

Future-proofing university teaching: An Australian case study of postgraduate teacher preparation

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Abstract

This case study of an award winning Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme describes how it operates in order to share good practice and facilitate similar innovations elsewhere. In particular, it explores the degree to which the Internship Scheme is embedded in faculty and school/department processes to ensure sustainable outcomes and it assesses the ripple effect through which postgraduate students might positively influence teaching in the university more broadly. The case study also explores the pedagogies that inform the Internship Scheme to show how the organisation of the program models the constructivist learning theory and work-integrated approaches, which are espoused in the program as good practice for adult learners.

The analysis of the case study gives voice to postgraduate students showing how they experience the outcomes of the Scheme. Their words reveal what works, as well as barriers encountered, with particular reference to the change leadership potential of the

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Scheme. The conclusion is that changing the priorities of the professoriate in a research-intensive university is no easy task. However, preparing postgraduates to teach through well-structured, scholarly programs that challenge the status quo and encourage a reflective and critical approach to their practice is one way of moving forward.

Key words: Teaching preparation for postgraduate students; change leadership; academic development

Change leadership to promote university teaching

Organised change leadership to promote university teaching has arisen from the massification of higher education, significant state investment in universities and increasing numbers of international students paying fees at commercial rates. Together these have focused the attention of university management teams and national governments on the importance of delivering a quality teaching product to students. As Hunt and Peach (2009, p.1) observed the numerous national enquiries into higher education bear testimony to the level of interest in university teaching:

In the USA, the Spellings Report (2006: ix) came to the “uneasy conclusion that the sector’s past attainments have led our nation to unwarranted complacency about its future”. Concerns included ... variable standards and outcomes including the low literacy skills of some graduates ... In the UK ... seven reviews of higher education [were launched] for much the same reasons.

While there is variation in response to these external pressures, many universities have coordinated efforts to promote teaching through academic development units, often known as learning and teaching centres. Some centres sit within faculties, others operate at university level. As Kift (2004, p. 8) observed:

There are advantages and drawbacks in each approach [because] centralised teaching and learning centres risk marginalisation from faculties and schools [and faculty-devolved processes] risk isolation from broader international, national and university strategic initiatives.

However they are organised, many academic development units find it a struggle to promote university teaching, as Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008, p. 50) found in their study of academic leaders who described their work as similar to 'Getting butterflies into formation' and 'Trying to drive a nail into a wall of blancmange – little resistance but no result'.

Some of the difficulties stem from zero sum perceptions that research is the central function of universities and that time devoted to teaching is time taken from research. Other difficulties arise from debates about what good university teaching might mean. Whatever the cause, such difficulties need to be confronted. Strategies to do so may be loosely conceptualised as top-down, bottom-up and middle out. Top-down change processes include the development of policies and infrastructure to support teaching, such as the implementation of learning management systems. Middle-out change through learning and teaching centres normally includes professional development and the creation of resources and incentives to promote good teaching. Bottom-up change refers to initiatives by individual academics or groups of colleagues in departments and schools, much of which might be discipline-based. Needless to say, these three levels are intertwined because it is senior management that approves proposals and budget for all levels of change, and learning and teaching centres normally facilitate both top-down and bottom-up initiatives. This paper is about one such initiative: a postgraduate teaching internship scheme at a research intensive, Australian university. It is about promoting teaching among early career academics and it is also about change leadership. Indeed, in Blackmore's (2012, p. 269) view teaching and leading are intertwined:

Developing an approach to teaching is an important part of growing into an academic role which normally includes teaching, research and administration or service. If we see teaching as being not only about subject content but also about enabling students to develop the capacity to think and write in a rigorous and autonomous way, to develop their own perspectives and their own voices, then not only is teaching an act of leadership but these desired outcomes start to look like aspects of leadership too. Teaching becomes the enabling of intellectual leadership among those who are learning. The teaching role may also be seen as one in which teachers are involved in the improvement of the practice of teaching – both their own practices and those of colleagues – again acts of leadership.

Blackmore's optimism about opportunities to lead 'at whatever level in the university we find ourselves' is the point of analysis in this case study of a postgraduate teaching internship scheme. Blackmore (2012, p. 268) starts his own account of academic leadership with an impressionist account of what leadership in teaching might look like to early career academics:

'But we can't do this, we're just tutors.'

'Sounds great, but the subject outline is already set and we have to do what it says.'

'Well, my Head of Department isn't interested, because the department is assessed on research output, so innovative teaching isn't even on her radar.'

This dispirited group of postgraduate students were participating in a Foundations of Teaching program specifically geared to early-career university teachers. As the coordinator listened to them, he realised that leadership was an issue that needed to be addressed even at this early stage in their careers. But how is it possible to lead from behind and below – from the position of a part-time tutor's role? How could he help them to promote learning and teaching? Even if they could do little at this stage, these are the academic leaders of the future – how could he facilitate a 'can-do' approach to leadership in teaching?

This case study describes one 'can-do' strategy – a postgraduate teaching internship scheme. It also explores outcomes and assesses the advantages and challenges of promoting teaching through a postgraduate program, questioning the effectiveness of programs targeted at postgraduate students as a means of bottom-up change effected through individuals.

Case study method

A descriptive case study method is useful for describing processes 'within ... real-life context' (Yin, 1984, p. 23). In this case, it makes transparent features of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme and reveals elements that might be generalised to other universities. It is 'a methodological approach that incorporates a number of data-gathering measures' (Berg 2001, p. 225). Specifically, this case study is

based on process documentation and on evaluations spanning more than a decade. The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme is embedded in the professional development and research education processes of the University, so describing it as a stand-alone scheme would provide only a partial picture. Accordingly, the descriptive case study method has been chosen because it can reveal 'valid knowledge and meaningful understanding [that] comes from building up whole pictures of phenomenon, not by breaking them into parts' (Flood 2001, p. 133).

The purpose of this case study is to share practice: 'Case studies may provide ideas, suggestions, or imagery that might sensitize outsiders to issues they may have not considered, particularly with regard to the process of institutional change' (Wals, Walker & Blaze Corcoran 2004, p. 347). Whilst acknowledging that 'institutional innovation benefits from well-documented experiences elsewhere, not by blind adoption but by critical adaptation.(Wals et al 2004, p. 347), the purpose of this case study is also to engage with the transformative agenda of academic development centres that seek to promote university teaching.

The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme

Institutional aims and processes

This descriptive case study of the award-winning Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme refers firstly to institutional aims and processes before progressing to an account of course structure and design. The Internship Scheme began in 2000, when 24 postgraduate internships were funded through the University's Teaching and Learning Committee. The Scheme is designed to add value to postgraduate education and to attract and retain outstanding students by enhancing their employment prospects. It also forms part of a professional development agenda designed to enhance learning and teaching at a research-intensive university. It is an intervention that provides for bottom-up change, a fifth column approach, if you like, that influences good teaching practice in departments and schools, now and in the future, through early career academics.

The cross-institutional support strategies, necessary to the success of the Scheme, include management processes and financial incentives to support the participation of postgraduate students. The Scheme is overseen by a subcommittee comprising representatives from faculties and from the university's teaching and learning centre, which is responsible for the delivery of the program. Further, schools receive funds from the Scheme to cover payment for each postgraduate intern to complete 104 hours of teaching and curriculum development. The teaching plan submitted at application must account for this time.

Institutional support must also be demonstrated by a statement from the principal research supervisor and the relevant head of school. The candidate's school (department) must demonstrate close consultation with and ongoing support for the intern. The statement from head of school is required to address the:

- candidate's suitability;
- opportunities in the School for the development of teaching skills;
- provision of facilities and resources including administrative support and the inclusion of the Intern in the university's routine evaluation of teaching and learning;
- approval of the candidate's teaching plan; and
- allocation of an internship supervisor. This is an academic within the intern's school, usually the person whose course the intern is teaching into. The internship supervisor's role is to:
 - engage in dialogues about teaching and learning;
 - provide feedback on teaching;
 - facilitate opportunities within the School;
 - assist with the project; and
 - liaise with the research supervisor.

The program begins with an orientation session for interns, heads of school and internship supervisors. Strong links between the Scheme and discipline-based schools are sustained by the allocation of an internship supervisor (an academic from within the postgraduate's discipline) to assist with the implementation of individual teaching plans.

Interns are also expected to participate in discipline-based teaching and learning meetings. Further, there are clear guidelines for the conduct of the program, which include the requirement for interns to be given a formal appointment in their schools. End-of-year reports from the interns and their heads of school (department heads) are also required for the evaluation of the program.

Application and eligibility processes

Currently enrolled PhD students, either full-time or part-time, may apply for the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme. Every effort is made to ensure that cohorts comprise a mix of discipline backgrounds. The application process is rigorous and each postgraduate candidate must provide the following.

- Proforma application
- Official academic transcripts
- Curriculum Vitae
- Personal statement
- Teaching plan
- Names of two academic referees
- Statement from research supervisor
- Statement from Head of School
- Special consideration

To address apparent concerns that participation might interfere with the progress of postgraduate research, it is a requirement that all applicants have their research proposal approved prior to the start of the program and also that the thesis is not due for submission before completion of the internship. Applicants in their second year of candidature are preferred and they must demonstrate personal commitment to the program through the presentation of a high quality teaching plan incorporating large and small group teaching and some curriculum development they will undertake during the period of the internship.

The program

The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme is scholarly, work-based and firmly embedded in the organisational structures of the university. It is based on reflective practice and the exchange of ideas and it incorporates the principles of adult learning. In the context of postgraduate education, it extends postgraduate student learning beyond discipline-based study and enhances the teaching-research nexus and postgraduate students' career prospects. The aims of the program are to:

- encourage interns to reflect explicitly upon the nature of teaching and learning at tertiary level;
- enable the exchange of ideas about teaching and learning beyond their field of disciplinary specialisation;
- participate in professional development concurrent with their teaching experience, so that each component of the internship may inform the other;
- provide them with an opportunity to engage in the scholarship of teaching and learning and participate in a public forum on teaching and learning.

Postgraduate interns are paid through the Scheme to attend 50 hours of professional development comprising an intensive three-day workshop at the start of the year plus 30 hours of seminars over two semesters. This is equivalent to the customary Foundations of University Teaching and Learning Program that is provided to all new staff. This is in addition to the payment they receive for 104 hours of teaching and curriculum development activities. This component of the internship typically comprises at least three individual lectures and two series of tutorials. Interns are supported to take a scholarly approach and they are encouraged to extend curriculum development activities to an academic paper for presentation at a teaching and learning conference.

The pedagogy of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme

The design of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme reflects constructivist pedagogies which argue that, 'learners are not passive, uniform, empty vessels into which we can pour second-hand knowledge. Effective learning occurs when the learner is actively involved in the primary construction of knowledge' (Stewart 2012, p. 10). Interns in the program engage in reflective practice, including critical incident analysis,

and they must address constructive feedback provided by peers, supervisors and instructors. These processes empower interns to solve their own problems as evaluations of the program reveal.

*I now feel confident about my teaching and I am not as concerned if I am confronted with problems when I am teaching or if something that I try doesn't work. This is because I feel I have the tools to solve any problems that I come across (**teaching intern, 2012**).*

*Prior to completing the teaching internship I was aware when a teaching session did not go well, but I had no idea how to improve the same activity the next time that I taught it (**teaching intern, 2010**).*

A major learning artefact of the program is a Teaching and Learning Portfolio developed by the intern. It contains evidence of personal teaching philosophies and evaluations of teaching practice as well as statements addressing specific teaching and learning criteria. These accord with criteria for national teaching awards (OLT nd) to facilitate future applications for such awards by participating postgraduate students. The criteria are:

1. Approaches to teaching that influence, motivate and inspire students to learn
2. Development of curricula and resources that reflect a command of the field
3. Approaches to assessment and feedback that foster independent learning
4. Respect and support for the development of students as individuals
5. Scholarly activities that have influenced and enhanced teaching and learning

Interns learn through group interaction, and through internship supervisors and learning partners (a fellow postgraduate intern from their internship cohort) in a process described by social learning theory:

much learning occurs by observing and imitating the behaviours of people around us, and assimilating their experiences into our own developing understandings. Termed vicarious or observational learning, modelling is central to this process. It is particularly influential in the formation of expectations, in the adoption of new behaviours (watch and learn) and for developing students' self-efficacy' (Stewart 2012, p. 13).

To the extent that annual intakes of interns are bound together in common goals and learning experiences the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme may also be characterised as situated learning described as ‘a social act that occurs in everyday life ... Lave and Wenger suggest that learning is situated in distinct contexts and that success in any one is a function of how well individuals ... learn to become competent in that setting’ (Stewart 2012, pp. 13-14). The focus of the internship program on teaching in a university setting, and, more specifically, in departmental discipline-based settings, illuminates how the Scheme is informed by social and situated learning theory.

The curriculum design of the program also incorporates authentic work-integrated learning (WIL), which, according to Garnett (2012, p. 164):

acknowledges not only that work has learning needs (i.e., workers require specific knowledge and skills) but also that high-level learning can take place at work, through undertaking work and for the specific purposes of work ... WIL has a focus on higher education level knowledge, skill acquisition and application. This distinguishes it from simple work experience, which is not necessarily integrated into a theoretical and research-based university program.

The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme accords with Garnett’s description of work-integrated learning because it prepares postgraduate students for their teaching role in universities (the learning needs of work) and postgraduate interns also learn at work (high level learning at work) through the adaptation of generic teaching skills to discipline-specific contexts in their schools.

In an approach that incorporates constructivist and situated learning, reflection, community of practice processes and relevant work-integrated learning, the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme might best be characterised as adopting the principles of adult learning outlined by Knowles, Holton and Aswansu (2005). These include engaging with the life experiences and knowledge that adults bring to learning environments and the need for relevant and practical approaches to learning and assessment.

Scholarship and the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme

Over the last two decades, national governments in Australia and Britain, as elsewhere, have conducted research quality and output audits and tied university funding to research productivity. This exerts pressure on university management teams to encourage research productivity. At the same time, governments have also demanded higher teaching standards and greater accountability for expenditure on university teaching. This has exacerbated existing fault lines between the teaching and research functions of universities. Time is limited and it is not possible for academics to do everything. They feel pressured and it seems to be teaching that suffers as Spafford Jacob and Goody (2002, p. 10) report in their study of the effectiveness of the foundations of teaching program in their university. When they asked about barriers to implementing what they had learned in Foundations, respondents observed:

A barrier is defeating detractors who say not to bother because research is what gets rewarded around here.

Whilst innovative in their research many [colleagues] are very conservative in their teaching. I believe that most staff do not view their teaching as important and it is down the list of priorities.

Boyer (1990) sought to diffuse unnecessary dichotomies between the teaching and research functions in universities by offering scholarship a broader meaning that includes four areas of scholarship: the scholarship of discovery research; the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of service (the practical application of knowledge); and the scholarship of teaching. The latter was described by Trigwell (2012, p. 254) as in keeping with the customary peer reviewed processes of academic research:

The scholarship described in most research journals is about making transparent the scholarly processes used to reach the reported research conclusions through a publicly available artefact that can be scrutinised by the peers of the researchers ... So if teaching involves a scholarly process aimed at making learning possible, it follows that the scholarship of teaching is about making transparent, for public scrutiny, how learning has been made possible.

The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme was developed in a scholarly manner. Participants are invited to reflect on their teaching processes, to engage in discussion and research and, where possible, to develop research papers and conference

presentations related to their teaching practice. These are in addition to discipline-based research publications related to their PhD theses and serve to enhance further the curricula vitae of postgraduate students. Evaluations of the program reveal that postgraduate students do connect the dots between their participation in the program and their postgraduate research and between theory and practice:

The whole process of breaking down some complex theoretical ideas and adapting the material at the student-level really got me thinking about the fundamental concepts behind my research. ... about how important such discussion/debate sessions are to the progress of my own scholarship (teaching intern, 2007).

One of the drawbacks of research I find is that I get used to thinking in a certain way. My students asked me some really good questions that got me thinking about the material in a different light (teaching intern, 2009).

Achievements and Challenges

The Internship Scheme now represents a serious and sustained financial commitment by the University both to teaching and to its postgraduate students because, by 2013, the annual budget for the Scheme has risen to \$ 214,320. The program is now well embedded in the professional development processes of the University and, so far, twenty or more internships have been completed each year for thirteen years.

The processes and outcomes of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme were peer reviewed as part of an application for a national teaching award. Its success was acknowledged when the program received a 2006 Australian Learning and Teaching Council Award for Programs that Enhance Learning. Some of the interns have also received individual awards for teaching innovations at university and national level.

Summary evidence, gleaned from reflective statements by interns; from the final reports of interns and heads of school; and surveys of interns, mentors and heads of school indicate that the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme has:

- assisted interns in the development of a philosophy of teaching and learning;

- increased postgraduates' confidence to teach;
- enhanced career prospects;
- facilitated dialogue about teaching and learning within schools;
- raised the status of teaching and learning in a research intensive university.

Over the thirteen years since its inception the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme has attracted 20-24 applicants each year. The program selects on high achieving PhD students who, through their personal statement, show a commitment to teaching and a desire to develop a scholarly approach to their practice. While these cohorts represent only a small proportion of the postgraduate students who are teaching into undergraduate courses, alternative development opportunities exist for those not involved in the internship. These include a shorter, less intense (6 month program) called Introduction to University Teaching, as well as a suite of one-off workshops focusing on different aspect of teaching in Higher Education.

The teaching interns consistently acknowledge that their understanding of pedagogy, teaching skills, and confidence has increased:

I became more conscious of...teaching with diversity, allowing that students learn in a different manner to the way I learn... I developed some more practical skills including... learning to structure a lecture appropriately, understanding the depth and breadth required for responsible curriculum development, working through issues of learning environments and methods **(teaching intern, 2006)**.

[The experience] was unprecedented in making me think about current issues in teaching and learning, reflect on my own teaching style and philosophy, explore the links between teaching and research as core academic activities (while I am completing my PhD!), and truly reflect on the nature of scholarly endeavour. **(teaching intern, 2010)**.

The program is fundamentally practical as it is about teaching, we taught, we talked about teaching and we talked critically and innovatively about that experience **(teaching intern, 2011)**.

There is evidence not only that the program enhances career prospects but also that it may have influenced postgraduates to consider a career in academia once they grew to be passionate about teaching.

*Exposure to what teaching is all about (it is a lot more than what goes on in the classroom) helps individuals contemplating a career in academia to understand more fully what it is all about. They might even change their mind (**teaching intern, 2009**).*

*The internship fostered in me a passion for teaching. It reinforced for me the satisfaction of sharing knowledge and enthusiasm for my science with a new generation of students, facilitating their learning and challenging them to expand their own academic horizons (**teaching intern, 2010**).*

*This has resulted in me seeking an academic position for the conclusion of my PhD, and largely thanks to the internship experience, I will commence as a tenured Senior Lecturer ... in England ... They were so impressed with the internship scheme they have exempt me from their T&L program for new academics! (**teaching intern, 2007**).*

There has also been consistent feedback about the positive effect of the program among established academics in schools:

*[The intern's] interaction with members of the academic staff in discussing her teaching role has led to a higher awareness by these staff of curriculum and assessment issues (**Head of School, 2012**).*

*All reports to me from teaching staff indicate that the intern's involvement/participation was most welcome and refreshing. Armed with what they learnt from the formal training, they even made us think more about how we do things and why. Their participation was a very positive experience (**Head of School, 2010**).*

Finally, the program has achieved a level of credibility in a research intensive university that has raised the status of teaching, as one head of school observed:

*One of the greatest benefits from the Internship from our point of view is the culture it has created amongst our postgraduates in relation to teaching. An Internship has come to be seen as a prestigious thing, worth competing for. Teaching is no longer just something which gets in the way of doing the research which will get them jobs, it has become a subject for serious scientific research, offering the same potential for recognition as their other endeavours (**Head of School, 2009**).*

The formal feedback from the program indicates considerable success but it also reveals some of the challenges for the postgraduates operating as bottom-up leaders. Such problems are not uncommon in universities. They apply also to early career academics in the foundation teaching courses which most universities prescribe for new and inexperienced staff. Spafford Jacob and Goody (2002, p. 7), for example, found that graduates of a Foundation of University Teaching course in their university find it difficult to implement the teaching ideas to which they have been introduced:

According to these respondents, colleagues are hesitant to discuss teaching methodology and are resistant to change or are inflexible. The skills and techniques taught reflect a change to the way things are typically done. Inflexibility on alternative assessment tools within the school is another barrier encountered by participants.

So what is the full story of the outcomes of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme? Coordinators of the program report considerable time spent in counselling postgraduate students who have been enthused by the program only to encounter resistance in their schools. They have also received direct communication from academics questioning the wisdom of what is taught in the program. Some academic colleagues dispute that the traditional lecture is passive, and extol passive listening as a skill in itself. They advocate the importance of content filled lectures balanced by interactive tutorials. As a coordinator of the program put it:

One academic actually wrote to me and suggested that the program was doing the interns a disservice by encouraging them to introduce questions into their lectures. This colleague didn't think there was time for that sort of thing since there was so much content to get through. I don't think this attitude is uncommon as I have had conversations with other lecturers who have expressed similar beliefs. It's so difficult to engage in discussion around issues like this when the majority of academics have little formal pedagogical training and do things the way they have always done them. Tradition has a lot to answer for! (Internship coordinator, personal communication)

What's going on? Here we have a story of the successful graduation of some twenty or more postgraduate students from the Internship Scheme each year, often with some teaching publications to adorn their curricula vitae. Yet, those same students often feel discouraged by the gap between their newly developing enthusiasm and knowledge of

teaching and the culture of their departments. It seems to be a common account of change leadership to promote university teaching, in particular when leading from below and behind.

Conclusion

Change leadership to promote university teaching has been characterised as the task of Sisyphus (Hunt 2012). In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was forever condemned to rolling a stone uphill only to find that it rolled down the other side, with the result that he had to start the task again. Professional development to promote teaching can be like this, especially when it is directed at individuals, such as postgraduates, because they may leave the university and it's necessary to start again with a new group. However, the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme does show some signs of influencing interns to stay in academia and they do have a ripple effect in the departments and schools in which they teach that extends beyond individual teaching accomplishment. The program might also be assessed as a circuit-breaker in the Sisyphus cycle because it future-proofs academia: In future, established staff in departments and schools will have been exposed to good teaching practice through interventions such as this internship program and they will be less resistant to change and teaching innovations. It is a capacity-building approach because it enhances teaching skills among early academics who intend to continue teaching in universities.

On one level, the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme is an intervention that works and it has been recognised as an outstanding program in the peer reviewed processes of Australia's national teaching awards. Through a community of practice organisation and constructivist pedagogy, the internship program adopts the best of formal and informal organisation to engage postgraduate students successfully in teaching. The benefits for individual interns and their students are continuously demonstrated with each graduating cohort of the program. However, despite the best efforts to mitigate mixed messages, through a structured approach aimed at managing expectations and facilitating interaction between schools and postgraduate interns, some interns remain perplexed and conflicted by differing perspectives of teaching.

A widely acknowledged dilemma in academic development (Kift 2004) is the extent to which change is better effected from within departments or schools than from outside, as Blackmore (2012, p.269) explains:

led from inside a department has its advantages and may be highly effective, but it has its own challenges. Subject teachers frequently report that the changes they would like to see happen are impossible to bring about, once they return to their home department after taking part in a professional development program. The advantage for people advocating change, sometimes termed 'change agents', within a department is that they have an intimate knowledge of the department and its ways of working. The disadvantage is that they have no external status or support.

The Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme does provide external status and support because it was carefully structured to do so through head of school commitments and school-based internship mentors. Even so, interns felt the pressure of marrying innovative ideas from the program with departmental perceptions about 'the way we do things around here'. The difficulties they experience as change agents, even in their own teaching, leads to the conclusion that context does matter (Hunt & Sankey 2013) and that there is an absence of a common language to engage established academics in a meaningful conversation about improving university teaching with their postgraduate students. This is not surprising given that in Australian universities, it is the exception rather than the rule, that academics possess formal teaching qualifications. A grounding in pedagogical theory, and the evidence that informs it, is a crucial starting point for a productive conversation. This is complicated further in the environment of a research-intensive university where, "research is omnipresent and often more highly valued than teaching" (Elen, Lindblom-Ylance & Clement, 2007, p.125). This remains a continuing challenge that results from the prevailing academic culture and is unlikely to abate in the short term.

In Australia, postgraduate student teachers fall into a category commonly known as sessional, or casual, staff. There has been considerable concern about the increased use of sessional staff in Australian universities because they are not experienced and because they have little power to influence teaching enhancements based on student feedback. Further, they are paid hourly rates and they are not necessarily as available

to students as full-time, or tenured academics. There have been national initiatives to enhance sessional staff teaching (see AUTC, 2003; Percy et al., 2008) but the internship program described in this case study illustrates a local and intra-university response to the issue. Its aim is to raise the level of teaching among sessional staff. This has immediate benefits for current students and it future-proofs the institution by starting out where it means to carry-on. Today's postgraduates are tomorrow's leaders and those who have participated in the internship program have received a healthy dose of pedagogy that will enhance their teaching.

It is possible to conclude from the analysis, so far, that institutional statements extolling the importance of teaching do not result in wholesale buy-in or support of the Postgraduate Teaching Internship Scheme across the entire institution. It is also possible to conclude that the internship program places postgraduate students in a difficult place between current studies in the Internship Scheme and teaching practice in their departments. Against this is balanced the successful enculturation of some 250 postgraduates over a thirteen year period. Their careers have been enhanced by the program and their students have benefitted from enhanced teaching practice at the university. Suffice it to say that the potential for real bottom-up leadership is substantial and that pockets of impressive achievements have been made by graduates of this program. This is evidenced by teaching awards at institutional and national levels.

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