

1. Background

The PVC (Education) Portfolio commenced in 2016 with the mission to deliver a set of integrated services to the UNSW community aimed at supporting the implementation of the 2025 Strategy. To achieve this objective a review was undertaken of all services currently provided by the PVCE Portfolio to determine whether they were aligned with UNSW's strategic priorities, fit-for-purpose, and structured and delivered in a fully integrated way.

Scope

To understand the alignment of the current services offered by the PVCE Portfolio and the needs of UNSW faculties and divisions, the scope of the needs analysis was defined by the following questions:

- What are the required services?
- Who are the required service owners?
- What organisational/business need(s) do these services address?
- For whom are these services offered?
- Are the current services fit-for-purpose given the priorities of the 2025 Strategy?
- What changes should be implemented in service provision or organisational structure to ensure an integrated service model?

Expected outcomes

- Integrated Service Catalogue for the Portfolio based on faculty and divisional needs
- Defining the capability and capacity needs in the Portfolio to deliver these services
- Clear definition of the relationships, inter-dependencies and business flows necessary to enable seamless integration of the services offered the Portfolio
- Clear understanding of the business infrastructure, systems and services necessary to support the development and delivery of these services
- Articulation of implications for other areas of the business
- Identification of risk areas
- Proposed changes to organisational structure to implement the Integrated Service Model

Project Steering Group

Geoff Crisp (Chair) – PVCE
Sue Beardman – Director, Learning Environments
Stephen Marshall – Director, Teaching Development
Mark King – Director, Learning Design
Mark Uncles – DDE, UNSW Business School
Chris Tisdell – ADE, Science
Oya Demirbilek – ADE, Built Environments
Graham Forsyth - ADA, Art & Design
Emma Bowen – Program Office
Adam Goc – Enterprise Architect, UNSW IT

2. Needs Analysis Approach

Stakeholder engagement

A series of focus groups and interviews were conducted in April and May 2016 with the following groups and individuals:

- DVCE, Chair Academic Board, PVCE, Dean of Built Environments, Dean of Art and Design, Dean of Engineering and Dean of Arts and Social Science, Director BRIDG
- Deputy and Associate Deans Education
- Directors PVCE Portfolio
- Student representatives
- Faculty Educational Developers (UNFED), TAN, BRIDG

Written responses were received from the Faculty of Business and the Faculty of Science and an online survey was distributed to relevant areas in schools, faculties and divisions with 115 responses received.

Key Questions

- How do we design and deliver an integrated service model for the PVCE portfolio that has addressing the needs of students and staff at its core, and the seamless integration of the digital and physical as its main goal and mode of delivery?
- How do we structure our services to seamlessly support the lifecycle of activities and creation of the building blocks of the 'student education experience' (this includes the physical and digital environments, curriculum, learning objectives, learning material, delivery methodology etc.) with the need to support the actual delivery?
- What capabilities are needed to create the building blocks of the Scientia Education Model?
- What services need to be provided and who owns those services?
- What are the dependencies between these services?
- How best can these services be integrated to address interdependencies?
- What does this mean for the nature of the relationships, business arrangements and flows, within and between the elements of the portfolio?

3. Needs Analysis Findings

The data from all sources were entered, coded and analysed in NVivo by PVCE Portfolio.

The following themes were extracted from the online survey results:

- My first priority is...
- My second priority is...
- My third priority is...
- Academic staff development – accredited and non-accredited courses, awards, grants, fellowships, interest groups.
- Scheduling services – timetabling and booking services, class management system support, reporting and analysis.
- Technology enabled learning and teaching (TELT) – training, support, maintenance and development of Moodle and other TELT applications, support for pilot projects
- Learning analytics – evaluation, analysis and reporting, educational data.
- Organisational Development – performance recognition and promotion.

- Learning design – curriculum, course and program development, practice guides, training and consultations.
- Media services – audio video training, equipment loans and production services
- Strategic projects – Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Piloting Active Learning Spaces (PALS)
- Audio-visual systems and services – Centrally allocated teaching spaces (CATS) development, support and maintenance
- Physical infrastructure management – teaching spaces and furnishings
- Other – any other services and support required from the PVCE Portfolio

Staff Focus Group

The feedback from focus groups for the Deputy and Associate Deans Education, the Learning Management System Advisory Group and UNFED resulted in the following themes:

- Capital investment
- Digital technology and pedagogical expertise and support
- IT versus TELT
- Online technology support and expertise
- Organisational structure
- Pedagogy
- Policy
- Project management
- Quality Assurance
- Service provision

Student Focus Group

The feedback from the focus group for students resulted in the following themes:

- Culture & community
- Curriculum Design and Mapping
- Digital Technology and Pedagogical Expertise and Support
- Learning Environments
- Online Technology Support and Expertise
- Quality Assurance
- Staff development
- Student Learning
- Wastage-inefficiency

4. Priorities from Needs Analysis data

Findings from the Needs Analysis revealed an overwhelming requirement for support with blended and online course and program design and delivery services. This was apparent across all groups and was seen as one of the high priority areas for the PVCE Portfolio. These needs included areas such as learning analytics and technology integrated learning spaces as well as the need for an e-portfolio option. Aligned with this requirement was the need for more self-use video recording studios where academics could produce online content with minimal technical knowledge but have access to technical and educational design support when needed.

Academic staff development was a priority, especially in areas such as blended and online delivery and in engaging students in large classes. The feedback indicated that the PVCE Portfolio should make more use of outstanding discipline teaching staff in our formal and informal development activities and that staff development activities should also be run at the local level

and not always as a central activity. The issue of a perceived lack of recognition of teaching in the academic promotion process was highlighted and the PVCE Portfolio was seen to be able to assist here with designing appropriate metrics for teaching and learning which could be used in academic promotion.

There was much discussion about the relationship between the PVCE Portfolio and other service areas of the University. Faculties and schools need all service areas to work together more closely so a coherent set of core business services can be delivered more effectively; areas relevant to the PVCE portfolio include student services and administration, technology, learning spaces and policy development. The PVCE Portfolio needs to work more closely with IT, FM, Student Life and Learning and governance to ensure faculties and schools do not have to negotiate with multiple service areas or divisions to solve a problem or initiate a change.

Student feedback through the CATEI system generated many comments, especially the low response rates and the perceived inappropriateness of some of the questions. The PVCE Portfolio was seen as an area able to assist with improving response rates, the interpretation of student responses and providing specific support for schools where issues have been identified.

Access to appropriate teaching spaces also generated many comments. This is a complex issue as it involves the interaction of program structure, physical learning spaces at the University and local level and the availability of appropriate teaching staff across the teaching week. Nevertheless, the PVCE Portfolio was seen as having a core role in designing and delivering a timetable and scheduling pattern that met the needs of the schools and faculties.

There were many comments around the provision of appropriate educational and staff development resources for academics to use in their own time rather than having to attend formal sessions. The need for concise templates, toolkits and on-demand resources which academics could readily access was something that the PVCE Portfolio should be in a position to deliver through working collaboratively with the faculties and schools.

Students commented particularly on the perceived lack of alignment between the weightings given to particular course content and assessment tasks. Students indicated they valued the recording of lectures and were frustrated when some academics did not record their lectures or the recordings had poor sound quality. Students would also value a better sense of community, especially in large classes. Work integrated learning activities and paid internships were also highlighted as being particularly beneficial to students.

5. Integrated Service Model Approach

It is clear that faculties and schools require a PVCE Portfolio that is visibly aligned to the priorities of the institution and its component parts and is responsive to the rapidly changing higher education sector. A static model of engagement with faculties or a fixed set of services will not fulfil the needs of the University. The PVCE Portfolio must be organised in such a way that it can respond in a timely manner to faculty and school needs yet still provide core services that are likely to be required over a number of years. For this reason, a partnership model with faculties would be more appropriate for meeting these expectations.

In this partnership model, PVCE Portfolio staff would form cross service teams which would be dedicated to a particular faculty (or faculties depending on the activity) and spend some of their time co-located with faculties or schools. These teams would not be fixed for multiple years but would be assembled for negotiated activities and then continue or be reassigned or reconfigured through negotiation with faculties. The PVCE Portfolio would work closely with other service

areas to integrate them into the activities or negotiate service provision to ensure a cohesive and effective outcome for faculties.

6. Recommendations

1. That the PVCE Portfolio move to a partnership model of engagement with faculties and divisions. The PVCE Portfolio would negotiate with faculties the priorities and assemble appropriate resources to work with faculty and school staff. PVCE staff may co-locate with faculty or school staff for part of the engagement time.
2. That to facilitate this partnership model, the PVCE organisational structure should move to a horizontal model for partnership working arrangements but retain current line management arrangements for administrative purposes.
3. That the PVCE Portfolio move to using the Agile methodology wherever appropriate in order to be responsive to the needs of faculties and schools and to ensure timely and continuous delivery of valued services.
4. That the PVCE review the current range and type of staffing positions within the Portfolio to align with the priorities identified in the Needs Analysis.
5. That the Deputy and Associate Deans Education meet quarterly to provide feedback on the efficacy of the partnership model and propose improvements to the working relationship between the faculties and the PVCE Portfolio.
6. That the PVCE Portfolio has closer working relationships with other service areas so that cohesion and alignment is achieved for service provision.
7. That the PVCE Portfolio facilitates the effective use of communities of practice around high priority areas.
8. That the Teaching Gateway website be updated through discussions with the faculties as to the priority areas and requirements.

7. Next Steps

The PVCE Portfolio will initiate a series of changes over the coming months to implement these recommendations and begin work on establishing the partnership model with faculties. The Portfolio has already submitted two Viability papers seeking strategic funding for a significant expansion in our capacity to support blended and fully online program and course design and delivery and for an increase in student-led learning spaces and innovation spaces.

The organisational structure of the PVCE Portfolio will be redesigned so that it emphasises cross disciplinary teams rather than perceived rigid silos based on existing reporting lines (horizontal rather than vertical view of functions). The University is moving towards more education focussed positions and the PVCE Portfolio will move to adopt this approach for some of its positions.

The number of different types of staff required to deliver the priorities associated with the Needs Analysis and the 2025 Strategy will be reviewed and the outcomes from the Operational Excellence activity will also be used to inform a workforce planning proposal for the Portfolio.

8. Conclusions

The Needs Analysis was an important activity for the PVCE Portfolio and for the University. It has informed the future direction of the PVCE Portfolio and the nature of how it will work with faculties, schools and other service areas. This report has highlighted key themes and major needs expressed by faculties, schools and divisions but has not necessarily addressed all issues raised by specific areas. PVCE Portfolio staff will, however, continue to use the rich data set to inform their work and future practices by exploring more specific issues from specific areas. This continued use of the data set will be for a short fixed time in line with ethics protocols.

We are particularly grateful for the generous time that others gave in providing constructive and thoughtful feedback and suggestions. As PVCE, I am also grateful for the considerable effort of PVCE Portfolio staff in designing this Needs Analysis and coding the vast array of feedback.

Professor Geoffrey Crisp

PVC (Education)

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