Activity aimed at continuous Improvement in CSU (2004 – 2008)

Flexible Learning Institute

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Time period (Start-End dates) : 2008

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<th>Formal Name of Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Conduct</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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| The Flexible Learning Institute (FLI), established in October 2007 seeks to attain excellence and lead in the quality provision of flexible learning and teaching, in line with Charles Sturt University’s vision. | In addition to undertaking continual checks of service delivery, a review of the functioning of the Flexible Learning Institute against objectives set out in the Institute’s Strategic Plan has been undertaken, the outcomes will be described in this document. | The review of the activities of the Flexible Learning Institute was undertaken by the Director and Deputy Director of the Flexible Learning Institute, in league with other staff members. Monthly meetings were conducted where performance was reported on. In addition to this, two meetings were conducted, in late 2008 and early 2009, where the activities of the Institute were reviewed in terms of the Institute’s Strategic Plan. Outcomes of these activities were reported to the Flexible Learning Institute Management Committee and key stakeholders, both internal and external to the Charles Sturt University community. | The review of activities highlighted the following achievements:  
- Establishment of the Flexible Learning Institute and staffing.  
- Production of the Flexible Learning Institute Strategic Plan.  
- Establishment of the Flexible Learning Institute Management Committee.  
- Implementation of a Flexible Learning Institute Fellows Scheme in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 and Seed Grant Scheme in 2009/2010. These schemes offered the chance for recipients to engage in strategic learning and teaching development projects involving the scholarship of teaching and leadership of change.  
- A review of flexible and blended learning and teaching activities at Charles Sturt University has been commenced and is ongoing, to be reported on by October 2009.  
- A draft Blended and Flexible Learning Standards Framework has been produced as a result of the review and aims to provide guidance regarding the level of learning engagement and the standards that can be aimed for in terms of this engagement. The draft has been made available for input to the Flexible Learning Institute Management Committee and Fellows.  
- Internal affiliations have been developed with a range of groups within Charles Sturt University, spanning Faculties, Schools, Academics, Students, Divisions, the Education for Practice Institute, CSU Committees (Learning and Teaching Committee), Faculty of Education Committees (Flexible Learning Working Group) and the SNI Network (Promoting Excellence Initiative).  
- Input has been made available at a strategic level regarding flexible and blended learning to forums such as the Unified Session Model Project, Digital Object Management System Project, Sustainable Network Initiative and National University in Regional Australia discussions.  
- External affiliations have also been developed through involvement with the Institute of Teaching and Learning at Deakin University, Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (Ascilite) and the Research Committee of the Association for Learning Technology (ALT).  
- The Flexible Learning Institute is also partnering with other institutions on ALTC projects including –  
  o Building academic staff capacity for using eSimulations in professional education for experience transfer (Deakin University and RMIT)  
  o Spaces for knowledge generation: a framework for designing student learning environments for the future (Latrobe University)  
- The Flexible Learning Institute is pursuing a number of grant opportunities, including an opportunity to link with an academic based in the United Kingdom.  
- The Flexible Learning Institute has sponsored a number of seminars, focused on blended and flexible learning, where visiting international scholars have presented. The Institute has also facilitated one on one or group meetings between visiting experts and Charles Sturt University staff members.  
- In addition to this, the Flexible Learning Institute is managing the delivery of the CSUED09 conference, focused on the theme, "Leading and learning in university education".  
- Ongoing support and mentoring has been given to PHD students who are aligned with the Institute.  
- Research activities were undertaken, including ongoing studies of –  
  o Blended and flexible learning  
  o Developing standards  
  o Transformative change and the Teaching Fellowship scheme.  

Achievements to date have highlighted the need for some Institute changes including:  
- Staffing has been increased to provide managerial, research and project support.  
- A review of the delivery of Seed Grant and Fellowships schemes has resulted in the streamlining of administrative processes. |
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| • In 2009 the Flexible Learning Institute will continue to conduct activities that are outlined in the Institute’s Strategic Plan. The delivery and management of these programs will be reviewed at monthly meetings and more formally at an annual all of staff meeting. Key strategic activities to be undertaken include: | o Revision of the Flexible Learning Institute Strategic Plan in August 2009.  
  o Contribution to AUQA planning and conduct in 2009.  
  o Liaison with key groups eg. the Division of Learning and Teaching Services regarding strategic priorities and opportunities for collaboration.  
  o Completion and reporting on the review of flexible and blended learning.  
  o Implementation of the Blended and Flexible Learning Standards Framework.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Other Comments:                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |