

# Report of the Committee Reviewing the Careers and Employment Service Student Services



**19 – 22 April 2010**

## **Acknowledgements**

The Review Committee would like to thank the University's senior officers for their guidance, suggestions, and comments.

The Committee would also like to thank those people who provided written submissions and the honesty and candour of those who made the time to attend interviews, which greatly assisted the Review Committee to form its recommendations and the findings that are described in this report.

## Executive Summary

As part of the Griffith University Council adopted framework of regular, five-yearly, systematic reviews, from 19 – 22 April the University engaged a Review Committee consisting of two external members and two senior Griffith staff member (see section 1.1) to undertake an independent review of the current activity and future plans of the Careers and Employment Service, Student Services (C&ES).

The Review Committee's role was to review the C&ES in line with Terms of Reference (see section 1.2) and to deliver a set of recommendations that will provide measurable improvements in performance and better align the Unit with the University's strategic goals.

Graduate outcomes are an important performance indicator across a range of measures in the sector, including Commonwealth Government funding, an indicator in the Bradley Review of Higher Education and consequential funding reforms, and in the rankings of Universities, such as those reflected in various league tables. Given their importance, the University has set for itself goals for increasing graduate outcomes and these are reflected in the key performance indicators set out in the *Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013*.

While it is acknowledged that the C&ES is not solely responsibly for the University's graduate outcomes, it plays an important role in supporting the University's directions in this area. The C&ES has much to be proud of, particularly in terms of program initiatives and innovations; however, there needs to be more strategic direction, orientation and focus, a broad focus to program and service delivery, and relationships built on individual connections as opposed to being embedded across academic groups to affect change.

In considering this, the Review Committee developed five recommendations around strategy; structure; branding, visibility and influence; building capability across the organisation; and building sustainable relationships.

The achievements to date by the C&ES have laid a strong foundation for its future success and the Review Committee acknowledges the staff for their deep commitment, dedication and experience.

To affect the required change to enhance graduate outcomes, the Review Committee observed that a cultural shift within the C&ES and the University more generally, is required. Thinking about careers and career development learning within and through a new Careers Office @ Griffith, in collaboration, with academic groups will require a shared understanding and responsibility to ensure that Griffith University:

- Connects the student community<sup>1</sup> to career and job options
- Connects employers and the community<sup>2</sup> to students and graduate talent
- Connects disciplines to employability and positive graduate outcomes.

The recommendations around strategy and structure are designed to further cement and support the profile and importance of careers and career development learning across the institution. The development of a strongly led future focused strategic plan will enable the

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<sup>1</sup> The Review Committee uses the term student community to encompass potential, current and future students

<sup>2</sup> The Review Committee is referring to the social and economic benefits of effective graduates

newly positioned Careers Office, in concert with academic groups, to focus on more targeted, leveraged approaches to graduate outcomes in key underperforming areas, such as Science, Business and the Creative and Performing Arts.

Strategic reporting relationships and the use of an account management model for service delivery within academic groups, consistent with other areas across the University, will assist the new Careers Office to better support the University's goals and develop strong relationships with academic colleagues.

The recommendation around branding, visibility and influence are aimed at enabling the Careers Office to be well known and highly visible, and an integral player in key conversations related to careers, career development learning and graduate outcomes across the University. The Review Committee agreed that commensurate with its position, a new name for the service was required, for example Careers @ Griffith.

The final two recommendations - building capability across the organisation and building sustainable relationships are designed to support the C&ES and the broader University community to proactively participate in career development learning across the institution.

The resultant Review Report provides in detail the basis upon which the Review Committee determined the areas for commendation and their key set of recommendations. It also acknowledges the challenges and, most importantly, improvements that will drive the required cultural change within the Unit and across the University more generally.

The Review Committee believes that these recommendations will assist the C&ES to continue to deliver quality programs and services, to increase the level at which career development learning is embedded in academic programs across the University, and to shift the current model of service delivery and focus to one that will have the greatest reach and positive impact on graduate outcomes.

The Review Committee presents its Report in the following pages, and acknowledges the work of C&ES in preparing for, and taking part in, the review process.

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## 1 Background

### 1.1 The Review Committee

The Review Committee was appointed by the Vice Chancellor on the recommendation of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Administration). In line with *University Reviews Policy*, the Committee comprised of two external members with relevant expertise in the area to be reviewed and two senior staff members of the University with knowledge of the operations of the area under review. The Vice Chancellor determined that an internal staff member would Chair the review.

The Review Committee comprised the following members:

**Chair:**

Professor Marie Wilson, Dean (Academic), Griffith Business School, Griffith University

**External Committee Member:**

Ms Joanne Tyler, Director, Employment & Career Development, Monash University

Mr Martin Smith, Head, Careers Central, University of Wollongong

**Internal Committee Member:**

Professor Peter Creed, School of Psychology (Gold Coast), Griffith University

**Secretary:**

Ms Amanda Clark, Manager, Review and Quality, Review & Quality Unit, Office of the Academic Registrar, Griffith University.

### 1.2 Terms of Reference for the Careers & Employment Service Review

The following Terms of Reference were approved by the Vice Chancellor:

*ToR1: Strategic Alignment* – Review the C&E Services’ strategic alignment with internal and external priorities, directions & expectations

- Alignment with GU strategic priorities and future direction
- Alignment with AA strategic priorities and future direction
- Alignment with employer expectations

*ToR 2: Client Service* – Review the quality, efficiency & effectiveness of programs and services provided by the C&E Service to clients and stakeholders

- Relevance of programs and services to emerging trends in graduate employment
- Effectiveness of communication
- Effectiveness of employer relationships & collaborative partnerships
- Mechanisms for monitoring and acting on client feedback
- Effectiveness of promotions & service delivery

*ToR 3: Program and Service Evaluation & Improvement* – Review the C&E Services’ continuous improvement policies, procedures & outcomes and suggest strategies for improvements to the unit’s quality assurance framework

- Monitoring & evaluation of the quality of programs & services
- Appropriate & transparent Key Performance Indicators to measure service effectiveness
- Benchmarking with relevant internal and external organisations
- Efficacy of continuous improvement strategies

*ToR 4: Internal structure, organisation and effectiveness* – Review the efficacy of internal structures, capacity and capability with a view to strengthening the positioning and development of the unit to meet future challenges

- Efficacy of structure of the unit
- Current staffing and workforce planning
- Deployment of resources to meet current & future needs
- Capacity & capability of the unit to meet future demands

### 1.3 Procedures

Reviews of administrative areas form an important part of the process of planning and review in the University. The arrangements described for these reviews are consistent with the approach delivered for the review of academic areas. The *University Reviews Policy* and a set of supporting guidelines govern review processes.

The purpose of each review is to improve the planning and performance of elements through a continuing cycle of self-assessment, benchmarking, critical reflection, forward planning and internal/external peer review. Reviews, therefore, form an important part of the process of planning at Griffith University and are predominantly future-focussed. In addition to constituting a critical quality assurance mechanism within the University, reviews examine how the element can achieve its own objectives in alignment with the University’s strategic goals.

The Review Committee’s procedures, following the *University Reviews Policy* and set of supporting guidelines, included:

- Consideration of the self-evaluation submission from the Careers & Employment Service, Student Services submitted in January 2010;
- A general invitation to the University community to make submissions to the Committee;
- A 3-day visit to the University from 19 – 22 April, during which a range of interviews and group sessions with senior University executives, key stakeholders, the Director, Student Services and staff of the area were conducted (see Appendices 1 and 2);
- On the final day of the review, the Committee prepared a set of affirmations and broad findings, and presented these to the University senior executives, the Academic Registrar, Director, Student Services and Head, Careers & Employment Service and all available staff of the area; and
- Preparation of this written Report, including affirmations and recommendations.

The findings of the Review Committee are based on the C&ES submission, individual submissions from members of the University community, and interviews conducted during the site visit.

## 2 Summary of Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

**Commendation 1:** The Industry Mentoring Program was acknowledged for its continuing success in matching students with employers.

**Commendation 2:** The Indigenous Cadetship Program was recognised for its success in placing indigenous students in internships and for the ongoing funding it receives from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

**Commendation 3:** Much comment was made about the staff of the C&ES and their deep commitment to students.

**Commendation 4:** The Career Focus and Making Employment Happen programs were acknowledged as a strong platform upon which to expand career development learning into the academic groups.

**Commendation 5:** The C&ES are to be commended for innovating and commencing particular initiatives around research higher degree, postgraduate and international students.

**Commendation 6:** The online materials developed by staff were considered good resources, but the career guides and options resources require greater academic consultation and involvement.

### Recommendations

The Review Committee developed five strategic recommendations to assist the C&ES to support the University's improvement in graduate outcomes:

**Recommendation 1: Strategy (ToR 1 and ToR 3)**

That the C&ES, in collaboration with academic staff, develop a future focussed career development learning strategy that is based on evidence, current best practice and takes into account the changing nature of the higher education environment and of the labour market.

Timeline: 3 months

**Recommendation 2: Leadership, Organisational Structure and Reporting Relationships (ToR 2 and ToR 4)**

That the University reconsider the current organisational location, reporting relationships and service delivery model of the C&ES so that a holistic and consolidated approach to career development learning is established within academic elements and elsewhere across the University.

Specific to this recommendation, the following is required:

- a) a new position of Director, Career Development Learning be established to provide overall strategic leadership and integration of current C&ES and Work Integrated Learning activity;
- b) service delivery is to follow the hub and spoke or account management model as employed elsewhere in the University.



Timeline: Within 6 months

**Recommendation 3: Building Sustainable Relationships (ToR 2)**

The C&ES further develops targeted relationships with key internal and external stakeholders to ensure a sustainable approach to career development learning over the longer-term.

Timeline: Intermediate and Ongoing

**Recommendation 4: Branding, Visibility, Influence (ToR 2)**

(Following on from Recommendation 2) The C&ES undertake a campaign to raise its professional profile and visibility to staff, students and employers.

Timeline: Within 6 months and ongoing

**Recommendation 5: Building Capability across the University (ToR 4)**

The C&ES staff are provided with appropriate levels of ongoing professional development, including participation in national and international conferences (where appropriate), and have opportunities to cross-train and team teach with academic colleagues.

Timeline: Within 12 to 18 months

### 3 Findings of the Review Committee

#### The Strategic Context

The University has a clearly articulated strategic plan, supporting plans, and a strong vision about its future – to be recognised as one of the leading universities of Australia and of the Asia-Pacific region. Key to its future success is the success of its graduates.

Graduate outcomes are an important performance indicator across a range of measures in the sector, such as Commonwealth Government funding and are presented in the rankings of Universities, such as those reflected in various league tables.

More recently, as part of the Bradley Review of Higher Education, graduate outcomes are being used as an indicator and as part of the Government's consequential funding reforms. These will have significant impact on the University in the future.

In times of stable or high employment, the outcomes for graduates in particular areas seemed quite low at Griffith. With the Global Financial Crisis occurring last year there was heightened concern about employment outcomes and it was considered important for the University to send a clear message to its students that they were concerned and committed to actively trying to place students in employment; hence increased funding was made available for placement staff in the C&ES during this period.

The concerns raised about graduate employment outcomes and their growing importance across the sector, led the University to set for itself goals for improving graduate outcomes and these are appropriately reflected in the key performance indicators set out in the *Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013*.

The Review Committee argues that these external factors, which are not unique to Griffith, will shape the directions the University will pursue in the next few years and will significantly shape the orientation, operation and focus of supporting units, like the C&ES.

While it is acknowledged that the C&ES is not solely responsible for the University's graduate outcomes, it plays an important role in supporting the University's directions in this area. The C&ES must ensure it can effectively support the University to meet its goals and to take maximum advantage of the opportunities to develop strategic partnerships, both internally and externally.

We believe that in the context of the changing demands in the higher education environment, and Griffith's targets for improved performance in graduate outcomes, we have structured the report around each recommendation with links to the terms of reference, as appropriate.

The following recommendations provide a more detailed analysis of the performance of the C&ES and suggest changes that will enhance the position of the C&ES within the University and wider community and enhance its capacity to partner with academic and other key groups to embed career development learning within the organisation.

The Review Committee believes that the recommendations outlined below will support the University's vision that Griffith students will be well prepared to play their part in the world.

## **Review Findings: Setting the Scene**

Griffith University has grown considerably over the last twenty-five years in terms of its academic profile and student population and is considered Australia's ninth largest higher education provider. The University serves one of the nation's fastest growing regions in the Brisbane to Gold Coast corridor and enrolls some 20 - 25% of its student load through international enrolments. The University currently has close to 40,000 students enrolled across its five campuses representing a broad and diverse demographic.

The changing nature of the University's academic profile and student cohorts, coupled with the broader 'widening participation' agenda, will dramatically impact on how the Careers & Employment Service (C&ES) positions itself and utilises its resources to deliver appropriate career development learning programs and services across the University.

The role the University requires the C&ES to play now and into the future has changed. After widespread consultation with the Griffith University community and employer groups, a number of factors were identified as being critical to the Unit's success in supporting the University in this new environment.

### **3.1 Developing Strategy**

A core theme emerged early in the review. There is a widespread lack of clarity and understanding within and across all levels of the University, and with employer groups, about what the C&ES offers, what it can offer into the future, and what its specific focus is in preparing students for positive graduate outcomes and life-long career management capacity.

Fundamental to the University's success is the need for the Unit to develop a future-focussed career development learning strategy and action plan that takes into account the changing nature of the higher education sector and the labour market. In this respect we mean the development of a holistic strategy that meaningfully engages with outreach programs in high schools, work integrated learning, the widening participation agenda, the development of graduate attributes, preparing students for work after graduation and beyond, and reconnecting with alumni.

While the C&ES articulated its vision and plans, we considered that its overall approach was reactive and focused on individual drivers within the University. We believe that what is required is a clearly defined and well-articulated strategy and vision for the Unit; one that is based on evidence, current best practice and that benchmarks performance with a view towards innovation and continuing improvement. More importantly, the strategy must involve a focus on partnering to embed career development learning within academic groups, either through curricula or other appropriate avenues.

Wide consultation in the development of this strategy is expected. Consultation about the future direction of career development learning and the various support mechanisms will go some way towards breaking down the barriers and improving clarity across the community about the C&ES (see also Recommendation 4).

We recommend that the strategy include an agreed set of key performance indicators so that the C&ES can measure its contributions to the University in a concrete way. Various types of data were outlined and discussed in the self-review portfolio. However, in reaching our conclusions, we were unable to find strong, tangible evidence that the C&ES accesses robust sources of evidence to guide its service delivery and to actively respond to particular needs

across the institution. Senior members of the University community presented their concerns around graduate outcomes, in particular areas where the University hasn't performed well, and the need for the Unit to be responsive and address these in concert with academic groups.

We are aware that the C&ES may find it challenging to have space – curricular or otherwise - in the academic arena, but graduate outcomes are a concern for the whole University community and as such, the C&ES must play a synergistic role in supporting academic groups and the University to improve on this important measure. Our recommendation around increasing staff development is expected to greatly assist in this endeavour (see Recommendation 5).

Further, we were made aware by the senior staff of C&ES of its difficulty in obtaining timely and accurate data. The University has invested significantly in a data warehouse and the Office of Finance and Business Services' continuing focus on data integrity, quality and provision of information, via a data warehouse portal, is expected to improve access to data.

We believe that in developing strategy, the dialogue required to achieve this will pave the way for allaying concerns and for more positive and collaborative partnerships (see Recommendation 3).

**Recommendation 1: Strategy (ToR 1 and ToR 3)**

That the C&ES, in collaboration with academic staff, develop a future focussed career development learning strategy be developed that is based on evidence, current best practice and takes into account the changing nature of the higher education environment and of the labour market.

Timeline: 3 months

### 3.2 Leadership and Structure

To drive this vision, the Unit will require strong and strategic leadership so that it can leverage and increase interactions with other parts of the University. We see this as critical so that the Unit's operations are no longer stand-alone and any ambiguity amongst stakeholders is minimised.

The Unit is managed by the Head of the C&ES who reports to the Director, Student Services, who reports to the Academic Registrar, ultimately reporting to a member of the Executive, although the Review Committee noted there were dotted reporting lines within the Unit to other members of the Executive with particular portfolio responsibilities. We have concluded that there are many supervisory relationships within the C&ES and this seems disproportionate to the size of the Unit. We also observed that the reporting relationships for the Unit within the University are complex and cumbersome and recommend that the University demonstrate the value that it places on graduate outcomes through a reconsideration of the current organisational location and reporting relationships.

In presenting our broad findings, we suggested a range of options, such as direct reporting to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) or Dean (Student Outcomes), but have favoured an alternate approach through the creation of a new role, a Director, Career Development Learning. It is our premise that such a role would provide the necessary strategic leadership

and innovation that is essential to affect the required cultural change to shift graduate outcomes. The role will engender a shared understanding and responsibility so that activity is sufficiently forward focussed and:

- Connects the student community to career and job options
- Connects employers and the community to students and graduate talent
- Connects disciplines to employability and positive graduate outcomes.

It is imperative that the new role and Unit be well-connected throughout the University community and participate in dialogue about curriculum renewal and development occurring across a variety of fora, including appropriate membership of relevant committees and ongoing access to key leaders within the University. Should the C&ES Unit not be included in this manner, it is the Committee's view that it will continue to be marginalised and its role misunderstood, and its overall effectiveness and impact may remain similar to current levels.

We are cognisant that the location of the Work Integrated Learning Unit within the C&ES is set to expire at the end of 2010 and that the University is currently considering options about its future location and focus. In recommending the creation of a new leadership role, we expect that it will take ownership and responsibility for Work Integrated Learning (currently located within the Unit) and the current Careers and Employment Service (C&ES) and would shepherd the broad suite of current activities to career development learning, including those based in academic groups.

A key challenge for the newly created role will be the consolidation of all career-related activity outside of that already occurring within the curriculum and the development of a holistic framework across the organisation on which to better facilitate the nexus between Work Integrated Learning and Career Development Learning and the scaffolding of activity from outreach to alumni.

In reaching our conclusion on organisational location, we considered Career Units in other universities and their location within their respective organisations and current literature on the topic. We believe that the current location is potentially problematic for two reasons. First, the C&ES is not visible across the University community – both in terms of its work and its organisational location. We are not recommending that the University merely increase directional or other signage towards the C&ES or provide increased space; we believe that visibility can be achieved via other means (see Recommendations 3, 4 and 5). Second, the C&ES is located within an organisational unit with key service drivers directed towards individualised and welfare focussed delivery, such as that offered as part of Health and Counselling Services.

Given the size of the student body, we consider that the current focus on one-to-one service provision is unsustainable and that the Unit must expand its reach and impact. We consider that while one to one interactions with students are useful, they should be residual rather than the prime focus of the C&ES, hence our strong preferences for partnership and embedding activity in the curriculum. We also recognise that co-location with the Student Equity Service and others within the organisational cluster has proved fruitful and will require ongoing relationship management as part of the widening participation agenda. However, we strongly believe that a fresh approach is necessary to drive the required cultural change. We note that this is a significant change in the “business model” of C&ES, from a focus on career counselling and advising of individual students to one that explicitly limits this activity and focuses instead on programmatic career development learning. This significant change

should be reflected in the strategy, structure and operations of the Careers Office in the future.

In terms of service delivery, we are of the view that the services currently provided to students are largely unproblematic and receive positive feedback. In particular, we acknowledge the work of specialised roles, such as that of the Manager, International Career Development and Placement Officer, Indigenous Students. What was of concern to us is the current mode of delivery and embedding of key programs and services in the academic disciplines. Through consultation we have concluded that this is patchy and largely based on individual relationships rather than data. While consultations highlighted some innovative work being undertaken in some disciplines and the customisation of programs, they also showed that other members of similar disciplines or those part of the larger academic group were in the most part unaware of the extent of customisation or other initiatives that the C&ES has and continues to provide to their colleagues.

To improve partnerships with academic groups, we recommend that a hub and spoke model or account management model be created in C&ES with staff servicing academic groups. This type of service delivery is common within the University and is well regarded. We affirm that such arrangements will strengthen the connections with initiatives that are based in academic groups and are expected to produce what Watt's refers to as "bespoke" modules that are developed for specific purposes within particular departments or courses<sup>3</sup>.

In saying this, we recognise the "bespoke" work that the C&ES has undertaken to date in the Business Group and small pockets in the Arts Group. That being said, the University's key challenges in other spheres have not been well addressed and further work across all academic groups is required (see specific areas of challenge below). We believe that this model of service delivery will enable a broader reach and penetration and will inspire greater understanding and influence for the C&ES (see also Recommendation 5).

#### Resourcing for Sustainability

In relation to service delivery, during the course of the review we were concerned by what may be a project-based funding model for innovation in the C&ES. The C&ES has undertaken innovations in preparing students for work and these are in the main supported through fixed-term and/or piecemeal funding and, in most cases, the services continue long after the funding period. While we acknowledge that reviews are not the appropriate forum in which to bid for an increasing envelope of resources, we are concerned about the nature of funding for the C&ES and the message this may send about the (lack of) importance of innovation. The review recommends changes which will need to be embedded within existing funding. Some transitional funding may be required, but overall, other activities may need to be reduced to enable leveraged activities in academic groups.

In addition to the account management model described above, we have concerns about the model of service provision for particular cohorts of students and affirm the need for the C&ES to move from a generic to a more tailored model of service delivery to ensure that the needs of these cohort groups are appropriately addressed. In particular, we raise the following as suggested options for prioritising service delivery:

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<sup>3</sup> A G Watts 'Career Development Learning and Strategy', The Higher Education Academy [http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/resourcedatabase/id592\\_career\\_development\\_learning\\_and\\_employability.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/resourcedatabase/id592_career_development_learning_and_employability.pdf) (accessed May 2010) page 17.

- International students – elsewhere in this report we highlight particular challenges faced by international students in preparing for the world of work. We acknowledge the role of Manager, International Career Development as having had a positive impact in developing some programs around Work in Australia and other specific services to this group of students, but reiterate that given the University’s performance in the International Student Barometer, more work is required to improve the University’s standing.

However, we are aware that the University currently has some 10,000 international students enrolled across its 5 campuses and has one dedicated role. We consider this to be an important area of activity for the University for two reasons. First, as part of its core strategy in learning and teaching the University considers that the diversity of its student body is a resource for learning<sup>4</sup> and this assists in providing for all students opportunities to develop competency in culturally diverse and international environments<sup>5</sup>. Second, in considering the staffing levels at other institutions, it is noted that Queensland University of Technology’s similar role supports 5,000 students, while Wollongong University’s 6,000 international student population is serviced by 4 dedicated staff. Given the high numbers of international students at Griffith this would seem anomalous.

- Indigenous students and other equity groups under the ‘widening participation’ agenda – two examples will be used to highlight both the challenge and opportunity for the C&ES to provide appropriate programs suitable to the particular requirements of these cohorts.

The C&ES has an excellent program and reputation in placing indigenous students in cadetships and this has been commended earlier in the report. A challenge for the University will be growing indigenous students numbers, and in particular their representation across the majority of academic programs. Particular strategies and partnerships are needed to reach the stated targets, given the University’s potential partnership cluster<sup>6</sup> as having the third lowest, or 8% of the total population identifying as indigenous.

The self-review report outlines that a large proportion of Griffith’s students are from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds, however evidence presented to us by the University suggests that the majority of the University’s students are in the mid SES range. Should the definition of SES move from postcode to ‘first in family’ then a large proportion of Griffith’s students would be drawn from the low SES range. Given the tendency for first in family students to enrol in academic programs with clear employment pathways (such as nursing and education) particular strategies are required to ensure that these cohorts are adequately prepared for their transition to employment.

- Portfolio career development – the performance of the Creative and Performing Arts disciplines gives rise to the need for more customised approaches to addressing the employment challenges faced by these student cohorts. For Creative and Performing Arts students, the academic schools strongly advocate that students should be prepared to manage a portfolio career and that such preparation should run over the duration of their study program. This is an important area to address given the University’s performance

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<sup>4</sup> Griffith University Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013, page 7

<sup>5</sup> Griffith Graduate Attributes Statement (2009/0005817)

<sup>6</sup> see Higher Education Forum Widening Participation Working Group, March 2010

in graduate outcomes, although we note that there is some unease in how the national survey measures creative and performing arts employment outcomes.

In considering this as an area for focus, we are cognisant of the strong partnerships the C&ES has fostered over a reasonably long period with the applied theatre and Queensland Conservatorium programs and recommend that these be extended across all Creative and Performing Arts programs.

- Small business management skills – the Health Group (and similarly Creative Arts) have identified a ‘missed opportunity’ in preparing their graduates for work. In particular, it is widely known that many graduates leaving these programs will go on to run their own small businesses, and consider that the development of appropriate resources will prepare students well for the transition to employment and perhaps provide them with a competitive edge.
- Cohort support for low performing programs – given the importance the sector and University places on graduate outcomes, it is imperative that the C&ES respond appropriately and partner with academic groups to address career development within the disciplines. In particular, it is imperative that cohort support programs be customised. Given the University’s performance relative to competitor institutions, we recommend urgent action be undertaken in the following discipline groupings based on the University’s 2009 performance relative to its seven competitor institutions:
  - Creative Arts;
  - Information Technology;
  - Management and Commerce; and
  - Natural and Physical Sciences<sup>7</sup>.

**Recommendation 2: Leadership, Organisational Structure and Reporting Relationships (ToR 2 and ToR 4)**

That the University reconsider the current organisational location, reporting relationships and service delivery model of the C&ES so that a holistic and consolidated approach to career development learning is established within academic elements and elsewhere across the University.

Specific to this recommendation, the following is required:

- a) a new position of Director, Career Development Learning be established to provide overall strategic leadership and integration of current C&ES and Work Integrated Learning activity;
- b) service delivery is to follow the hub and spoke or account management model as employed successfully elsewhere in the University.

Timeline: Within 6 months

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<sup>7</sup> 2009 National CEQ data provided by the Office of Finance and Business Services



### **3.3 Building Sustainable Relationships**

In order for the C&ES to have the widest possible reach and penetration without a massive injection of resources, it is imperative that it gains momentum and collaboration through strategic partnering, both internal and external to the University. Partnerships are outlined separately below.

#### Building Relationships in Academic Groups

We noted that the C&ES does not always appear to have the opportunity to be involved in discussions and decision-making around graduate outcomes and career development learning. The C&ES needs to be fully aligned with the strategic directions and priorities around improving graduate outcomes across the University and particularly those developed within academic groups. The production of a strategy and action plan, as outlined in Recommendation 1 and the suggestion for strong leadership through a Director, Career Development Learning as outlined in Recommendation 2 is a solid starting point, but to be effective, the C&ES needs to be perceived by all as integral to the University's agenda around improving graduate outcomes and as having the strong support of the University's Executive for its suite of programs and activities.

This support needs to be demonstrated in strong and tangible ways, including the inclusion of members of the C&ES in key decision-making processes regarding career development learning strategy and priorities.

We acknowledge that developing students' preparedness for work must be undertaken via a partnership model and the University's goals in this area will not be attained if academic groups and the C&ES continue to work either in parallel or separately. Fundamental to this success is the criticality of building on strong foundations and progressing more deeply embedded partnerships with academic groups to progress the important goal of preparing students for the world of work.

Internally this will include involvement in the necessary informal and formal structures of the University to influence activity around career development learning and graduate outcomes. We note that many academic groups have Industry Advisory Boards, Teaching and Learning Committees and/or dedicated staff roles or other arenas in which the business of graduate outcomes is likely to be discussed. These forums would provide an excellent vehicle for the Group based C&ES staff member/s to be involved in discussions and debates about graduate outcomes and to collaboratively consider strategies for improvement across the academic group.

#### Building Relationships with Central Offices and Student Associations

The University has a number of centralised office areas that engage in related space and as such, any strategy developed by the C&ES to build strategic and sustainable relationships should be inclusive of these groups, for example Office of Student Recruitment, External Relations, Development & Alumni and Griffith International. We know that these offices have contact with many and varied groups, including employers and other contacts, that need to be leveraged to ensure that the University is achieving maximum value and impact from its connections.

Similarly the student body is organised around a number of groups in which the C&ES would be able to reach students in a different setting. We congratulate the C&ES for effectively engaging with the Honours College, Golden Key Society and others to date and for customising their programs to the specific needs of these student groups. We strongly recommend that this work continue and be expanded where value can be added.

#### Building Relationships with Employer Groups

The building of strong external partnerships takes an enormous amount of time and energy. The C&ES has recently engaged a Manager, Employer Liaison and Graduate Promotion and while we are still coming to grips with the detail of this role, we acknowledge the work achieved to date in drawing together and updating the various employer databases within the C&ES itself and their stated desire to expand the database to include academic group based contacts. We do note however that there may be some reluctance from academic groups to share contacts and networks, particularly those that are considered a closed shop.

The Recruitment and Careers Fair, Industry Mentoring Program and Indigenous Cadetship Programs have enabled the C&ES to start from a strong base in which to further grow employer relationships. The C&ES must bring together a broader range of employer groups for global employment than which currently exists. Furthermore, employers have provided feedback about the generalist nature of these Fairs and the student groups attending and have requested more focussed events that are tailored to the disciplines – although these may be costly to deliver. Equally student attendance at such Fairs, particularly at the Gold Coast, may be indicative of the need to refocus events. This should be considered as an opportunity for the C&ES to revisit its approach generally and explore opportunities to partner with academic groups to deliver a series of specific events, similar to those offered elsewhere in Criminology and Financial Planning. We are of the view that the C&ES should not feel that it has to be everything to everyone. In this regard we believe that those professional associations, such as Law and Accounting, that run their own external specific recruitment and careers fairs should be encouraged and appropriate promotion and facilitation of attendance should be undertaken by the C&ES in partnership with the academic group/s.

While we agree that employer and professional association contacts should be managed effectively, we are conscious of the proliferation of systems that are emerging across the University. To that end we strongly encourage the C&ES to reconsider the use of Career Board and determine whether they are achieving maximum value and optimum usage. Other Universities are able to manage contacts and various other activities through Career Board and it was felt that the C&ES should investigate how other universities set about achieving this. Alternatively, there may be value in viewing other systems that currently exist, or are about to exist, in the University, and their ability to integrate with Career Board, such as Raiser's Edge held in Development & Alumni or the CRM being developed through University Administration rather than potentially developing an alternate stand-alone database that may have limited integrative capacity across the institution.

Whatever database is decided and whatever the extent of contacts included, there should continue to be a sharing of information and the appropriate management of contacts to ensure maximum advantage and benefit to students.

#### Building Student-University Relationships

Given the size of the University and student cohorts, and commitments to work integrated learning, it is timely to consider the possibility of developing a "Jobs on Campus" model for

student employment within the University. The University already actively employs students across a range of settings and further work in this area may arrest some of the challenges with finding suitable part-time or employment experiences for particular cohorts of students. Such an initiative will require the support of the broader University and their willingness to consider or perhaps dedicate jobs/roles to students. Literature suggests that an on-campus employment program is a central aspect of the student experience<sup>8</sup> and may lead to better retention and outcomes for students.

During the course of the review we were made aware of the desire of Griffith International to establish a new position – Community Engagement Officer – to work both locally and offshore. Funding has been set aside by the Pro Vice Chancellor (International). The role is intended to focus on volunteering aspects as a mechanism for integrating international students in the community. Griffith International intends to model this role on the successful community partnerships program offered at the Leeds Metropolitan University, and more recently the establishment of a similar program at Macquarie University. Griffith International believes that the roles of Community Engagement Officer and Manager, International Career Development would work well together to advance opportunities for international students. While we make no comments about this new role and its organisational location, we agree that greater attention must be paid to international students, and commend Griffith International for pro-actively engaging with this issue. It should be noted that volunteering provides an opportunity for career development learning, but also that the *Fair Work Act* impacts on how such programs can be delivered.

#### Building Student-Academic Partnerships

We are aware that the Griffith Business School in partnership with Griffith International are keen to develop a global citizenship passport where students have various activities, such as volunteering, study abroad, exchange, international symposia etc. This initiative is seen as an integral part of the Griffith Business School's strategy for developing students for the global world of work. Where appropriate, the C&ES must play an active role in developing customised programs for this planned initiative.

The University has recently redeveloped its statement of graduate attributes and is paying particular attention to the way in which course learning objectives and assessment outcomes are expressly defined and linked to the graduate attributes statement. We are of the view that the graduate attributes are not as yet widely known or understood by students and that the development of an annual Griffith Graduate Attributes Challenge is one vehicle in which to advance students knowledge and understanding of skills development within the discipline in a fun and challenging environment.

#### Building Relationships Across the Student Lifecycle

With the changes to the higher education environment that have already taken effect and those that are intended to commence shortly, we are of the view that the University must scaffold and integrate career development learning more effectively within the curriculum and across the student lifecycle. Such changes within the sector are an opportunity for the C&ES to play an active role in career decision making and planning – commencing in high school outreach programs, through work integrated learning, programs such as Career Focus and Making Employment Happen, to preparing students for the world of work in the second and

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<sup>8</sup> Hanover Research Council (Mach 2010), Effective Utilization of Student Workforces on University Campuses

third years of their program and beyond graduation, and the re-engagement and involvement of alumni, such as part of the Industry Mentoring Program.

**Recommendation 3: Building Sustainable Relationships (ToR 2)**

The C&ES further develops targeted relationships with key internal and external stakeholders to ensure a sustainable approach to career development learning over the longer-term.

Timeline: Intermediate and Ongoing

### 3.4 Visibility and Influence

There were a number of lines of evidence that led us to believe that it was important to enhance the profile, professional standing and visibility of the C&ES to its key stakeholders. First, we considered that the current name, Careers & Employment Service (C&ES) was outdated and a new name that better reflects its role within the University and broader community is required. A suggested option is Careers @ Griffith.

Second, we found across diverse areas and levels of seniority within the University that academic and general staff have limited understanding about the services and programs that the current Unit offers. This has led to many areas within the University developing their own careers resources and managing student career enquires in-house through the First Year Advisor or Program Convenor roles. Third, we were unable to identify specific reporting and communication strategies that would make information about what the Unit does readily available to the internal and wider community. We were made aware that the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and Dean (Student Outcomes) regularly received reports from the Unit about their range of activity and so on, but these did not appear to be promulgated more widely across the University.

We heard mixed views about the profile of the web as a communicator of information. It was observed that the Unit's web presence was not sufficiently 'front door' enough for employers and that there were missed opportunities as a result. Similarly, there are too many layers internally for staff to reach the plethora of well-crafted information and resources available, and the students that were interviewed also commented on the Unit's web location and difficulty in initially finding supporting resources. Future and potential students would appear to not have access to career resources given their current location within the student portal. Consideration must be given to increasing the visibility of the website.

The visibility of the Unit clearly needs improving across the University. However, given the recommendations around organisational structure and reporting relationships, the Review Committee strongly urges that this activity commence once the University has made decisions in relation to Recommendation 2. Actively promoting services to academic colleagues and employer groups is essential, regardless of organisational location (see below in relation to employers).

Nevertheless, we are cognisant of the University's recent initiatives in relation to addressing the problems surrounding its web presence and strongly encourage the web working party to consider as a priority employer groups. The University's Future Students website may alleviate the issues for those groups that may be seeking information for career decision-making purposes. While we do acknowledge that the C&ES has a wide range of resource

materials, we consider that some resources require academic input and that overall they perhaps need revisiting to ensure that they are in tune with the three aims:

- Connects the student community to career and job options
- Connects employers and the community to students and graduate talent
- Connects disciplines to employability and positive graduate outcomes.

During the course of our investigations, we were also advised of the initiatives being undertaken within the C&ES to better connect with employer groups, such as the priorities set for the recently established role of Manager, Employer Liaison and Graduate Promotion. It is our understanding that the role is expected to be the point of contact with employer groups across the University and we consider that in order to gain university-wide traction, the role will need to effectively work with academic groups to ensure that students advantage from the many relationships held within the University. Further the role will be responsible for the Recruitment and Careers Fairs and one point of contact for employers will reduce the feedback received by them about multiple and/or changing contacts. We also consider that the role will need to be engaged with academic groups and, through a range of other mechanisms, to appropriately expand the University's range of employer networks. During the course of the review, much was said about engaging with small to medium enterprises. While the exact activity around this issue has not been provided in detail, we believe that this is worth investigation in order to better reflect the many employment options open to students.

The new initiative that was discussed of introducing a regular e-communication to employer contacts may be considered a useful tool provided the content suits their interests, is related to the timing of particular activity within the sector (for example internships), and is inclusive of information that is targeted to the needs of different employer organisations. Feedback from employer groups on their preferred method of communication with the University is required.

What was not clear to us, however, was how international employer connections would be fostered. Although this line of inquiry was not directly discussed with staff from the C&ES, Griffith International provided comments to us about its views and their concerns about how this activity is progressing and their offers to facilitate contacts through their in-country staff and University alumni. We do note that the self-review report outlined that the Manager, International Career Development had undertaken one trip in conjunction with QUT but that such trips were costly. We note that funding has been provided particularly for this role and that it has to date not been fully expended. We believe that given concerns raised by international students as evidenced by the findings in the International Student Barometer, that the University must find ways in which to better support international students, in particular for enabling relationships and opportunities for when students return back home to work (see Recommendation 2).

The C&ES has outlined a range of strategies for raising their profile with students as part of their self-review. While we acknowledge that it utilises many avenues, and feedback is positive, we believe that embedding the services and connections within the academic group and in the curricula, the connection with work integrated learning, the development of activity over the course of a students' program, and a set of specific activities targeted to particular cohorts, will improve the visibility of career development learning across the institution.

**Recommendation 4: Branding, Visibility, Influence**

(Following on from Recommendation 2) The C&ES undertake a campaign to raise its professional profile and visibility to staff, students and employers.

Timeline: Within 6 months and Ongoing

### 3.5 Building Capability

As commended elsewhere in this report, we are of the view that the staff within the Unit are to be recognised for their dedication and commitment in supporting students.

The senior executives of the University asked our views on the size, staffing profile and skill mix of the Unit. Our view is that the Unit is of an appropriate size in comparison to other units in the sector but note that their arrangements may differ, such as dedicated roles servicing particular cohorts of students etc. We have made recommendations around structure and service delivery models elsewhere in this report (see Recommendation 2). We did note that the staff of the Unit were longstanding and that this was considered positive. The number of positions in the Unit (17) was considered high, and although we noted a large number are fractional, we wondered whether this may inhibit moving forward.

We believe that there are two key opportunities to build the capability and credibility of staff within the C&ES to effectively partner and embed within the academic groups the delivery of career development training.

First, we consider that the current budget of \$5,500 per annum for staff professional development is insufficient. While we again acknowledge that such reviews are not opportunities to bid for increased resources, we consider that the ongoing professional development of this group of staff is vital to support the University's improvement of its graduate outcomes. Staff should be afforded appropriate opportunities for national and international networking opportunities, presenting papers and attending relevant conferences, and to engage more broadly in the profession. Necessary funding is required to ensure the appropriate up-skilling and ongoing development of staff within the C&ES.

Second, we recommend that the University develop within the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education program a career development learning module. The module would be open to both academic and general staff and that such training would have a multiplier effect; it would increase the credibility of the C&ES unit, increase the numbers of academic staff in Schools engaged in career development learning and provide increased opportunities to cross-train and team teach in career development. To that end, relevant C&ES staff and academic colleagues should be supported to undertake this further study. We do note that a very small number of staff within the C&ES have, or will complete, qualifications in career development.

**Recommendation 5: Building Capability across the University (ToR 4)**

The C&ES staff are provided with appropriate levels of ongoing professional development, including participation in national and international conferences (where appropriate), and have opportunities to cross-train and team teach with academic colleagues.

Timeline: Within 12 to 18 months

#### **4 Follow-Up**

The Pro Vice Chancellor (Administration) and Academic Registrar will be invited to prepare a response to this report and will draft an action plan addressing each of the Committee's recommendations. This report, along with the Implementation Plan, is submitted to the Executive Group, Academic Committee, and University Council. An eighteen-month progress report is required and is also submitted to these bodies.

## 5 Appendix I

List of those who attended interviews with the Review Committee:

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE</b>	
Professor Ian O'Connor	Vice Chancellor and President
Professor Sue Spence	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
Professor Marilyn McMeniman	Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost
Mr Colin McAndrew	Pro Vice Chancellor (Administration)
Professor Kerrie-Lee Krause	Dean (Student Outcomes) and Director, Griffith Institute for Higher Education
<b>ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION EXECUTIVE</b>	
Ms Kathy Grgic	Academic Registrar
<b>CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE</b>	
Ms Joanna Peters	Director, Student Services
Mr Tony Lyons	Head, Careers and Employment Services
Ms Margo Bass	Manager, Employer Liaison and Graduation Promotion
Ms Lauren Caramella	Careers Counsellor
Mr John Doyle	Career Resources Officer
Ms Mary-Ellen Hempel	Careers Counsellor
Ms Sharon Hensby	Careers Counsellor
Ms Vicki Tolstoff	Careers Counsellors
Ms Nicole Graham	Manager, International Career Development
Ms Dina Fyffe	Career Development Officer
Ms Tiana Fenton	Career Development Officer
Ms Jenny O'Neill	Placement Officer, Indigenous Students
<b>GRIFFITH HEALTH GROUP REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Professor Allan Cripps	Pro Vice Chancellor (Health)
A/Professor Jay Browning	Associate Professor, School of Medical Science
Dr Greg Raddan	Senior Lecturer, School of Physiotherapy



NAME	POSITION
	and Exercise Science
Ms Sassy Braisby	School Administrative Officer, School of Medical Science
<b>GRIFFITH BUSINESS SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Professor Lorelle Frazer	Dean, Learning and Teaching
Dr Brett Freudenberg	Senior Lecturer, Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics
Dr Ruth McPhail	Primary Program Director, Department of Employment Relations and Human Resource Management
Mr Craig Cameron	Primary Program Director, Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics
<b>SCIENCE, ENVIRONMENT, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Professor Sue Berners-Price	Pro Vice Chancellor (SEET)
Dr Ann McDonnell	Deputy Head, School of Biomolecular and Physical Sciences
Dr Andrew Busch	Lecturer, School of Engineering
Ms Angela Dickinson	School Administrative Officer, School of Biomolecular and Physical Sciences
Ms Louise Peters	Postgraduate Officer, School of Aviation
Ms Mary Ping	School Administration Officer, School of Engineering
Ms Camilla Rodrigues	School Administration Officer, School of Information and Communication Technology
Mr John Robertson	School Administrative Officer, Griffith School of Environment
<b>ARTS, EDUCATION AND LAW GROUP REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Professor Paul Mazerolle	Pro Vice Chancellor (AEL)
Professor Michael Balfour	Professor, Applied and Social Theatre, School of Education and Professional Studies

<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>
Dr Merrlyn Bates	Senior Lecturer, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Dr Don Lebler	Deputy Director, Learning and Teaching, Queensland Conservatorium
Ms Linda Brauns	Marketing and Engagement Coordinator, Griffith Law School
Ms Liz Ellis	Executive Officer to the PVC (AEL)
Ms Shirley Pugsley	Project Officer, Social Enterprise, School of Humanities
Ms Sue Wilkinson	Team Leader, Professional Placement Office, Faculty of Education
<b>GRIFFITH INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE</b>	
Ms Lucinda Chappell	Senior Manager, International Administration
<b>GRIFFITH WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Professor Stephen Billett	Professor, School of Education and Professional Studies
Dr Calvin Smith	Deputy Chair, GWiL
Dr Liz Ruinard	Project Manager
Ms Carol-Joy Patrick	Chair, GWiL
<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS</b>	
Ms Hayley Anderson	Biomedical Science
Ms Davina Baird	Urban and Environmental Planning
Ms Rianna Brady	Arts
Ms Melody Cheong	Biomolecular Science
Ms Joanna Czajkowski	Law/Arts
Mr Panashe Dube	Law/Commerce
Ms Rosanna Gunders	Public Health
Ms Leesa Habener	Science
Ms Alexandra Karlovic	Pharmacy
Mr Riki Money	Human Resource Management
Ms Ruth Potts	Environmental Planning
Ms Rajinita Singh	Public Health
Ms Jessica Tyzack	Law/Psychology

## 6 Appendix II

List of those who made written submissions to the Review Committee:

NAME	POSITION
<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY STAFF</b>	
Ms Jennie Hardware	HR Project Officer, Planning Unit, Division of Information Services
Mr John Eyley	First Year Advisor, Griffith Film School
Associate Professor Trish FitzSimons	Associate Professor, Griffith Film School
Professor Michelle Barket	Senior Fellow, Griffith Institute for Higher Education
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause	Dean (Student Outcomes) and Director, Griffith Institute for Higher Education
<b>GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS</b>	
Ms Beverly Marcussen	Biomedical Science