Scientia Education Investment Fund Grants

Final Report

Date: 30 January 2019

Title of Project: SEIF2: Evolving leadership, administration, professional development, and culture to establish a sustainable, scalable, blended learning strategy

School, Faculty: UNSW Art & Design

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[The completed report should be 8 pages in length]

1. Executive Summary

Aim

The aim of the project was to evolve current leadership, administration, professional development and culture in order to establish a sustainable, scalable blended learning strategy for UNSW Art & Design. This proposed BL strategy would then be implemented across the faculty upon completion of the project.

Context

The Inspired Learning Initiative (ILI) has been an important catalyst for kick-starting Blended Learning and the wider discussion about digital uplift at UNSW Art & Design. However continued funding is limited, and as such ILI would only impact a maximum of 40 courses and would fall short of addressing cultural change and the associated implications of blended learning on other operational areas of the Faculty.

The aim of this SEIF2 project was to complement and extend upon ILI by developing a cohesive Blended Learning Strategy that informs ***all*** operational areas of the Faculty, including executive, administration, teaching and resources. The masterplan should serve as an impetus for widespread culture change across all areas to facilitate the uptake of digital pedagogies to be effective, efficient, scalable and sustainable. This will expand the impact and capability of staff and faculty well beyond these selected ILI courses and help improve the quality, personalisation and flexibility of the student learning experience.

Priorities addressed

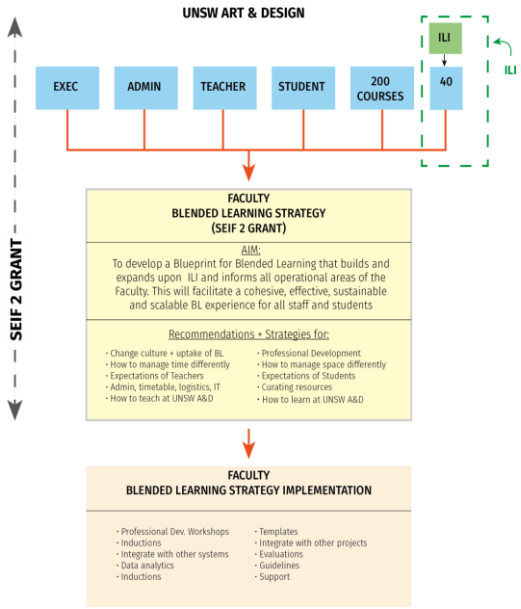
UNSW 2025 Strategy Priority: This project aligns with UNSW2025 Strategy Theme A2: Educational Excellence – the UNSW Scientia Educational Experience, and in particular:

Initiative 1 - Design, develop and deliver the UNSW Scientia Educational Experience

Initiative 2 – Supporting and valuing teaching excellence

Initiative 3 – Systematically integrating technology into teaching

SEIF 2017 Priority Area: Significantly enhance the student experience or student outcomes via any other original approach not covered above or in other funded schemes like the Inspired Learning Initiative or UNSW 3+ calendar



Theoretical Background

This project built on and developed strategies to action the UNSW Scientia Education Model, in particular 'Being Digital' and 'Inspired Learning through Inspiring Teaching'

Prior to 2002, a lack of institutional strategy was regarded as one of the main barriers to the implementation and embedding of eLearning in tertiary institutions. (Smith, 2002). Since then, many institutions have included eLearning into their Learning and Teaching strategies, however most address the *introduction and/or implementation* of eLearning but fail to address how these might become *embedded* in institutional practice (DfES, 2003, Stiles, 2003) in order to remain sustainable and scalable. The successful embedding of eLearning in institutions is often impeded by the failure to effectively introduce culture change or to address change management. Critical issues such as 'one off' staff development training, irregular consolidation of progress, little of no evaluation, and lack of follow through serve as further obstructions (Stiles, 2004) .

Consistently applied, truly innovative Blended Learning fundamentally changes the practice of teaching. If *all* aspects of faculty operations do not evolve considering this, then it becomes difficult to effectively scale and embed blended learning across the faculty in a consistent and sustainable manner.

Department for Education and Skills, "Towards a Unified e-Learning Strategy", (Nottingham: DfES Publications, 2003), 6
Smith, T. (2002) *Strategic factors affecting the uptake, in higher education, of new and emerging technologies for learning and teaching.* York: Technologies Centre, [online] www.techlearn.ac.uk/NewDocs/HEDriversFinal.rtf
Stiles, M., & Yorke, J. (2004). *Embedding staff development in elearning in the production process and using policy to reinforce its effectiveness*. Paper presented at the The 9th SEDA Conference, Birmingham,.http://www.staffs.ac.uk/COSE/cosenew/embedding.pdf

Outcomes and Outputs

Through comprehensive consultation, a Blended Learning strategy has been compiled including:

- guidelines and templates of best practice for academic staff (including sessional staff) to adopt and adapt in teaching and technical support
- a professional course development program (CDP) comprising 5 x 3hr workshops over 6 months
- guidelines for students on how to study in a BL model

Widespread Cultural change has been initiated across the faculty by:

- regular and extensive consultation with executive, IT, technical and admin services to align and determine potential impact of BL strategy recommendations on other areas of the faculty, and vice versa
- consistent and comprehensive integration with other current faculty initiatives and projects such as the Bachelor of Design and Bachelor of Fine Art program redesign, UNSW A&D Hubs Skills Packages (SEIF#1 grant), UNSW A&D online proficiencies and inductions, and UNSW A&D online course outline system
- integration with current UNSW wide initiatives such as the Inspired Learning Initiative and 3+ model

These strategies and initiatives have facilitated widespread cultural change across the faculty, and support the sustainability and scalability of blended learning beyond the scope and duration of the project.

Dissemination outputs to date include:

- showcase at UNSW Inspired Learning Summit 2019
- poster presentation at UNSW Learning and Teaching Forum 2019
- short presentation at UNSW Learning and Teaching Forum 2019
- showcase at UNSW A&D Inspired Learning Showcase 2019
- presentations at 2 x Course Curriculum Development Programs (5 workshops each)

Key Findings

The project scope was to devise a proposed BL strategy by the end of 2018, with implementation occurring after completion of the project. However the process of widespread consultation, strategy and planning adopted by the team for the project has already initiated cultural change and 'buy in' across all areas of the faculty, where there has been significant uptake of digital pedagogies. This has enhanced the quality of blended learning and provided greater flexibility in timetabling and course design to facilitate an improved, personalised student experience. The sustainability and scalability of the model has been supported through integration with other faculty and UNSW projects, and by embedding it in professional development programs, timetabling, skills proficiencies, sessional staff inductions and student communication. Key findings were:

- an integrated approach towards other faculty projects, initiatives and staff was critical to ensure widespread buy-in, uptake, and sustained cultural change towards blended learning
- an extensive, sustained, evolving and consultative approach towards other faculty departments and services such as IT, administration, technical, executive was critical to ensure support and sustainability
- both a macro (whole faculty) and micro (individual student and teaching experience) approach to the strategy was essential to minimise any unintended consequences and adverse impacts
- improved, personalised and flexible student learning experiences and teaching excellence were the key drivers throughout the process
- strategy and guidelines should cater for academics' diverse range of competencies and understanding of BL.
- systematically integrating technology into teaching should be done on an ongoing basis
- greater levels of support for academics is initially required, with Educational Developers playing a crucial support role. These academics should then serve as mentors to other staff striving for academic excellence
- Harnessing existing change and disruptions already occurring at the faculty or institution (eg 3+, ILI, A&D program renewal) were regarded as positive catalysts to implement cultural change
- Evaluation was formative and iterative, and summative evaluation now needs to be completed once the strategy is implemented in 2019. This will facilitate opportunities for refinement and improvement.

Recommendations

The Blended Learning strategy has been completed, and there will now be widespread implementation, evaluation and further refinement of the strategy at UNSW A&D throughout 2019, with a view for wider dissemination beyond the faculty towards 2020.

The focus to date has been on systematically integrating technology and BL into undergraduate programs. This should now be extended and expanded into the postgraduate programs once initial evaluations have been completed.

The strategy, guidelines and templates are currently located on the CDP Moodle website, but should ideally be located in a centrally accessible location or website. This will be determined upon further discussions with the Associate Dean Education and other relevant stakeholders.

Acknowledgements

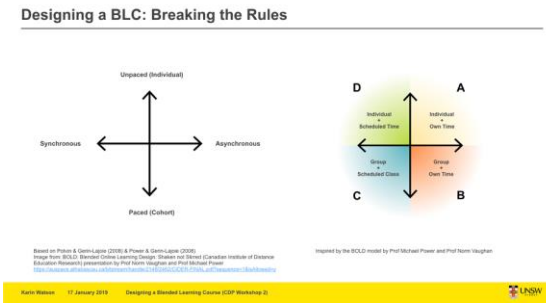
Input, implementation and consultation into this project have been collaborative and widespread across the faculty, and include the Executive, Academic, Professional and Technical Staff, Educational Developers, Library staff, PVCE and students as partners.

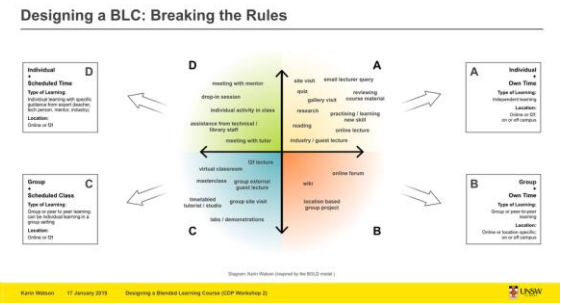
2. Outcomes and impact

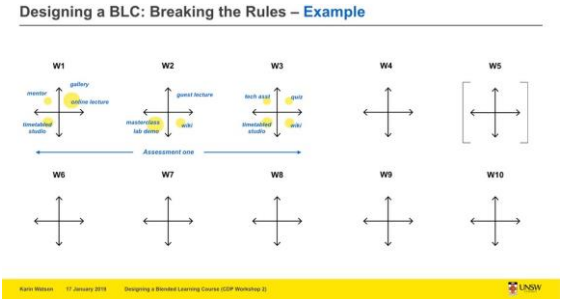
Major achievements of project in relation to the outcomes and deliverables:

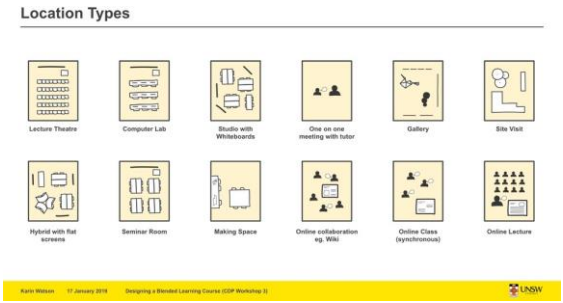
A comprehensive Blended Learning Strategy that provides:

- Professional Development Workshop resources (series of 5 x 3hour workshops over 6 months)
- Guidelines and templates of best practice for staff to adopt and adapt in teaching and technical support including:
    - How to manage time, location, learning spaces and technology differently for a BL context
    - How to curate resources for a BL context
    - Integrating ILI into your courses
    - Templates for Moodle layouts, assessment briefs, etc
- Guidelines for students to adopt in their learning experience including:
    - How to manage time, location, learning spaces and technology differently to maximise flexibility and personalisation of learning experience
    - How to locate and utilise resources to provide an enriched learning experience
- UNSW A&D 'Expectations on Teachers' Guidelines
- UNSW A&D 'Expectation of Students' Guidelines
- Guidelines for inclusion in sessional staff inductions
- Recommendations for timetabling structure changes, including technical making and workshop spaces, IT availability, and student personalised dashboard
- All recommendations and guidelines integrated with other major A&D projects including:
    - Bachelor of Design and Bachelor of Fine Art program redesign,
    - A&D Hubs Skills Packages (SEIF#1 grant),
    - A&D online proficiencies and inductions
    - A&D online course outline system
    - A&D Making Centre '101 Courses'
- Guidelines for integrating curriculum development with UNSW Inspired Learning Initiative (to date 15 ILI courses completed) and 3+ model
- Re-allocation of faculty technical and skills resources to include:
    - Drop in centres
    - Master classes
    - Online Hubs skills packages









Project Impact:
To ensure maximum impact on student experience as well as staff professional development opportunities, the project has initially focussed on the revised Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Design programs commencing in 2019. This will ensure all new courses within the new programs benefit from the strategy.

To date the project has impacted on the following programs, courses and staff:

- 6 revised programs commencing 2019 at UNSW A&D including Bachelor of Design, Bachelor of Fine Art, Bachelor of Media Arts, Bachelor of Design Honours, Bachelor of Fine Art Honours and Bachelor of Media Arts Honours
- 41 new courses within the above mentioned programs, teaching commencing 2019 and 2020
- 30 academic staff participated in professional development program CDP1 and/or CDP 2
- 7 Educational Developers participated in CDP1 and/or CDP2
- 15 courses completed ILI

To date, the project has consulted and integrated strategies with the following faculty departments and services including:

- Faculty Executive (Head of School, Finance, Associate Dean Education , Deputy Heads of School, etc)
- IT Services
- Making and Technical Services
- Administration and Timetabling (Student Client Services, Student support services)
- Library
- Education Support Managers
- PVCE and student partners
- UNSW A&D Students

To date the project has integrated and consulted with the following UNSW A&D projects:

- UNSW revised UG Program redesign (see above)
- 2 Hubs Skills packages (Photoshop package and Analogue making skills package) for SEIF#1 grant
- Online course outline system
- Online Proficiencies and inductions
- Making Centres, 4D hubs, refit of rooms, informal spaces, corridors to maximise learning flexibility, Materials Exchange, etc

Future impact:

- A third professional development (CDP3) is planned for T2, 2019 which would include 22 staff participating in 26 courses across 2 programs.
- All students undertaking the revised undergraduate programs and electives at A&D will benefit from the project when the revised programs commence in 2019.
- It is intended that the BL strategy now be extended to A&D postgraduate program redesign, with new PG programs commencing in 2020.
- It should be noted that the scope of the project is to produce a BL strategy, with implementation and evaluation occurring post project completion.

2. Dissemination strategies and outputs

The dissemination strategy to date has centred around showcasing works-in-progress to faculty and UNSW forums and summits during the development of the BL strategy. Future dissemination to other

faculties at UNSW, and outputs in journals and conference proceedings are planned once implementation and evaluation of the strategy have been completed, both of which are beyond the scope and time constraints of the grant.

The following dissemination activities and events have been completed, and have been particularly successful in demonstrating the collaborative, integrated approach and culture change that has occurred to date:

- UNSW Learning and Teaching Forum (October 2018) – poster and short presentation https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/forum18
- UNSW Inspired Learning Summit (October 2018) - showcase https://ils.teaching.unsw.edu.au/stations.html
- UNSW A&D Inspired Learning showcase (November 2018) – showcase presented by 20 academic staff
- UNSW Scientia Education Academy Annual report (projects demonstrating academic leadership and excellence at UNSW)
- UNSW A&D Course Development Programs CDP1 and 2 (2018)

Future dissemination activities and events include distribution of the 'Expectations of Students' (how to learn at UNSW A&D) guidelines in the Faculty Welcome email to all new students in T1 and T3, 2019, and presentation at the Faculty Welcome to students in O Week, T1 and T3, 2019.

The BL Strategy, including the 'Expectations of Teachers' (how to teach at UNSW A&D) guidelines will be integrated into the sessional staff induction process during O Week T1 and T3, 2019 (and ongoing), with additional presentations at UNSW A&D Domain meetings (Art, Media Arts, Design) in Term 1, 2019 and ongoing.

The third Course Development Program is scheduled for T2, 2019, with an additional 26 courses, 22 academics, 4 Educational Developers across 2 programs participating.

Presentations are planned for the 2019 UNSW Connections Seminar series, UNSW Education Focussed Lunch and Learn activities and the UNSW Learning and Teaching Forum.

Outputs are planned for the following:

- ICEL (International Conference on Education and Learning) August 2019 http://icel2019.gaics.org/site/page.aspx?pid=901&sid=1254&lang=en
- ISSOTL (International Society of Scholarship in Teaching and Learning) October 2019 https://www.issotl.com/2019
- 28th ICDE World Conference on Online Learning November 2019 https://wcol2019.ie/welcome/
- HERDSA Annual Conference http://www.herdsa.org.au/conference

3. Evaluation of project outcomes

A formative, ongoing and iterative evaluation strategy was adopted for the project outcome, since implementation and summative evaluation of the BL strategy falls beyond the scope and time frame of the project. These feedback sessions, evaluations and ongoing developments were implemented through:

- fortnightly update and feedback meetings with the project governance team
- fortnightly planning and feedback meetings with the Education Support Manager
- Weekly planning and feedback meetings with the Hubs Skills Packages Team (SEIF1) which included the IT Manager, Technical Services Manager, ADE, Educational Developers, and 2 academics.

- Regular feedback and strategy discussions with Deputy Heads of School, Student Client Services, Library staff, timetabling, facilities
- Student focus groups in conjunction with the Hubs Skills Packages (SEIF1) project
- Regular feedback from the PVCE regarding ILI and best practice

Strategies and guidelines were continually evaluated against the strategic priorities of:

- Initiative 1 - Design, develop and deliver the UNSW Scientia Educational Experience, in particular facilitating and supporting a personalised, flexible learning experience.
- Initiative 2 – Supporting and valuing teaching excellence, through professional development programs, templates and guidelines
- Initiative 3 – Systematically integrating technology into teaching through ILI, Hubs Skills packages, revised courses and programs

Ethics approval has been gained for summative evaluations in 2019 once the strategy is implemented, with the view for further refinement of the strategy to maintain sustainability and scalability, and to facilitate further outputs. The project will also be evaluated in association with projects it has closely aligned with, such as the Hubs Skills Packages (SEIF1).