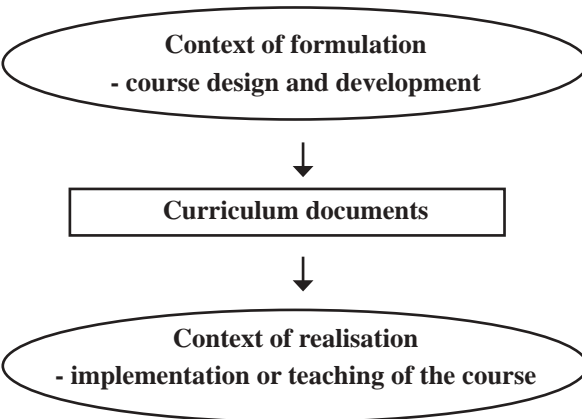


Curriculum

What is a curriculum?

There is a general understanding of the term 'curriculum' as being synonymous with the 'courses' that we teach. However, the range of definitions is varied and there is no real consensus about what actually constitutes a 'curriculum'.

One approach to curriculum is provided by Lundgren 1982, who considers that the curriculum is contained in two contexts. The context of formulation (that is, the design and development of the course documents) and the context of realisation (that is, the implementation or teaching of the course). These two contexts are joined by the curriculum documents (that is, course related documents, subject proformas, subject outlines and so forth).



Lundgren 1982 views the curriculum as a great deal more than the courses that are taught. He considers that the contexts of formulation and realisation contain many social, psychological and political factors that influence either, what is placed in the course design or what is transferred from the course design to the teaching situation. The factors that are influential in the context of formulation are different from the factors that are influential in the context of realisation. An understanding of these variables and their potential impact is important for the design, development and implementation of quality courses and therefore also for quality student outcomes.

What are some curriculum issues?

The main curriculum issue is to decide what from the 'real world' to transfer into the curriculum. This is not easily decided as there are many perspectives of 'reality', many ways that 'reality' could be represented to students, and many ways that students could experience and learn about 'reality'. In the context of formulation the different perspectives can compete and make decisions about the curriculum approach and content difficult.

When the curriculum has been designed a different set of perspectives can take over as individual lecturers or groups of lecturers interpret what has been placed in to the curriculum documents and decide what will be transferred to the teaching situation. This leaves room for individual interpretations and thus some parts of the curriculum may be emphasised and other parts overlooked. Also, as the time from the development of the curriculum increases and as staff, who were responsible for the development of the curriculum leave, the gaps between what was intended and what actually occurs can widen. It is often difficult to keep track of what is actually being taught and assessed.

What curriculum services can CELT provide?

CELT is able to assist Schools with a range of curriculum consultancies that will contribute to the attainment of quality outcomes and help address curriculum problems. These consultancies can include providing advice and assistance for:

- designing and developing educationally sound course documentation with conceptual integrity;
- designing and developing a particular approach to the curriculum, for example, a problem-based curriculum, resource-based curriculum, activity-based curriculum and so forth;
- implementing a curriculum change process including the learning and teaching process appropriate for the curriculum;
- curriculum analysis for an existing curriculum, including analysis of documentation and implementation;
- curriculum mapping for all components of the curriculum including the assessment; and
- evaluating the effectiveness of all components of the curriculum.

Reference

Lundgren, U. 1982 Between hope and happening: Text and context of curriculum. Deakin University Press, Geelong.

Celt

CELT has a team of Educational Designers who work with staff in designing and developing learning resources for all modes of delivery supported by relevant communications technology. CELT offers services in:

- Developing learning materials and quality assurance
- Development of e-resources
- Using technology in learning and teaching
- Evaluating learning and teaching
- Staff development for academics
- Research in learning and teaching

Through:

- School-based Educational Designers
- Learning Media Laboratories in Albury, Bathurst, and Wagga Wagga
- The Evaluation Unit
- Consultancies

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Curriculum

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