ACDS Fellowship – Distributed leadership to embed scholarship in STEM teaching teams
Tina Acuña and Jo-Anne Kelder

New TEQSA Guidance Note: Scholarship

In Australia, the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) minimum requirements include continuous evaluation that informs ongoing curriculum transformation: five threshold standards refer explicitly to scholarship.

Significantly, TEQSA in December 2018 released the *Guidance Note: Scholarship* that states:

'*The intent of the Standards is that scholarship that is claimed to inform teaching (or supervision) must have a demonstrable relevance to the course being taught, including scholarship relating to the process of teaching and learning in itself.*'

SoTL in STEM

Changes to national Learning and Teaching awards and grants suggests a signal that scholarship is *in practice* an undervalued and largely invisible activity that may be neglected altogether by academics and management.

In STEM, prioritisation of disciplinary research and lack of capacity/expertise in research approaches more common to the humanities and education are substantial barriers to scholarship in learning and teaching.

Considering the TEQSA guidance note, it is essential to identify mechanisms to engage and reward academics to engage in scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).

The HESF focus on degree-level curriculum implies the whole team of academics involved in designing and teaching degree curriculum need to be engaged in SoTL; not just specialist teachers.

Building effective leadership for improved learning and teaching

The value proposition for engagement in scholarship needs to resonate with academic goals and aspirations, rather than communicate administrative activities for compliance.

Our Fellowship will conceptualise leadership for active engagement in scholarship within teaching teams. It includes a framework to ensure team-based scholarship activities are aligned with institutional structures, processes and instruments, so that scholarship can be focussed on degree-level curriculum and can be made visible, monitored, measured and reported against TEQSA standards.

A Curriculum Evaluation and Research Framework

We will contextualise the Curriculum Evaluation and Research (CER) Framework (Kelder and Carr, 2017) to suit the STEM discipline (Fig 1).

The CER framework embeds scholarship in the cycle of quality improvement (yearly) and quality assurance (external benchmarking; at least 5 yearly) of qualifications, leading to evidence-based scholarly outputs and informs a collaborative approach to curriculum design that can be facilitated within and across disciplines and university boundaries.

The objectives of the CER STEM Fellowship are to:

- Reconceptualise the CER framework based on implementation at six higher education providers, to ensure alignment with the TEQSA Guidance Note: Scholarship
- Address barriers to uptake and address identified opportunities and strategic actions that will support institutions to incorporate scholarship into their infrastructure for learning and teaching
- Extend and contextualise the CER STEM framework in at least six Science (or Allied) Faculties/Colleges in Australian universities
- Build on national and international networks and partnerships to promote best practice in learning and teaching.

How to engage with the CER STEM Fellowship

Workshops are planned from September 2019 at:
- Deakin University
- Swinburne University of Technology
- The University of Adelaide
- The University of Melbourne
- The University of Western Australia
- University of Tasmania

Upcoming Conferences: ACDS TL Leaders Conference in July 2019; ACSME in September 2019.

Coming soon! CER STEM website and newsletter.

Kelder J & Carr A. (2017). Embedding Evaluation and Scholarship into Curriculum and Teaching: The Curriculum Evaluation Research Framework. In A Hørsted, A Bartholomew, J Branch & C Nygaard (Eds.), New Innovations in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Oxfordshire: Library Publishing.
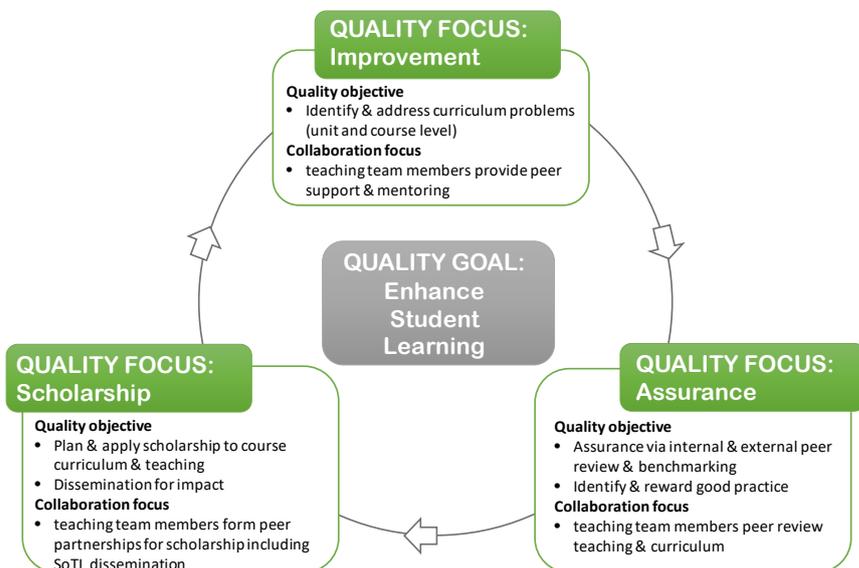

QUALITY FOCUS: Improvement
Quality objective
- Identify & address curriculum problems (unit and course level)
Collaboration focus
- teaching team members provide peer support & mentoring

QUALITY GOAL: Enhance Student Learning

QUALITY FOCUS: Scholarship
Quality objective
- Plan & apply scholarship to course curriculum & teaching
- Dissemination for impact
Collaboration focus
- teaching team members form peer partnerships for scholarship including SoTL dissemination

QUALITY FOCUS: Assurance
Quality objective
- Assurance via internal & external peer review & benchmarking
- Identify & reward good practice
Collaboration focus
- teaching team members peer review teaching & curriculum

Fig 1. Proposed CER Framework for STEM, modified from Kelder and Carr (2017)

About the joint ACDS Fellows

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