



Australian Government



Office for  
**Learning & Teaching**



# LEARNING AND TEACHING ACROSS CULTURES

Final Report, 2015

### Lead organisation

International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)

### Project leader

Dennis Murray  
Tel: 0428 579 305  
Email: dennis.murray@unimelb.edu.au

### Principal investigator

Professor Betty Leask  
Tel: 0429 839 619  
Email: b.leask@latrobe.edu.au

### Report author

Dennis Murray  
Tel: 0428 579 305  
Email: dennis.murray@unimelb.edu.au

Support for the production of this report has been provided by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching. The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching.



With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and where otherwise noted, all material presented in this document is provided under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

The details of the relevant licence conditions are available on the Creative Commons website (accessible using the links provided) as is the full legal code for the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode>

Requests and inquiries concerning these rights should be addressed to:

Office for Learning and Teaching  
Department of Education and  
Training  
GPO Box 9880,  
Location code N255EL10  
Sydney NSW 2001  
[learningandteaching@education.gov.au](mailto:learningandteaching@education.gov.au)

2015  
978-1-76028-168-7  
PRINT/978-1-76028-169-4  
PDF/978-1-76028-170-0 DOCX

# Acknowledgements

IEAA gratefully acknowledges contributions to this project by:

## The Principal Investigator

- Professor Betty Leask (La Trobe University)

## The Project Reference Group

- Associate Professor Carmela Briguglio (Curtin University)
- Jude Carroll (Education Consultant, UK)
- Associate Professor Shanton Chang (The University of Melbourne)
- Dr Anna Ciccarelli (The University of Queensland)
- Professor Betty Leask (La Trobe University)
- Dennis Murray (International Education Association of Australia, IEAA)
- Dr Sue Starfield (The University of New South Wales)
- Dr Craig Whitsed (Murdoch University)

## Critical Readers (other than members of the Reference Group)

- Professor Michelle Barker (Griffith University)
- Dr Leela Cejnar (The University of New South Wales)
- Associate Professor Julie Duck (The University of Queensland)
- Dr Katie Dunworth (Curtin University)
- Dr Wendy Green (The University of Queensland)
- Pamela Humphreys (Griffith University)
- Jan McLean (The University of New South Wales)
- Pam Mort (The University of New South Wales)
- Stephen Parsons (University of South Australia)
- Dr Megan Paull (Murdoch University)
- Mary Anne Seow (University of South Australia)
- Dr Iain Skinner (The University of New South Wales)

## Authors of the Good Practice Report

- Professor Betty Leask (La Trobe University)
- Jan Wallace (Education Consultant)

## Project Evaluator

- Professor Margaret Hicks (University of South Australia)

## Workshop Presenter

- Jude Carroll (Education Consultant, UK)

## List of acronyms

AIEC	Australian International Education Conference
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council
DVCA	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic
EAIE	European Association for International Education
HERDSA	Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia
IEAA	International Education Association of Australia
IOC	Internationalisation of the Curriculum
OLT	Office for Learning and Teaching
VC	Vice-Chancellor

## Executive summary

Universities have a responsibility to cater to the learning needs of all students. Diversity in the student population is now the norm rather than the exception in Australian universities. Classroom diversity creates challenges and opportunities for teaching staff and for students. Good teaching and effective learning require that university teachers address student diversity in the design and delivery of curricula.

Recognising this, in June 2011, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) – subsequently the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) – commissioned the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) to prepare a Good Practice Report on Learning and Teaching Across Cultures and later a set of Good Practice Principles and supporting Quick Guides based on the findings of the report. Individually and collectively the Good Practice Report, the principles and the guides provide insights for university leaders, curriculum designers and teachers on how to ensure students in culturally diverse classrooms are challenged by and supported to achieve intended learning outcomes.

The project pursued its objectives in a phased fashion so as to ensure appropriate consultation, validation and effective dissemination of its key outputs and findings. A four-stage approach was taken (described in Chapter 1), which ensured consultation involving multiple stakeholders and the progressive development and refinement of project objectives and outputs.

A core finding of the Good Practice Report was that improving the learning outcomes of all students requires a combination of strategies targeting domestic and international students as well as staff. The combination will be different in different learning and teaching situations. The Good Practice Report addresses this challenge directly by highlighting the need for Good Practice Principles that can be applied in different ways depending on the teaching situation.

The Good Practice Report highlighted the importance of disseminating good practice in such a way that what has been learned in one situation can be adapted and applied by academics, student services staff and university managers in many different situations. The context and the content of learning and teaching vary and 'off-the-shelf solutions' are unlikely to be effective. Good practice exists and is evidenced in the Good Practice Report. The challenge is to translate it into action within various contexts and for different purposes.

The Good Practice Principles provide a useful foundation for the design of learning, teaching and assessment activities. They were informed by the lessons learnt from the literature and ALTC projects used in preparing the Good Practice Report. They were refined and affirmed by a broad range of expert practitioners engaged in the project. They are a valuable resource for program leaders and teachers to design, implement and evaluate curricula and teaching practices. Learning support service professionals will also find the Principles (and the associated Guides) useful in the evaluation of their contributions to effective teaching and learning across cultures.

Six Good Practice Principles were identified as important for effective teaching and learning across cultures:

### Good Practice Principles in Learning and Teaching Across Cultures

- Principle 1: Focus on students as learners
- Principle 2: Respect and adjust for diversity
- Principle 3: Provide context-specific information and support
- Principle 4: Facilitate meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement
- Principle 5: Be adaptable, flexible and responsive to evidence
- Principle 6: Prepare students for life in a globalised world

A suite of Quick Guides to good practice in learning and teaching across cultures was created using these six principles. Guides are available on the following topics:

## Quick Guides

- Guide 1: Assessment
- Guide 2: Curriculum Design
- Guide 3: Developing English Language Skills
- Guide 4: Managing Group Work
- Guide 5: Effective Professional Development of Teachers
- Guide 6: Working with Student Learning Services

A crucial seventh guide, *Learning and Teaching Across Cultures, Using the Good Practice Principles and Quick Guides: Suggestions for University Managers and Leaders*, was also prepared. This guide is for university leaders and managers. It provides suggestions on how institutions might best use the principles and the guides to improve learning and teaching across cultures strategically across a university. The seventh guide is a crucial resource in supporting the implementation of the principles and other guides.

Each Quick Guide focuses specifically on catering for cultural and linguistic diversity in the identified topic area. The guides may be used to audit and affirm current practice and/or to identify areas for additional effort or activity.

Dissemination of the project outputs and resources involved a range of engaged dissemination activities throughout the lifecycle of the project. These included a national symposium, distribution of drafts to critical readers and a series of workshops across Australia. The principles and guides were also distributed in hard copy to every Australian university and are available on several different websites (see below).

Outputs of the project include The Good Practice Report, the Good Practice Principles and the Quick Guides. All are available on the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) website, the Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IOC) in action website and on the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) website:

## Location of project resources

### Good Practice Report

- <http://www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures>

### ALTC Good Practice Projects

Listed in Appendix C. Full details given in the Good Practice Report (see above).

### Good Practice Principles and Guides

- [www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures](http://www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures)
- [www.ioc.global](http://www.ioc.global)
- [www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011](http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011)

The outputs of the project are already being used in universities in Australia and abroad, in some forthcoming academic work and through ongoing projects, including OLT projects. The principles and guides will be an essential point of reference for any ongoing projects in these areas. It is important that ownership of the resources is maintained and that continued dissemination and reference occurs, preferably using interactive methods with expert facilitator guidance.

As an excellence resource, universities will refer to the resources and use them over time in response to their own strategic needs.

## Table of contents

Chapter 1:	Project context and approach	8
Chapter 2:	Project outputs	13
Chapter 3:	Dissemination and impact	17
Chapter 4:	Evaluation	20
Chapter 5:	Conclusion and lessons learned	21

## Appendices

Appendix A:	Certification	23
Appendix B:	National symposium program	24
Appendix C:	Outline of projects analysed for the Good Practice Guide	26
Appendix D:	Evaluation report	29
Appendix E:	References	37

# Chapter 1

## Project context and approach

### Context

In June 2011, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) – subsequently the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) – commissioned the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) to prepare a Good Practice Report (GPR) on Learning and Teaching Across Cultures. This report drew on a range of projects, fellowships and best practice identified, nurtured and supported by the ALTC since its establishment in 2004. The projects and fellowships concerned had resulted in a significant body of knowledge and scholarship about learning and teaching across cultures.

The synthesis and dissemination of learning on this topic is important for the following reasons:

- Universities have a responsibility to cater to the learning needs of all students. Diversity in the student population is now the norm rather than the exception in Australian universities. Classroom diversity creates challenges and opportunities for teaching staff and for students. Good teaching and effective learning require that university teachers address student diversity in the design and delivery of curricula.
- The ‘intercultural’ is included as an element in most definitions of internationalisation in higher education, yet what it means in practice in universities is often poorly understood.
- Learning and teaching across cultures is an important quality assurance issue for Australian universities.
- Australian university teachers are involved in a range of ways in working across cultures both onshore and offshore, yet relatively little has been published on what this means for their practice, particularly in the offshore environment.

There are multiple loci and multiple pedagogical and learning tasks faced by teachers and students when learning and teaching across cultures is involved, including but not limited to:

- Teaching offshore
- Interactive, classroom-based teaching for international students
- Managing multicultural groups
- Designing fair assessment for students from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Using cultural diversity as a resource in the classroom (for example to assist domestic students to develop their intercultural competence and/or helping all students develop awareness of the importance of context)
- Developing teaching strategies to encourage international and domestic student interaction to enhance their learning.

Given the diversity of the student cohort, the current project focused on teaching across cultures in a broad sense. It covered multicultural groups generally, including both domestic students from non-English speaking backgrounds as well as international students.



## Project approach

The project sought to achieve its objectives in a phased fashion so as to ensure appropriate consultation, validation and effective dissemination of its key outputs and findings.

A four- stage approach was taken:

- Phase 1            A synthesis of the learning from 13 ALTC funded projects and fellowships and relevant international literature on the topic, to produce a Good Practice Report.
- Phase 2            Formulation of Good Practice Principles and a series of topic focused Quick Guides (hereinafter referred to as 'principles and guides').
- Phase 3            A National Symposium jointly presented by OLT (taking over ALTC's role) and IEAA to validate and begin the dissemination of the principles and guides
- Phase 4            Finalisation of the principles and guides followed by delivery of a small number of professional development workshops around Australia.

### Phase 1

Work on Phase 1 of the project began in June 2011. This phase involved the establishment of a reference group, development of terms of reference and appointment of an external evaluator. Importantly, the project drew on the expertise of citation and award winners within Australia who have been recognised for their expertise and achievements in relation to the topic and the related issues. A number were invited to participate as members of the reference group and/or as critical readers of the resources to be produced during the project.

A literature review was undertaken at the outset of Phase 1. The ALTC funded projects and fellowships were analysed and good practice exemplars were identified. A draft Good Practice Report was completed in October 2011.

At this point, feedback from reference group members and critical readers provided invaluable information for formative evaluation. Their feedback was incorporated into a revised draft Good Practice Report.

It was important and very useful to engage a range of stakeholders and experts in the formative evaluation of the draft report. The perspectives provided by English language specialists as well as discipline-based leaders in learning and teaching and an international expert with involvement as a leader in a similar UK-based project ensured a range of critical perspectives were incorporated into the final version of the Good Practice Report. The feedback prompted significant redrafting of the report and encouraged refinement of the project design.

The final Good Practice Report was presented to the OLT in March 2012 with recommendations for future action. Taking account of the lessons from the first phase of the project, a refined project proposal for the three ensuing phases of the project was prepared. (Note: the outputs and findings of the literature review and Good Practice Report are provided in Chapter 2).

The recommendations in the 2012 Good Practice Report, in particular (i) the development of a set of Good Practice Principles and an associated series of Quick Guides on specific topics to illustrate the Principles in different contexts, and (ii) the proposal to invite ALTC Project Leaders and Fellows to the national Symposium to contribute to the development of the principles and guides, materially shaped the subsequent phases of the project. The processes above illustrate how iterative and inter-related the elements of the project had become.

### Phase 2

The Good Practice Report provided a solid foundation for the conceptualisation, design and development of the principles and guides. Six Quick Guides topics were identified (Assessment, Curriculum Design; Developing English Language Skills; Managing Group Work; Professional Development; Student Services).

Preparation of the principles and the guides began in April 2012. This was the most challenging phase of the project, reflecting the fundamental complexity of the subject matter.

The development of the principles was complex, but less so than the development of the series of interconnected but topic specific Quick Guides. The development of both the principles and the guides involved multiple drafts and rigorous peer review.

The decision to develop the principles and guides together was crucial and a significant innovation. While there are many guides on various topics related to teaching international students available on websites and in hard copy, none are underpinned or informed directly by robust good practice principles. Few are illustrated by practical multi-disciplinary examples. The principles, developed from the extant literature, provided the theoretical context necessary to go beyond a 'hints and tips' approach in the Quick Guides. They were also used as the structural framework for each guide. In this way the project sought to combine the findings from the theoretical and scholarly literature and the findings of the ALTC Projects in different disciplines explored in Phase 1 (see above) as the foundation for academic staff to adopt, adapt and develop new approaches to teaching across cultures – approaches suited to the needs of their students that take into consideration the unique characteristics of their institutional and disciplinary contexts.

A dissemination plan of project outputs and resources (Good Practice Report and the Principles and Guides) was prepared. It anticipated dissemination by a wide variety of means:

- OLT and IEAA websites
- AIEC 2012 and 2013
- The IEAA Internationalisation of the Curriculum Special Interest Group (IOC SIG)
- HERDSA newsletter
- Hard and electronic copies of the resources for distribution to the leadership of all Australian universities and selected other stakeholders
- National workshops.

The principles, in their development, were themselves informed by an extensive range of research, which included an analysis of international literature, and critical discussion by members of the reference group and critical readers.

A template for each guide was developed and initial drafts of each guide and the principles were prepared. The main challenge was to synthesise the vast amount of available information into the principles and the Quick Guides and provide succinct examples of value to a wide audience. Context is critical in this area and yet there is a natural reluctance from individual teachers to sift through large amounts of information looking for examples that best fit their own situation. Consequently, to help deal with this challenge an additional consultation and revision phase was built into the development of the principles and guides. First drafts of the resources were submitted to critical readers at the end of August 2012. A presentation on the project was delivered at the Australian International Education Conference on 4 October 2012 in Melbourne and some additional comment/feedback taken on board by the project team. The principles and guides were subsequently refined again in early 2013 in light of all of the feedback that had been received.

## Phase 3

Revised draft principles and guides were disseminated in advance and subsequently critically reflected on by 80 participants at a national symposium, Learning and Teaching Across Cultures, jointly presented by OLT and IEAA on 30 May 2013 in Melbourne (For the program see Appendix B, p.24). Symposium participants included Reference Group members as well as critical readers for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project. The conversations resulting from bringing together this diverse group of national and international scholars and practitioners in areas related to learning and teaching across cultures, as well as government representatives with some stake in the final outcomes of the project were rich and informative.

The main purpose of the Symposium was to:

1. Disseminate the outputs of the project to date: the Good Practice Report; the Good Practice Principles: Teaching Across Cultures and the Quick Guides
2. Critically evaluate the content of the principles and guides and
3. Seek guidance on strategies to enhance the uptake and impact of these resources.

The program was designed to be both highly interactive and highly structured. The aim was to facilitate small group discussion in which participants discussed how the principles and the guides might be best used. Could they serve as a suite of resources by universities seeking to improve learning and teaching across cultures? Group leaders were provided with guidelines for managing and focussing these discussions so as to achieve the desired outcomes (see Appendix B).

No major flaws were identified in the Good Practice Principles or the Quick Guides.

The discussion groups provided a range of suggestions for:

- Minor revisions to individual Quick Guides and the Good Practice Principles
- Ways of using the Good Practice Principles and the Quick Guides as a bank of resources, and using guides individually, to improve learning and teaching across cultures in specific learning and teaching contexts
- The development of additional resources to support the Good Practice Principles and the Quick Guides

By far the most consistent piece of feedback on the Quick Guides was the need for discipline-specific examples. However, it became clear that these needed to be generated and disseminated within and across faculties, institutions and the sector and were not best provided in a generic set of Guides. Other substantive recommendations included the suggestion that an additional Quick Guide be developed for institutional managers to give them guidance on how to use the Principles and the Quick Guides to improve learning and teaching across cultures in their institutions.

Symposium participants provided valuable guidance on how to enhance uptake and impact of the resources so as to improve teaching and learning across cultures in Australian universities. This feedback was used to inform: (i) the content and format of the workshops – another important part of the dissemination process (see Phase 4 below) and (ii) the lessons learned from this project as described in Chapter 5. The latter provide valuable guidance to the Office for Learning and Teaching and, more broadly the sector, on further work needed in this area.

## Phase 4

The final phase of the project focussed on continuing dissemination of the project outputs and findings. A number of Australia-wide workshops for key university staff were developed and delivered. The content and focus of these workshops was informed by the outcomes of the Good Practice Report, the national symposium and the finalised principles and guides. They were developed by the workshop facilitator, Jude Carroll, the international member of the project reference group, in consultation with the principal investigator, Professor Betty Leask.

Three workshops were presented in February and March 2014 in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide to between 70–80 participants, the majority being academic teaching staff. University student support staff and university management staff also participated in good number.

The focus of the workshops was on actively engaging academic staff in the development of ‘personalised’ guides with discipline-specific examples (as this had been identified in previous phases as a crucial need). The Good Practice Principles and their underpinning rationale were presented to participants. Syndicate groups were then invited to complete a topic in line with the Good Practice Principles (using the matrix in Figure 1). The groups shared their outcomes and the facilitator commented, questioned and made suggestions based on findings from the projects. The interactive, face-to-face application of the principles in these workshops allowed participants to both confirm their current practice and to begin to think through creative and scholarly ways to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

**Figure. 1 Applying the Good Practice Principles**

PRINCIPLE / TOPIC	ASSESSMENT	CURRICULUM DESIGN	ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS	WORKING WITH STUDENT SERVICES	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	INTERACTIVE TEACHING	GROUP WORK
TREAT AS LEARNERS							
ADJUST FOR DIVERSITY							
CONTEXT SPECIFIC INFO							
INTERACTION AND DIALOGUE							
EVALUATION AND FLEXIBILITY							
FIT FOR A GLOBAL WORLD							

The workshops were well received and evaluations were uniformly positive. The most valuable aspects of the workshops from the participant point of view included:

- Shared networking and discussion
- Applicability of the principles and guides to front-line practice
- Understanding the evidence base and the framework underpinning the principles and guides
- Knowledge and leadership of the presenter.

One participant summed up the general sentiment as follows: “Thank you! Fabulous! The most practical, valuable and authentic workshop I have been to for ages!”

In summary, the workshops confirmed the utility of the Good Practice Principles and highlighted the challenges of their future use without this guided, interactive element.

# Chapter 2

## Project outputs

### The Good Practice Report

The 13 ALTC Project Reports on the theme 'Teaching and Learning across Cultures' between 2004 and 2010 investigated a breadth of issues associated with three main areas, essentially:

- The development of intercultural competence
- Student support
- Transnational teaching and learning

These projects emerged through calls for expressions of interest and competitive peer review of proposals. This means that they reflected the most pressing concerns of those associated with teaching and learning across cultures at that time. Some common threads emerged including that:

- Both teachers and learners in intercultural classrooms need support to develop relevant skills and knowledge. Students bring a diverse range of skills, knowledge and prior experience with them and collectively they will need access to a wide range of language and learning support services – both within and beyond the classroom. Teachers need additional knowledge beyond their discipline-specific realm to develop fair and inclusive learning and assessment tasks. They may also need assistance to integrate activities into the curriculum that will assist the English language growth of their students and to provide constructive feedback to students on their progress in this area.
- Further work is needed within institutions to ensure consistency and accountability in transnational programs. In particular more attention needs to be paid to professional development and to the building of effective working relationships between onshore and offshore staff.

Whilst acknowledging these future needs, the Good Practice Report: Learning and Teaching Across Cultures analysed and disseminated the findings and good practice examples from the ALTC projects and fellowships. The report is available at:

<http://www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures>.

The literature review undertaken as part of the development of the Good Practice Report confirmed many individual project findings. Most significantly, it highlighted the need to interrogate and disrupt existing assumptions and practices in curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment given the increasing diversity of the student population in universities. The literature review also influenced the project resources developed during the later phases of the project.

The Good Practice Report demonstrates the considerable breadth and depth of knowledge on how learning and teaching across cultures might be best achieved.

Collectively the projects provide a wide range of resources useful to some extent in their existing form and also able to be adapted for use in a range of different types of institutions, programs and settings. The resources developed across all projects include frameworks, guides, online materials, checklists, teaching modules, DVDs, CDs and videos.

All the relevant project reports together with the associated resources can be found on the OLT website at <http://www.olt.gov.au/list-projects> or by searching the OLT website by individual project title. An outline of each of the 13 projects is given in Appendix C.

The Good Practice Report highlights the importance of disseminating good practice in such a way that what has been learned in one situation can be adapted and applied by academics, student services staff and university managers in different situations. The context and the content of learning and teaching vary and 'off-the-shelf solutions' are unlikely to be effective. Good practices exist and are evidenced in the Good Practice Report. The challenge is to translate them into action within various contexts and for different purposes.

Essentially, in practical terms a core finding of the Good Practice Report is that improving the learning outcomes of all students requires a combination of strategies targeting domestic and international students as well as staff. The combination of strategies will be different in different learning and teaching situations. The Good Practice Report addresses this challenge directly by highlighting the need for Good Practice Principles that are illustrated through the topics selected for the topic specific Quick Guides.

## The Good Practice Principles

The Good Practice Principles are useful to guide and inform practice. They have been designed to help program leaders and teachers to develop, implement and evaluate curricula and teaching practices. Learning support service professionals will also find the Principles (and the associated guides) useful in the evaluation of their contributions to effective teaching and learning across cultures.

Six Good Practice Principles were identified as important for effective teaching and learning across cultures:

### Good Practice Principles in Learning and Teaching Across Cultures

- Principle 1 Focus on students as learners
- Principle 2 Respect and adjust for diversity
- Principle 3 Provide context specific information and support
- Principle 4 Facilitate meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement
- Principle 5 Be adaptable, flexible and responsive to evidence
- Principle 6 Prepare students for life in a globalised world

The Good Practice Principles are informed by research reported in the Good Practice Report. Following Nicol (2007) the Principles seek to:

- Capture core ideas from the published research
- Be specific enough to guide teachers in their practice
- Be flexible enough to accommodate the variety of different learning and teaching contexts within which teachers and learners work, for example: offshore, onshore, online, in large and small groups.

Four basic premises underlie the Principles:

#### 1. Teaching practices and learning behaviours are effective if they are fit for their purpose

Purposes for teaching and for learning vary so that teaching practices and learning behaviours are most effective when they are fit for their purpose. For example, in circumstances where a repetitive and memory-based approach is required, teaching practices that encourage repetition and recall will be effective. In other circumstances, where application and developing a personal stance in relation to a topic are required, a more effective approach would be to encourage discussion and debate. If the intention is to develop critical thinking skills and the teaching encourages and rewards rote learning, the teaching practices are not likely to be effective. In order to be fit-for-purpose, effective teaching across cultures also recognises that students bring different skills and experiences of learning and of teaching. Individual students will be stronger in some areas than others.

#### 2. Teaching encompasses a broad range of activities

Teachers engage in an extensive range of activities including selecting content, planning classroom learning activities, designing assessment tasks, providing students with feedback on their progress and evaluating the effectiveness of their own and others' teaching. Commonly accepted approaches to all of these activities vary across discipline communities. Principles for effective teaching across cultures therefore need to be equally broad ranging and allow for variation in implementation, depending on the nature of the discipline and its related professions, the teaching and learning context and the characteristics of the student and staff population.

### 3. Teachers have access to specialised support for being effective intercultural teachers

Teaching across cultures can be challenging and the responsibility for doing so effectively rests primarily with individual teachers but never with them alone. Institutions have a responsibility to provide teachers with access to specialised support; program teams need to collaborate and design programs where developing students' skills and knowledge of intercultural learning are shared. Teachers have a responsibility to access ideas, advice and expertise and to use them effectively to improve student learning.

### 4. Cultures are dynamic and variable

The term culture is a broad concept that encompasses the lifestyle, traditions, knowledge, skills, beliefs, norms and values shared by a group of people. Cultures are most often recognised by shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs and affective understandings. These are learned through a process of socialisation. However, within different cultural groups, individuals are unique. Meaning is continuously constructed through human interaction and communication within and across cultural groups. Cultural learning is a dynamic, developmental and ongoing process. Cultural diversity in the student population has a significant impact on teaching and learning.

## The Principles Explained

### Principle 1: Focus on students as learners

All, not just some students, need to adjust to the disciplinary and academic cultures of their universities. Even with help, transition can be difficult and may take some students longer than others.

Effective intercultural teaching assumes everyone benefits from expanding their repertoire of learning behaviours. Transition into a new academic culture will usually require students to acquire different skills and adopt locally valued behaviours in order to be effective learners.

### Principle 2: Respect and adjust for diversity

Diversity can be a resource that enriches all students' learning if teachers are able to create an inclusive learning environment. Teaching and learning within a culturally inclusive learning environment requires effort from teachers and students. For teachers, the aim is to create a learning culture that exposes all students to multiple perspectives, challenges them and connects them with alternative views of the world. Inclusive teaching treats different ways of knowing as a valuable resource for learning. Respecting and adjusting for diversity requires judgement and reflective practice on the part of the teacher and reflection on the effectiveness of any attempt to create a more inclusive teaching environment for all students.

### Principle 3: Provide context-specific information and support

Teaching and learning is an interaction where individual teachers and students may have very different expectations of each other. Context-specific information and support makes expectations transparent. Clarity is especially important in relation to assessment expectations including the criteria by which success will be measured. A second aspect requiring explicit context-specific information is tertiary academic skills, such as academic writing, information literacy, numeracy and computer literacy. Each academic skill is defined and expressed within a specific disciplinary context and all students will benefit from being taught, for example, particular disciplinary requirements in relation to critical thinking, using sources appropriately and identifying and reviewing relevant literature.

### Principle 4: Enable meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement

Creating environments conducive to interaction is an important foundation for meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement. Recent research highlights the importance of teacher intervention focused on enabling meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement.

### Principle 5: Be adaptable, flexible and responsive to evidence

Good teaching requires the ability to adapt methods and approaches, including those for assessment, to different contexts and student groups. Tasks that have worked well in one culturally diverse setting may not work well in another. Culturally inclusive teaching requires a certain amount of flexibility in planning and delivery and it assumes teachers respond to evidence showing a need for change.

### Principle 6: Prepare students for life in a globalised world

Ethical action and social responsibility underpinned by understanding of and respect for other ways of knowing and ways of being are increasingly important. As graduates, today's students will take on roles as citizens and professionals in this interconnected world. Most universities have statements of graduate qualities or attributes related to global citizenship that connect with other graduate attribute statements. Using these to inform course and program design and review focuses attention on the development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes to thrive in the globalised world of the future.

The Good Practice Principles are each fully explained in the publication *Learning and Teaching Across Cultures: Good Practice Principles* available at [www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures](http://www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures). Examples of how each principle can be enacted in practice are also provided in the full text of the each Quick Guide.

## The Quick Guides

A suite of Quick Guides to good practice in learning and teaching across cultures has been created using these six Principles. Guides are available on the following topics:

- Guide 1: Assessment
- Guide 2: Curriculum Design
- Guide 3: Developing English Language Skills
- Guide 4: Managing Group Work
- Guide 5: Effective Professional Development of Teachers
- Guide 6: Working with Student Learning Services

A crucial seventh Guide, *Learning and Teaching Across Cultures, Using the Good Practice Principles and Quick Guides: Suggestions for University Managers and Leaders*, is also provided. This Guide is for university leaders and managers. It provides guidance and suggestions on how institutions as such might best use the principles and the guides to improve learning and teaching across cultures strategically across a university. The Guide is a crucial resource in supporting the implementation of the principles and other guides.

Each Quick Guide focuses on catering for cultural and linguistic diversity in the identified topic area. The guides may be used to audit and affirm current practice and/or to identify areas for additional effort or activity. The principles and guides will achieve their function only if they are introduced strategically, with appropriate institutional support, including resources.

It should be noted the Good Practice Principles (and the Quick Guides) do not provide a prescriptive or complete list of best practice. They have been written to assist teachers and those who work with them to check their current practice and consider what they might do to make improvements appropriate to their particular context.



# Chapter 3

## Dissemination and impact

### Dissemination

The Dissemination Plan has been achieved as anticipated. It has involved a range of engaged dissemination activities throughout the lifecycle of the project. Ongoing dissemination to a wide range of audiences is assured in several ways.

The Principles and Guides are available on the following websites:

#### **International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)**

[www.ieaa.org.au/LTAC](http://www.ieaa.org.au/LTAC)

The site reports the outputs of all IEAA major projects, including the present one. The site attracts IEAA members including international office staff, academic staff interested in IOC and teaching international students and researchers (including established researchers and PhD students).

#### **Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IOC) in action website**

[www.ioc.global](http://www.ioc.global)

The site disseminates a wide range of information about internationalisation of the curriculum, including resources developed for the present project. It was established by Betty Leask as part of her ALTC Fellowship, Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Action and further developed by Craig Whitsed and Wendy Green as part of an extension project.

The site attracts academic staff, university student support staff and senior university management responsible for learning and teaching and student support (e.g. Pro Vice-Chancellors Teaching and Learning).

#### **Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) website**

[www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011](http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011)

The site attracts academic teaching staff, researchers and senior university management responsible for learning and teaching and quality assurance matters.

In addition, hard copies of the principles and guides have been distributed to all Australian universities. Access to some hard copies as well as the web addresses above have been provided at the following conferences:

- Australian International Education Conference (AIEC) 2012, 2103, 2014
- European Association for International Education Conference (EAIE) 2013, 2014

Critical readers and symposium and workshop participants from practically all Australian universities have engaged with the project at various times during the project lifecycle.

## Location of Project Resources

- **Good Practice Report**  
[www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures](http://www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures)
- **ALTC Good Practice Projects**  
Listed in Appendix C of this report. Full details given in the Good Practice Report (see above).
- **Good Practice Principles and Guides**  
[www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures](http://www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures)  
[www.ioc.global](http://www.ioc.global)  
[www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011](http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011)

## Impact

Ultimately the impact sought from this project is an improvement in teaching and learning across cultures in Australian universities over time. Measuring impact of this sort is difficult. However, ongoing demand and engagement with the Good Practice Principles and the Quick Guides is one indicator of impact. Ensuring strategies are in place to facilitate access and engagement in the long-term is crucial. The following strategies address this need:

- The Good Practice Principles and Quick Guides will continue to be available through at least three websites, each one accessed by a slightly different audience.
- The Practice Principles and Quick Guides have been disseminated as hard copies and through a network of workshops. As an excellence resource, universities will refer to them and use them over time in response to their own strategic needs.
- The Good Practice Principles and Guides have been referenced in recent academic publications, namely:
  - Carroll, J. (2015) *Educating the Globally Mobile Student*. Routledge: Abingdon
  - Leask, B. (2015) *Internationalising the Curriculum*. Routledge: Abingdon  
[www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415](http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415)
- IEAA will continue to offer workshops on putting the Good Practice Report, Principles and Guides into practice as part of their annual professional development workshops.

Another form of sustainability is through ongoing projects. The latest round of OLT commissioned projects has included two topics, English Language Support and Developing Global Perspectives. The principles and guides will be an essential point of reference for any ongoing projects in these areas.

In addition, the Quick Guide on curriculum design has recently influenced the revision of the university programs of a Dutch university (personal communication from Jude Carroll, member of the project reference group and workshop facilitator).

It is important that ownership of the resources is maintained and that continued dissemination and reference occurs, preferably using interactive methods with expert facilitator guidance. Continued reference/access to the Quick Guides is also necessary.

In summary a range of dissemination and engagement strategies have been implemented to ensure this project has a significant and ongoing impact on those influencing the theory and practice of teaching and learning across cultures:

DISSEMINATION STRATEGY	TARGET AUDIENCE
IEAA website	IEAA members include International Office staff, academic staff interested in IoC and teaching international students and researchers (including established researchers and PhD students)
IOC in action website	Academic staff, university student support staff and senior university management responsible for learning and teaching and student support e.g. PVCs Teaching and Learning
OLT website	Academic teaching staff, researchers and senior university management responsible for learning and teaching and quality assurance matters
Hard copies distributed to VC/DVCA for local dissemination	University leaders and academic staff
Conferences	Various (as above)
Workshops – Past and future	Various (as above)
Publications	Various (as above)

# Chapter 4

## Evaluation

A formative and a final evaluation of the project were undertaken over the period 2012–2014. Professor Margaret Hicks, Adjunct Professor of the University of South Australia was invited and accepted the task of independent evaluator. Professor Hick's report is included as Appendix D.

An evaluation framework for the formative evaluation was developed and agreed upon by the project team members, reference group and the evaluator. Key evaluation questions were identified:

1. How might the plan of activities be improved?
2. Are the processes appropriate to the achievement of the desired outcomes of this project?
3. How could they be improved?
4. How useful are the outputs of this project?
5. How could they be improved?

The key summative evaluation questions are:

1. How influential have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?
2. How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?

These questions guided formative evaluation as the project progressed and informed the final evaluation. The evaluator was engaged from the beginning of the project and at various stages throughout. Key contributors to the formative evaluation of the project were critical readers who provided feedback throughout the development of the good practice report, reference group members and the range of stakeholders who were engaged in the conferences, consultations, national symposium and professional development workshops.

The Evaluator's final conclusions were:

*"The Learning and Teaching Across Cultures project has been complex both in terms of what it was trying to deliver and the methodology to do so. However despite these complexities the project team has delivered on the project, all objectives have been realised and a suite of resources has been developed that have had widespread input across the sector and will be very useful as staff engage with these issues in the future. The challenge, as with most projects, is now the ongoing sustainability of these resources."*

# Chapter 5

## Conclusion and lessons learned

Cultural diversity in the student population has a significant impact on teaching and learning in universities. Cultural learning is a dynamic, developmental and ongoing process for students and teachers.

In order to provide a relevant educational experience for all students in an environment that is supportive and inclusive of all students, university teachers need to be reflective, prepared to review and interrogate their own culture and values and to consider how these influence their teaching practice and in particular their decision-making in relation to the selection of content and teaching, learning, and assessment tasks.

University teachers will simultaneously need to be outward-looking and internationally and cross-culturally aware; actively pursuing intercultural engagement with their students and within the discipline; and taking every opportunity to learn about the national and cultural perspectives of others in relation to all that is taken for granted in the way knowledge in the discipline is constructed, communicated, and converted into action.

The creation of a dynamic, intercultural, global learning community in the classroom often requires that university teachers and students step out of their comfort zone. It is important that teachers overtly signal the value of multiple perspectives and encourage students to share their different ways of thinking, doing and being in the world through carefully managed activities. This can be challenging and while the responsibility for doing so effectively rests primarily with individual teachers, it does not rest with them alone. Universities have a responsibility to provide teaching staff with access to specialised support. Program and course teams also need to collaborate and design programs where the development of students' skills as intercultural learners is shared.

### Lessons learned from this project

The critical lessons learned from this project relate to the ongoing effective use of the principles and guides. These lessons were affirmed during the three half-day professional development workshops held around Australia in early 2014 in the final phase of the project.

#### Lesson 1: A principles based approach is valuable.

The utility of a principles-based approach is widely accepted. A range of assumptions and misconceptions about how students from different cultural backgrounds learn prevail in universities. There was broad consensus among those engaged in the project (members of the Project Reference Group, critical readers and symposium participants) that the Good Practice Principles effectively capture core ideas from relevant research, are specific enough to guide practice and flexible enough to accommodate a variety of different learning and teaching contexts (for example, disciplinary and delivery contexts).

#### Lesson 2: The principles and guides will be most effective in changing practice when staff are prompted to actively engage with them.

While together the principles and guides are invaluable as a stand-alone resource, for staff to engage with them to best effect there is likely to be a need for them to be 'workshopped'. Bringing staff together to identify ways of applying the principles in practice in the workshops in Phase 4 of the project provided opportunities for staff to make the principles 'real', to stimulate new ideas and to innovate. Staff learned from each other, with each other, within and across disciplines.

**Lesson 3: Staff are best supported to engage with the principles and guides by an expert in the field of teaching and learning across cultures.**

It was important that the workshops were led by a facilitator with the specific expertise to elucidate the principles and guides and to instigate activities illustrating how they may be used in practice. Many staff may not be able to make the leap to asking themselves the question, 'What would it be like if I designed a curriculum which did actually 'treat students as learners'? What would I be doing as a teacher? What would my students be doing? What would an outsider expect to see in the curriculum that enacted that principle and what would the enactment look like in more detail? Imagining in this way is a considerable challenge for any staff member. This highlights the need for universities to ensure staff are supported to teach effectively across cultures through ongoing professional development activities facilitated by those with specific skills and expertise.

**Lesson 4: There is a potential and dangerous gap between designing and doing.**

In the workshops, staff who had successfully identified possible ways in which each principle could be put into practice then needed to be reminded of the need to move from plan (identifying the possibilities) to action (determining how to implement those possibilities). Commitment without action will not improve learning outcomes for students. It is important to address the gap between designing and doing.

**Lesson 5: Further research is required.**

There are many opportunities to build on the work and findings of this project. In this regard the project was a starting point rather than a finishing point. Moving from designing to doing, from plan to action, in a particular teaching situation is in itself a complex task. The obstacles to and opportunities for innovating and implementing newly formed plans vary widely across universities. The impact of specific innovations is not always evaluated. Further research is required on the structures, processes and services that best support innovation in teaching and learning across cultures in universities as well as the effect of specific innovations on student learning in diverse classrooms.

# Appendix A

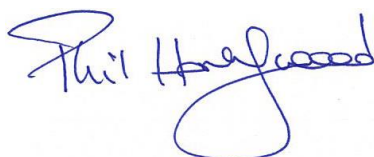
## Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)

I certify that all parts of the final report for this OLT grant provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Name: HON. PHILLIP HONEYWOOD

Position: CEO, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Signature:



Date: 11 JUNE 2016

# Appendix B

## National Symposium

### Date

Thursday 30 May 2013

### Time

10.00am–5.00pm  
Registration from 9.30am

### Location

Stamford Plaza Hotel  
111 Little Collins Street  
Melbourne



Australian Government



Office for  
Learning & Teaching

# LEARNING AND TEACHING ACROSS CULTURES

The Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) and the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) are pleased to present this one-day National Symposium, Learning and Teaching Across Cultures.

The OLT-funded project, Learning and Teaching Across Cultures, consolidates and disseminates international research and good practice in this area, including the outcomes of OLT and Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) funded projects and fellowships.

The project team has prepared a set of 'Good Practice Principles' and seven 'Quick Guides' across a range of specific topics. Symposium participants will discuss how these might be effectively used to improve learning and teaching across cultures in individual institutions and across the sector.

For more info, visit [www.ieaa.org.au/events/LTACsymposium](http://www.ieaa.org.au/events/LTACsymposium)



## Program

TIME	SESSIONS	SPEAKERS
9.30am	Registration	
10.00am	Welcome / Project Background	Suzi Hewlett General Manager Office for Learning & Teaching
10.20am	Project Outline / Activities to Date	Dennis Murray Director, Research and Major Projects IEAA
10.30am	Project Outcomes: The Good Practice Report, Draft Principles and Quick Guides	Associate Professor Betty Leask Lead Researcher University of South Australia
11.00am	Discussion	
11.15am	Morning Tea	
11.40am	Institutional Perspectives: Supporting Learning & Teaching Across Cultures	Professor Margaret Hicks Director Learning and Teaching University of South Australia
12.00pm	Discussion	
12.15pm	Break-out Groups (Part A) Small group discussion and reflection on how the Principles and Quick Guides might be best used as a suite of resources in an institutional context.	
12.45pm	Lunch	
1.30pm	Break-out Groups (Part B) Discussion of the Principles	
2.00pm	Break-out Groups (Part C) Discussion of the Quick Guides	
3.30pm	Rapporteur's Comments	Professor Sally Kift Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) James Cook University
3.45pm	Summary and Next Steps	Associate Professor Betty Leask Dennis Murray
4.00pm	Networking Drinks	

# Appendix C

Outline of the 13 ALTC projects analysed for the Good Practice Guide.

PROJECT/ FELLOWSHIP	KEY OUTCOMES
<b>Developing Intercultural Competence</b>	
Development and Evaluation of Resources to Enhance Skills in Higher Degree Research Supervision in an Intercultural Context (CG7-507)	To address the potentially serious implications of communication problems between post-graduate students and their supervisors, this project developed four resource packages using video and written scenarios for student and staff use, strategies and checklists for staff and an annotated bibliography to support ongoing professional development. It is not institution, discipline or ethnic cohort specific.
Embedding the Development of International Competencies in Business (CG6-37)	A framework for embedding the development of intercultural competence was developed, supported by a wide range of resources and disseminated through a series of seminars to encourage wider uptake and implementation.
Enhancing Domestic and International Students' Engagement: Changing Attitudes and Behaviors (CG8-725)	With the knowledge that, despite its value, interaction between domestic and international students does not happen without intervention, this project developed an Interaction for Learning Framework, a systematic approach to developing a curriculum to support interaction, supplemented by a DVD and guide for academics and a flyer for students.
Strategies and Approaches to Teaching and Learning Cross Cultures (CG7-494)	Using information from both staff and students, this project identified the major issues faced by international students and made recommendations to address these. Recommendations cover English language entry requirements, pre-departure preparation, orientation and the transition from teacher to student-centred learning. It is supported by a Student Guide and a model for staff to support international students in group work.
Bringing the Learning Home (CG10-1549)	This project is ongoing. It is expected that it will provide teaching materials to enhance the learning of study abroad and exchange students during and after their experience.
<b>Student Support</b>	
Assessing the Ongoing English Language Growth of International Students (CG7-453)	Based on international students' perceptions of their own language support needs, this project provides clear guidance on the institutional strategies most likely to be effective. It is accompanied by supplementary website and CD materials for individual student use.

<p>Diversity: a Longitudinal Study of How Student Diversity Relates to Student Resilience and Successful Progression in a New Generation University (CG6-38)</p>	<p>This study reinforced a number of the important factors previously identified as influencing the quality of learning for all students. For international students in particular, the importance of a small, consistent, supportive, interactive classroom, with an enthusiastic, empathetic, flexible teacher, with whom they could forge a bond was highlighted. International students also reported that while they wanted to interact with local students both in class and beyond they needed encouragement to do so.</p>
<p>Evaluation of Teaching and Learning Delivery Modes in Arts (CG7-489)</p>	<p>This project investigated student preference in support and reference materials. It found that students preferred integrated rather than centralised language and learning support and that they preferred print materials to those provided online for both course reading and language support. A Teach and Delivery website has been created to assist others developing integrated language and learning support.</p>
<p>Investigating the Efficacy of Culturally Specific Academic Literacy and Honesty Resources for Chinese Students ( CG8-766)</p>	<p>This project was response to the learning needs of Chinese students entering a world of student-centred, independent, critical learning. A series of videos, primarily designed for students, show how new students confront common academic and acculturation issues. There is also a comic strip for students focused on study problems. An important recommendation is that institutions make a commitment to developing further resources.</p>
<p>Life-Learning Interactively for Engagement: Meeting the Pedagogical Needs of Refugee Students in two Western Australian Universities (CG7-496)</p>	<p>Having identified that refugee students faced particular issues in adapting to university, this project provided modular face-to-face support programs for the students, a DVD to improve staff awareness and a Teacher's Guide for use in the classroom. Recommendations around the institutional support required to meet refugee student needs are made.</p>
<p>Transnational Learning and Teaching</p>	
<p>Assessing Students Unfamiliar with Assessment Practices in Australian Universities (PPS-43)</p>	<p>This project sought to identify and address the challenges of consistency in assessment in delivering the same program in one onshore and two offshore locations. A number of strategies and assessment packages were trialled and evaluated. This is supplemented by an extensive resources list and a manual for academic staff to inform best practice.</p>

<p>Enhancing Frameworks for Assuring the Quality of Teaching and Learning in Offshore Education Programs (CG7-378)</p>	<p>Based on AUQA reports on 39 Australian offshore programs and a qualitative study of 10 transnational courses, this project developed a framework to address curriculum, pedagogy and welfare issues in offshore programs which can be used as a developmental or internal quality audit tool.</p>
<p>Moderation for Fair Assessment in Transnational Teaching and Learning (PP8-906)</p>	<p>This project identified a number of common concerns of transnational staff related to moderation practices and processes. This led to the development of a 'user-friendly' toolkit for use in assessment moderation to improve the consistency of the process regardless of the location of the program.</p>

# Appendix D

## Evaluation report

### OLT funded project: Learning and Teaching Across Cultures

#### Background

The Office for Learning and Teaching-funded project 'Learning and Teaching Across Cultures' was tendered by the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA). The project was managed by Dennis Murray (former Executive Director, IEAA) and Professor Betty Leask, then convener of IEAA's Internationalisation of the Curriculum (IOC) Special Interest Group.

There were four main phases of the project:

1. Identification of all ALTC projects where there had been a focus on learning and teaching across cultures and synthesis and publish the learnings from these projects in a report.
2. Develop workshops and disseminate the learning from these projects through the IEAA professional development program (over a two-year time frame).
3. Produce a suite of online resources
4. Facilitate an ongoing network/knowledge community of professionals interested in this area.

The outcomes of the original project brief included:

- consolidation of learning and best practice on the topic in the form of a synthesis report which provides a summative evaluation of the good practices and key outcomes for teaching and learning from completed ALTC projects and fellowships in the six areas identified above, supported by a literature review in these areas which draws on relevant national and international research
- dissemination of the report and related resources both online, in print form and through interactive, cross-disciplinary workshops
- fostering and strengthening of knowledge communities in these areas.

The first outcome of the project, the Good Practice Report was delivered to the OLT in March 2012. The report made five recommendations and as such the remaining three phases were modified and timelines were adjusted accordingly. There were also a number of time points throughout the project where feedback from a range of stakeholders informed the next steps – hence the phases from the original project brief were changed to reflect that. This included:

Phase 2 – the formulation of good practice principles, supported by a series of topic focused quick guides

Phase 3 – feedback on the draft principles and guides at a national symposium jointly presented by the OLT and IEAA

Phase 4 – Finalisation of the good practice principles and quick guides through the delivery of a small number of professional development workshops in different parts of Australia.

## Evaluation

I accepted the invitation to be the evaluator of the OLT funded project 'Learning and Teaching Across Cultures' during 2012. As the project progressed I met regularly with the Principal Investigator, Professor Betty Leask, attended one of the major dissemination events of the project in Melbourne on 30 May 2013. I also met with one of the project's international contributors, Jude Carroll, Higher Education consultant, from the United Kingdom.

An evaluation framework (see Table 1) was developed and agreed upon by the project team members, reference group and the evaluator. Key formative evaluation questions were:

1. How might the plan of activities be improved?
2. Are the processes appropriate to the achievement of the desired outcomes of this project?
3. How could they be improved?
4. How useful are the outputs of this project?
5. How could they be improved?

These questions guided formative evaluation as the project progressed and have also been taken into consideration for the final evaluation. Key contributors to the formative evaluation of the project were critical readers who provided feedback throughout the development of the good practice report, reference group members and the range of stakeholders who were engaged in the conferences, consultations, national symposium and professional development workshops.

This evaluation focusses on the overarching and key summative evaluation questions:

1. How influential have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?
2. How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?

## Overarching summative evaluation questions

- How effective has this project been in achieving its principle goals?
- What lessons have been learned from this project?

The evaluator has drawn on a number of resources and interactions with the project team to complete this evaluation. These include:

- The original project application and progress reports
- Regular face-to-face and phone meetings with the Principal Investigator
- Attendance at the National Symposium in Melbourne 30 May 2013
- Evaluations from the National Symposium and state-based professional development workshops
- Interview and written comments from one of the international collaborators, Jude Carroll
- All outcomes documentation: report, Good Practice Principles, and Quick Guide.

The evaluator has drawn on a number of resources and interactions with the project team to complete this evaluation. These include:

- The original project application and progress reports
- Regular face-to-face and phone meetings with the Principal Investigator
- Attendance at the National Symposium in Melbourne 30 May 2013
- Evaluations from the National Symposium and state-based professional development workshops
- Interview and written comments from one of the international collaborators, Jude Carroll
- All outcomes documentation: report, Good Practice Principles, and Quick Guide.

Four main questions are addressed in this report:

1. How effective has this project been in achieving its principle goals?
2. What lessons have been learned from this project?
3. How influential have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?
4. How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?

### How effective has this project been in achieving its principle goals?

The original project brief identified three main outcomes and although the phases of the project changed after the first outcome (and phase 1), the outcomes and the principle goals were delivered. The first outcome, a good practice report, which consolidated the literature and learnings on 'Learning and Teaching Across Cultures' was delivered on time and laid the foundation for the remaining outcomes and the revised phases. A particular challenge for the project, but an absolutely critical one, was ensuring stakeholder input and consultation. It is always difficult to engage people outside of the project who are busy and focused on other priorities, but this was successfully done through the design of the remaining phases, critical readers, the national symposium and the final professional development workshops that were led by an engaging presenter.

Throughout the project a number of presentations were made, they were well received with positive responses from the attendees. A brief summary of each is given below.

1. Australian International Education Conference, Melbourne 4 October 2012, chaired by Dr Anna Ciccarelli (DVC-International, University of Queensland) – 60 people attended.
2. National Symposium 30 May 2013, Melbourne – 80 participants, 31 institutions represented (23 higher education). The symposium had three main aims and all were achieved. These were to:
  - disseminate the outputs of the project to date – the Good Practice Guide, draft good practice principles and draft quick guides
  - identify flaws in the resources and additional input
  - seek guidance on strategies to enhance uptake and impact of all project outputs.

An evaluation of the day was completed and 33 of the 76 participants (excluding presenters) responded. The majority of the respondents were satisfied (strongly agreed/agreed) with all statements about the symposium's expectations, its value, the organisation and the quality of the presentations. The day was organised around different activities and again the majority of respondents found the different aspects of the day useful.

One of the main outcomes of the day that people commented on was the opportunity to network, discuss and engage with colleagues. The area of least satisfaction was the opportunity for more discussion. Both the information gained through feedback on the draft good practice principles and quick guides and the comments from the evaluation made significant contributions to the project implementation and the resources going forward.

### 3. Professional Development Workshops

Phase 4 of the project included a series of half-day professional development workshops to finalise the good practice principles and quick guides. The workshops were facilitated by the international consultant from the UK, Jude Carroll. They were held in three major capital cities and invitations were extended multiple higher education institutions:

- Brisbane (University of Queensland) on 25 February 2014 – 18 participants
- Melbourne (La Trobe University) on 4 March, 2014 – 37 participants
- Adelaide (University of South Australia) on 12 March, 2014 – 30 participants.

Each workshop was evaluated and feedback was consistently high for all 3 workshops, with the majority of respondents rating the event excellent/very effective and strongly agreeing/agreeing with what they had learnt, the information presented, and organisation. One of the strongest points of satisfaction was the quality and expertise of the presenter and the way that she engaged with the participants. The only comments about improvement were the need for more time and extending the time of the workshop.

### 4. At the conclusion of the project the resources have been published in hard copy form (and sent to each institution, 140 copies distributed) and are available on the IEAA website:

GUIDE	ONLINE READS*	ONLINE IMPRESSIONS*	PDF DOWNLOADS
Quick Guide to Assessment	97	1,131	537
Quick Guide to Curriculum Design	112	1,163	660
Quick Guide to Developing English Language Skills	109	1,653	1,257
Quick Guide to Managing Group Work	61	707	513
Quick Guide to Effective Professional Development of Teachers	41	544	518
Quick Guide to Working with Student Learning Services	32	1,469	375
Using the Good Practice Principles and Quick Guides	71	962	475

In summary the project has delivered on its outcomes, and has been effective over the time of the project in engaging the sector in the issues raised.

\* Reads: Counted each time a user opens a publication for more than two seconds of ISSUU (online viewing platform).

^ Impressions: Counted each time a publication is displayed to a user in an embedded website or on ISSUU (online viewing platform).

Figures last updated: 7 April 2015.



## What lessons have been learned from this project?

There have been three key issues that have been raised throughout this project. Each issue was identified throughout the project and dealt with as it arose.

1. *Dealing with a vast amount of information and overlap with different topics*  
The scope and complexity of the topics encompassed by 'Learning and Teaching Across Cultures' resulted in the need to consult an extensive literature. The dispersed nature of practical examples of best practice in teaching across cultures added another layer of complexity. The only way to deal with this was to redraft individual guides iteratively, throughout the development of the suite of guides, both prior to and then again as a result of feedback from critical readers and participants in the National Symposium.
2. *Managing extensive feedback*  
Feedback was important at every phase of this project and the lessons learned here (being responsive to feedback and flexible with timelines) ensured that rich feedback was received which continued to inform the project phases. It was essential that the Quick Guides (both topics and content) were meaningful to the sector and again the need to take time to collect constructive feedback and be adaptable with the timing to properly reflect and make adjustments was needed throughout the project – hence timelines needed to be extended and adjusted.
3. *Ongoing consultation with a wide range of stakeholders*  
Critical to this project was the need for stakeholder consultation and input. There is always a challenge in how to manage this across a diverse tertiary sector and given the distance between universities. This was effectively done using different approaches.

The strength of this project was in its engagement with the sector and this was achieved through identifying issues as they arose and dealing with them in responsive and different ways.

## How influential have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?

A key factor to the success of this project was engaging the sector at different points throughout the project. This has been achieved both through the methodology that was used in the project design and consulting on drafts and outputs as the project progressed. The professional development workshops at the conclusion of the project where the Quick Guides were finalised was a very effective approach to disseminating the major resources with just under 100 participants across a range of institutions and states.

The international consultant has also used the quick guides overseas (in about 6 places) and the following comment reflects how well they have been received in an international environment.

*'The Quick Guide on curriculum design has been very useful and influential in my work with one Dutch university where the project team are revising all university programs. They pounced on it and have used the ideas in the principles to underpin their own framework.'*  
Jude Carroll, March 2014.

The outcomes of this project have also influenced two recently published books:

- Carroll, J, 2015, *Tools for Teaching in an Educationally Mobile World*, Routledge, Oxon
- Leask, B, 2015, *Internationalizing the Curriculum*, Routledge, Oxon

## How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?

Measuring impact of a project of this breadth is difficult, however, demand and engagement with the Good Practice Principles and the Quick Guides is one measurement. They have both been made available online and disseminated as hard copies and through a network of workshops. As an excellence resource, universities will refer to them and use them over time in response to their own strategic needs, hence it is very difficult to 'measure' impact at this stage. However it is important to note two observations by Jude Carroll as she concluded the professional development workshops:

1. For people to engage with the Quick Guides, she believes that they need to be 'workshopped' by a facilitator with the expertise to do so
2. A concern was raised about the guides being hosted on the IEAA website and whether there is enough access to them. It is unclear as to whether people (not connected to IEAA) will look for them there.

Given these concerns it is important that ownership of the resources is maintained and that continued dissemination and reference occurs.

Another form of sustainability is through ongoing projects. The latest round of OLT commissioned projects has included two topics English Language Support and Developing Global Perspectives. The Good Practice Principles and Quick Guides will be an essential point of reference for any ongoing projects in these areas.

## Conclusion

The Learning and Teaching Across Cultures project has been complex both in terms of what it was trying to deliver and the methodology to do so. However despite these complexities the project team has delivered on the project, all objectives have been realised and a suite of resources has been developed that have had widespread input across the sector and will be very useful as staff engage with these issues in the future.

The challenge, as with most projects is now the ongoing sustainability of these resources. Over the course of the project there were a lot of changes across the sector (ALTC/OLT, the Australian higher education, funding, etc.) and these changes will continue to occur as different government and higher education priorities are identified.

What will be important will be champions in the different areas of higher education teaching and learning, and they too will change. In this regard the support of organisations like IEAA is useful in ensuring that the deliverables of this project will continue to be disseminated and influence teaching and learning across cultures in our higher education environment.

### **Professor Margaret Hicks**

Adjunct, University of South Australia

September, 2014

# Evaluation Framework

The overarching summative evaluation questions are

- How effective has this project been in achieving its principle goals?
- What lessons have been learned from this project?

There are five formative evaluation questions and two summative evaluation questions associated with these overarching questions. There are also a number of focus questions associated with each key question. The primary purpose of the formative evaluation is to assist in the achievement of the best possible outcomes for all stakeholders.

The key formative evaluation questions are:

1. How might the plan of activities be improved?
2. Are the processes appropriate to the achievement of the desired outcomes of this project?
3. How could they be improved?
4. How useful are the outputs of this project?
5. How could they be improved?

The key summative evaluation questions are:

1. How influential have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?
2. How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?

These key questions, the focus areas and focus questions associated with them and the key data sources are identified in the table below.

KEY QUESTIONS	FOCUS AREAS	FOCUS QUESTIONS	DATA COLLECTION (AND OUTCOMES)
<b>How might the plan of activities be improved?</b>	Goals/aims/objectives/proposed outcomes	1. Are the proposed goals and outcomes achievable in the timeframe?  2. Are the activities appropriate to the achievement of the goals and outcomes?	Discussions between Principal Investigator and Evaluator in commencement phase  Discussions with representatives of key stakeholder groups  (Modification of project activities if and as appropriate recorded in evaluation report)

<p><b>Are the processes appropriate to the achievement of the desired outcomes of this project?</b></p> <p><b>How could they be improved?</b></p>	<p>Planning/ communication/ processes at each site/wider dissemination strategies/ budget management</p>	<p>3. Have the key people and groups at each site had access to the information they needed?</p> <p>4. Are processes sufficiently flexible to take account of the different institutional and disciplinary contexts?</p> <p>5. Are appropriate strategies in place to raise awareness of the project and disseminate resources to a wide range of institutional and disciplinary groups?</p> <p>6. What is the level of awareness of the project across the sector in Australia and overseas?</p> <p>7. Is the Reference Group appropriately informed and engaged?</p> <p>8. Is the budget being appropriately managed and monitored?</p>	<p>Email or phone interview at mid and end-point of project (Q3&amp;4)</p> <p>Modifications to courses, subjects and teaching processes in different disciplines (Q3&amp;4)</p> <p>Analysis of groups involved and their level of engagement as evidenced by number of contacts, changes made to curricula and joint presentations and publications (Q5)</p> <p>Invitations to present at different institutions and events (Q6)</p> <p>Analysis of website usage (Q5&amp;6)</p> <p>Analysis of minutes of reference group meetings (Q7)</p> <p>Interim budget reports (Q8)</p> <p>(Modification to processes if and as appropriate recorded in evaluation report)</p>
<p><b>How useful are the outputs of this project?</b></p> <p><b>How could they be improved?</b></p>	<p>Resources/ workshops/ seminars/ keynotes/ website/ case studies/IOC framework/IOC guidelines</p>	<p>9. Is an appropriate range of outputs being produced?</p> <p>10. How is their quality being assured?</p> <p>11. Are they being utilised?</p>	<p>Evaluation of individual resources produced at mid and end points of project – case studies; IOC framework; PD resources; IOC guidelines - and their range(Q9)</p> <p>Analysis of QA processes that have been implemented (Q10)</p> <p>Analysis of usage statistics (where available), requests for outputs and ratings of individual outputs including resources, workshops and seminars (Q10&amp;11)</p> <p>(Revisions to outputs if and as appropriate recorded in evaluation report)</p>
<p><b>How influential, nationally and internationally, have the project activities and outputs been in the short term?</b></p>	<p>Engagement of academic staff/ dissemination of outputs/increased awareness of IOC and processes associated with it</p>	<p>12. Have the key people and groups at each site improved their understanding of IOC in action?</p> <p>13. Have the outputs been widely disseminated?</p>	<p>Data collected via email and/or phone interview at mid and end-point of the project (Q12)</p> <p>Modifications to courses, subjects and teaching processes in different disciplines (Q12)</p> <p>Range of dissemination activities; national and international mix; articles in CR, HES, HERDSA newsletter and journal articles submitted (Q13)</p>
<p><b>How will the impact be sustained in the long-term?</b></p>	<p>National and international networks</p>	<p>14. What influence has the project had on existing national and international networks?</p> <p>15. Have any new (N&amp;IN) networks been formed?</p> <p>16. What processes are in place to ensure and capture long-term of the project activities</p>	<p>National and international networks actively connected to project e.g. jointly run activities (Q14 and Q15)</p> <p>Processes in place to ensure and capture long-term impact of the project activities (Q16)</p>

# APPENDIX E

## References

A large number of references and other resources were accessed in the course of the project.

All are listed in the published project outputs located as follows:

### [Good Practice Report](#)

<http://www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures>

### [ALTC Good Practice Projects](#)

Listed in Appendix C of this report. Full details given in the Good Practice Report (see above)

### [Good Practice Guides and Principles](#)

[www.ieaa.org.au/LTAC](http://www.ieaa.org.au/LTAC)

[www.ioc.global](http://www.ioc.global)

[www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011](http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011)

# Contact us

**IEAA Secretariat**








PO Box 12917  
A' Beckett Street  
Melbourne VIC 8006  
Australia

+613 9925 4579  
admin@ieaa.org.au



## LEARNING AND TEACHING ACROSS CULTURES

### ACHIEVEMENT STATEMENT

	<p>Diversity in the student population is now the norm rather than the exception in Australian universities. Good teaching and effective learning require that university teachers and university leaders address student diversity in the design and delivery of curricula.</p>
	<p>We analysed 13 ALTC funded projects in learning and teaching across cultures using the international literature to begin to isolate good practice.</p>
	<p>The resulting Good Practice Report confirmed many individual project findings, in particular the focus on curriculum design, pedagogy and assessment, with an emphasis placed on themes within these areas.</p>
	<p>But how can we assist university staff working in many different contexts to use good practice to design, implement and evaluate curricula and teaching practices?</p>
	<p>We used a 'principles' based approach to help guide and inform practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Principle 1: Focus on students as learners</li> <li>■ Principle 2: Respect and adjust for diversity</li> <li>■ Principle 3: Provide context-specific information and support</li> <li>■ Principle 4: Facilitate meaningful intercultural dialogue and engagement</li> <li>■ Principle 5: Be adaptable, flexible and responsive to evidence</li> <li>■ Principle 6: Prepare students for life in a globalised world</li> </ul>
	<p>We developed a suite of 'Quick Guides' to good practice using the six Principles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Guide 1: Assessment</li> <li>■ Guide 2: Curriculum Design</li> <li>■ Guide 3: Developing English Language Skills</li> <li>■ Guide 4: Managing Group Work</li> <li>■ Guide 5: Effective Professional Development of Teachers</li> <li>■ Guide 6: Working with Student Learning Services</li> <li>■ Guide 7: Using the Good Practice Principles and Guides, Suggestions for University Managers and Leaders</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="http://www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures">Good Practice Report</a> www.olt.gov.au/resources?text=learning+and+teaching+across+cultures</li> <li>■ <a href="http://www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures">Good Practice Principles</a> www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures www.ioc.global www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011</li> <li>■ <a href="http://www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures">Quick Guides</a> www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures www.ioc.global www.olt.gov.au/resource-good-practice-report-learning-and-teaching-across-cultures-2011</li> </ul>