, course, school and aggregated university level. Beverley brings to this project an in-depth understanding of staff development needs, quality curriculum development based on the principles of university pedagogy, and the effectiveness of face to face and elearning contexts.

Dr Richard Ladyshewsky is a Senior Lecturer in the Graduate School of Business Curtin University and teaches in the areas of organisational behaviour and management and leadership in the Master of Business Administration and Master of Leadership and Management Courses. He also is a unit controller for a large scale unit titled Managerial Effectiveness. Richard is a Fellow of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia and an Associate Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. He is Chair of the Graduate School of Business Teaching and Learning Committee and has received both internal and external teaching excellence and innovation awards. He was awarded Curtin Business School’s Teacher of the Year Award in 2004.

Institutional project sponsors

Professor Jane den Hollander, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic), Curtin University of Technology

Project Reference Group

ATN Teaching and Learning Committee, Directors of Teaching and Learning

- Professor Bruce King, Director, Flexible Learning Centre (UNISA)
- Dr Neil Carrington, Director, Teaching & Learning Support Service (QUT)
- Professor Shirley Alexander, Dean of Education & Head of Instructional Media Centre (UTS)
- Dr Robyn Lines, Director, Learning & Teaching Development (RMIT)
- Professor Bruce Shortland-Jones, Director, Learning Support Network (Curtin)