2011

Final Report

PEER ASSISTED TEACHING SCHEME

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Mr Jason Ceddia, Research Assistant, made a significant contribution to the final version of the PATS process by analysing the feedback from participants. Jason also assisted in the formulation of papers and development of the Peer Assisted Educational Programs Website.

The Reference Group members were an extremely valuable source of encouragement providing feedback and direction at critical times. The external members included:

- Dr Jane Skalicky, Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, University of Tasmania
- Ms Katherine Lindsay, Faculty of Business and Law, The University of Newcastle
- Associate Professor Roger Hadgraft, Faculty of Engineering, The University of Melbourne
- Ms Sally Rogan, Peer Assisted Study Scheme (PASS) National Trainer, University of Wollongong
- Associate Professor Susan Edwards, Office of the Executive Dean of Education, Australian Catholic University
- Dr Wendy Sutherland-Smith, Institute of Learning and Teaching, Deakin University

The internal Monash members included:

- Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
- Ms Catherine Barratt, Faculty of Business and Economics
- Dr Jane Bone, Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
- Dr Phillip Dawson, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
- Mr Adrian Devey, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
- Dr Yvonne Hodgson, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
- Dr Gerry Rayner, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Science
- Ms Jill French, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
- Ms Lisa Smith, University Library Administration
- Professor Peter Stewart, Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Workshop presenters

Three seminars were delivered each semester to assist the participants in their roles to improve the unit and with undertaking a peer review of teaching. The contents of these seminars were integrated into the Monash Graduate Certificate in Higher Education.
• Dr Maureen Bell, Wollongong University, for delivering the Peer Observation Partnership Workshop
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• Ms Joan Benjamin, Monash University for integrating the PATS process into the Monash Graduate Certificate in Higher Education unit HED5011 (Teaching and Learning in Higher Education).

**Associate Deans (Education)**

The Associate Deans (Education) were instrumental in engaging their staff with the scheme within their faculties; and the faculty liaison persons provided a communication channel between the faculties and the fellowship team.

• Faculty of Information Technology (Associate Professor Bernd Meyer)
• Faculty of Engineering (Professor Gary Codner)
• Faculty of Science (Associate Professor Cristina Varsavsky)
• Faculty of Education (Dr Joce Nutall (2010), Professor Peter Sullivan (2011))
• Faculty of Pharmacy (Professor Peter Stewart)
• Faculty of Business and Economics (Professor Owen Hughes, Professor Robert Brookes)

**PATS participants**

All the academics who participated in the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme, their willingness to trial the scheme and provide feedback, suggestions and recommendations for improvement were greatly appreciated.
Acronyms and abbreviations

ADE  Associate Dean (Education)
ALTC  Australian Learning and Teaching Council Limited
BIS  Business Intelligence System
CEQ  Course Experience Questionnaire
DIISRTE  Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education
FEC  Faculty Education Committee
GCHE  Graduate Certificate in Higher Education
HoS  Head of School
ICT  Information Communication and Technology
IT  Information Technology
iSETU  Informal Student Evaluation of Teaching and Unit
LT  Learning and Teaching
LTC  Learning and Teaching Committee
MEQ  Monash Experience Questionnaire
OPVCLT  Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
PAEP  Peer Assisted Educational Programs
PAL  Peer Assisted Learning
PASS  Peer Assisted Study Scheme
PATS  Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme
POT  Peer Observation of Teaching
SCERH  Standing Committee on Ethics in Research involving Humans
SETU  Student Evaluation of Teaching and Unit
TEQSA  Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency
UEC  University Education Committee
UW  University-wide
Executive summary

Aims and deliverables

The aim of the fellowship was to achieve a consistent university-wide strategy to assist academics in improving units perceived by students as needing critical attention. This was accomplished by introducing a Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS). PATS integrates unit evaluation data with discipline-based academic development opportunities to build leadership capacity amongst academics. This builds on the current research that highlights the benefits of Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) programs and applies it to academic teaching staff.

Specifically this fellowship was designed to:

- improve the quality of teaching and student satisfaction within identified units
- build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers.

The scheme was supported by a 2010 Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Teaching Fellowship.

Process

PATS is a process by which two or more colleagues collaborate to improve the quality of a unit. This is achieved by establishing a mentor-mentee partnership, in which the mentor has prior recognition as an excellent teacher. Partners work together reflecting on areas that can be improved in the unit. Using a collegial approach, strengthened through a series of informal discussions over coffee, the partners develop goals for unit improvement. Informal student feedback and peer observations are used as tools to monitor the progress of changes and enhance unit quality.

The scheme was first piloted in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University in 2009, and led to improved unit evaluations. During the course of the fellowship, using Monash University as a trial site, this model was extended to the Physical Sciences cluster, and then to the remaining three clusters: Biomedical Sciences (Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences); Social Sciences (Business and Economics, Law); and Humanities and Creative Arts (Arts, Art and Design, Education). This tested the validity of the scheme and whether it had the potential to be sustained at the institutional level. If so then it could continue as part of the normal practice for improving teaching and unit curricula across the university.

Data collection

To measure the success of the scheme four data collections were used:

- Focus group sessions with 2010 and 2011 PATS participants exploring the mentors’ and mentees’ perception of the scheme.
- Quantitative changes in unit evaluation results from 2009 to 2010, and 2010 to 2011. These determine whether students felt there was an increase in the overall quality of the unit.
- Surveys of sent to Associate Deans Education to suggest improvements to future iterations of the scheme.
- Feedback from reference group.

The 2010 participants were also invited to draft a case study of their experience in PATS. These were included in the production of a PATS guide and used as an information source for faculties wishing to embed the process in their faculty or institution.
Dissemination

The fellowship’s approaches were disseminated by means of a series of seminars, workshops and publications. From July 2010 to June 2011:

- One conference keynote on PATS was presented
- Eight seminars were given, another four are scheduled before the end of the year
- One round table was given and another two workshop are scheduled
- Ten meetings were held with Faculty Education Committees and associate deans (education)
- Two peer-reviewed conference papers were presented, and another has been submitted and is currently under review
- Four journal articles are in progress
- An ALTC-sponsored symposium on Peer Assisted Educational Programs was held on 7th June at Monash University
- Approximately 150 sets of PATS guides and workbooks were distributed
- Seven newsletters have been distributed to ADEs, reference group members, and participants.

Further details are provided in Appendix 4, page 39.

Measures to promote sustainability of the scheme

The following measures have been put into place to ensure the sustainability of the fellowship’s focus and outcomes.

- Early contact with the associate deans (education), immediately after the unit evaluation results are released.
- Each faculty to have a PATS liaison person with whom the Teaching Fellow can communicate to chase up partnership formation.
- Development of template letters to make recruitment into the scheme easier for ADEs and HoS.
- The development of a timeline so that participants are aware of when deliverables are due.
- The creation of an online instructional workbook, to minimise paper wastage, and so that participants can work from iPads and laptops. This will also minimise the time spent collating deliverables.
- Extending the scheme to faculties to include any units, not just those in the ‘critical attention’ zone.
- Creation of a list of mentors (this may come from academics in education-focused roles).
- Allowing various modes of PATS operation including:
  a. Single partnership standard mentoring relationship
  b. Single partnership reciprocal mentoring relationship
  c. Group partnership with reciprocal mentoring relationships.
Impact on the Fellow

The impact of the Fellowship on the Fellow has been significant. Associate Professor Carbone summarises it as follows:

The Fellowship has provided me with the opportunity to make a substantial impact on the unit and teaching quality of others. Within months of receiving the Fellowship I was approached to apply for the position of Associate Director of the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) at Monash University, an opportunity I would not have otherwise considered until much later in my academic career. This also resulted in an academic promotion from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor. This then led to further leadership opportunities including: representation on senior recruitment panel interviews; assessor of external grants and awards (CORE, iAwards, ALTC teaching awards); the creation of a new Graduate Certificate of Academic Practice (with over 60 enrolments); and the formulation of the Monash Educational Excellence Research Group which has over 100 members. The receipt of the Fellowship provided me with a different set of career aspirations and confidence to advance further into a more senior executive role.

As a recipient of an ALTC Teaching Fellowship, I have been appointed the Victorian State Convenor for the newly created Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows (ALTFs) Network. This has allowed me to strategically connect to a group of 60 academic Fellows and Discipline Scholars from across universities in Australia. The ability to connect with and build collaborative internal and external partnerships has been one of the biggest impacts of the Fellowship for me. I have taken every opportunity to form affiliations with other Fellows, allowing me to develop contacts which extend beyond academic circles into the local, regional, national and international business, government and professional sectors. In particular, Professor Sally Kift, Associate Professor Les Kirkup, Professor Ron Oliver, Professor Dawn Bennett and Associate Professor Jacquelyn Cranney have acted as mentors and advisors. I have established strong working relationships with DIISRTE representatives, in particular with those from the OLT, members of the Standards Panel, and TEQSA. My understanding of the government’s changes in higher education policy is more advanced and current, which allows me to inform colleagues within my own institution.

Since completing my Fellowship I have received invitations to present on my Fellowship findings within my institution, at other institutions, at local and international conferences, deans’ councils, Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development and government agencies. Details of my Fellowship presentations are located at:


I have published my work in the following journals and conference proceedings: Annual Conference on Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE); Australasian Computing Education Conference (ACE); HERDSA; International Computing Education Research (ICER); Higher Education Research and Development (HERD); Journal of Computing Science and Engineering (JCSE). There are still several more outlets and publications pending.

Immediately after completing the Fellowship, an ALTC extension grant of $10K funded the development and road testing of a website, instructional workbooks and workshops. Interest in the scheme was initially received by five external intuitions: University of Newcastle, Griffith University, University of New England, University of the Sunshine Coast and Edith Cowan University. Another small grant of $10K funded
by CADAD was used to trial the resources and processes across a small group of participants at these universities. Within Monash, the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme has been added to the employment contracts of 25 newly appointed Early Career Development Fellows, is still going strong within the Faculty of Information Technology, and is now part of Monash’s Educational Strategic Plan for 2011-2015.

Overall, the Fellowship has had a significant impact on my career aspirations and trajectory, even more so than the prestigious teaching awards I had received in the past (including the PM’s Award for University Teacher of the Year). It has changed the way I see my role, it has provided me with leadership opportunities, recognition and an opportunity to widen and connect with key stakeholders. Many of these opportunities were completely unforeseen.

Of course, as with all large-scale projects, many lessons were learnt throughout the course of the Fellowship. Please see Section 9 on page 36 for a detailed summary of the lessons learnt and recommendations for the future of the PATS scheme.

Conclusion

The quality of teaching and learning is an individual matter which needs personalised discipline-specific attention and not broad scale policy and systems. PATS provides a specific personalised approach.

Initial trials of PATS showed its potential for success and its uptake pattern is similar to the adoption trend for the ALTC award-winning PASS program (PATS RGM, 2010). The successful results from the pilot at Monash University, in the form of a decrease in both intensity and proportion of units needing critical attention, suggest that the scheme is beginning to develop new generations of leadership in learning and teaching which are instrumental in disseminating the resultant better practice throughout the sector.

More recently, PATS has been adopted as part of Monash’s strategy of building teaching capacity, by embedding the scheme in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education. This might prevent the stigma of being identified as a poor teacher and provide associate deans with an avenue to help address a somewhat sensitive issue for academics whose past unit evaluations have been underperforming.
1 Introduction

This ALTC Teaching Fellowship contributes to the national discourse on standards in learning and teaching, in particular, the development of teaching excellence. It does so by adapting and extending the considerable body of research on peer assisted learning among students in the form of a peer assisted teaching scheme. This discipline based scheme, first trialed in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University in 2009, delivered clear improvements in student satisfaction reports.

As a result, an ALTC Teaching Fellowship was awarded to extend the scheme to all faculties at Monash University in 2010. This allowed the formation of peer assistance capacity in faculties leading to a sustainable approach to teaching development that complements central programs.

The flow-on effects of this scheme will strengthen quality assurance commitments in universities, as specified or required by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to protect the overall quality of the Australian higher education system.

1.1 Fellowship team members

The fellowship team consisted of:

- **Associate Professor Angela Carbone**, ALTC Teaching Fellow, Associate Director, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
- **Ms Jessica Wong**, Project officer, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
- **Mr Jason Ceddia**, Research assistant, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)

1.2 Fellowship aims

The fellowship was designed to fulfill two purposes:

- To improve the quality of a unit and student satisfaction within identified units
- To build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers

1.2.1 Aims for the Fellow

The Fellow had the following aims:

- To ensure that academics felt supported in attempting to improve their units
- To develop contacts which extend beyond academic circles into the local, regional, national and international business, government and professional sectors
- To widen academic career opportunities into new and unforeseen areas

1.3 People involved

The program involved a reference group and an independent external assessor. The fellowship’s reference group consisted of internal and external members.

**External reference group members**

External members for PATS reference group include:

- Dr Jane Skalicky, Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, University of Tasmania
• Ms Katherine Lindsay, Faculty of Business and Law, The University of Newcastle
• Associate Professor Roger Hadgraft, Faculty of Engineering, The University of Melbourne
• Ms Sally Rogan, PASS National Trainer, University of Wollongong
• Associate Professor Susan Edwards, Office of the Executive Dean of Education, Australian Catholic University
• Dr Wendy Sutherland-Smith, Institute of Learning and Teaching, Deakin University

Internal Monash reference group members

The fellowship program accorded with the Monash University education priority area for 2010: Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), at the time of its proposal. Monash offered four internal Monash fellowships to focus on peer assisted learning at the undergraduate level. A working party had already been established and these members were invited to join the PATS program reference group. The internal members included:

• Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
• Dr Phillip Dawson, Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
• Ms Catherine Barratt, Faculty of Business and Economics
• Mr Adrian Devey, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
• Ms Lisa Smith, University Library Administration
• Professor Peter Stewart, Associate Dean of Education, Faculty of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
• The 2010 Monash Teaching Fellows (Peer Assisted Learning) were also included:
• Dr Yvonne Hodgson, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
• Dr Gerry Rayner, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Science
• Ms Jill French, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
• Dr Jane Bone, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
• Dr Susan Edwards, PAL Fellow, Faculty of Education

External assessor

Associate Professor Leigh Wood, from Macquarie University, agreed to be the external assessor in June 2010. She interacted with the internal and external reference group at their regular meetings and attended the 2011 PAEP Symposium.

Associate Deans (Education) (ADEs)

The smooth operation of the PATS scheme depended on the co-operation of the ADEs to (i) identify units within their faculty in need of improvement and (ii) to allocate/encourage staff to participate in the scheme. Some ADEs provided minor financial incentives to participants. The ADEs were:

• Dr Steve Legg (2010), Dr Susanna Scarparro (2011) – Faculty of Arts
• Associate Professor Robert Nelson (2010), Associate Professor Vince Dziekan (2010), Associate Professor Kit Wise (2011) – Faculty of Art and Design
• Professor Guojun Lu (2010), Associate Professor Bernd Meyer (2011) – Faculty of Information Technology
• Professor Gary Codner – Faculty of Engineering
• Associate Professor Cristina Varsavsky – Faculty of Science
• Dr Joce Nutall (2010), Professor Peter Sullivan (2011) – Faculty of Education
• Professor Peter Stewart – Faculty of Pharmacy
• Professor Owen Hughes, Professor Robert Brooks – Faculty of Business and Economics
• Professor Stephen Barkoczy, Ms Joanne Becker – Faculty of Law
• Associate Professor Louise McCall – Faculty of Medicine, Health Science and Nursing

1.4 Dissemination methods

A variety of strategies was used to disseminate the fellowship’s objectives and results to stakeholders and the Australian and international scholarly communities. These included:

• Engagement with senior management
• Seminars and workshops
• Refereed journal and conference papers
• ALTC-sponsored PAEP symposium
• PATS Guide and PATS participant instructional workbook
• Bimonthly Newsletters
• PATS website (ALTC extension grant to fund PATS website with interactive workbook (currently under construction))

Further details of each of these dissemination strategies are available in section 6 of this report.

1.5 Related ALTC projects

The fellowship drew on findings from the following ALTC projects:

• ‘Changing the culture of teaching & learning in ICT and engineering: facilitating research professors to be T&L leaders’, led by Professor Sylvia Edwards and Professor Peter O’Shea from Queensland University of Technology, Associate Professor John Hurst and Dr Judy Sheard, Monash University, and Associate Professor David Wilson from University of Technology, Sydney.
• ‘Assessing ICT curriculum recommendations from surveys of academics, workplace graduates and employers’, led by Professor Philip Ogunbona and a project team from University of Wollongong, Murdoch University, Swinburne University and the University of Queensland.
2 Background

A central theme in the Australian government’s agenda for higher education is the quality of teaching and learning in universities (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003). Its importance is seen through three government initiatives: (a) the establishment of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) which is aimed at improving the student learning experience by supporting quality teaching and practice, (b) its recommendation that funding for institutions will be determined, in part, by the measurement of graduate satisfaction with teaching, (DEEWR, 2010) and (c) the establishment of the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) to ensure quality is monitored and standards are set and met. As a result of these government measures there has been an increase in teaching quality initiatives, including the development of formal and informal programs aimed at improving teacher effectiveness (Ling, 2009).

2.1 Teaching quality

There is an increasing amount of attention on the quality of teaching and student satisfaction of units across universities globally. This has led to a spread of global initiatives in implementing strategies and policy changes aimed at improving the quality of education. Some of these have been reported in a study of quality teaching from 29 higher education institutions across 20 countries (OECD, 2009). In addition, higher education institutions are developing formal and informal programs aimed at improving teacher effectiveness (Ling, 2009). Also, many institutions (70%) require early career teaching staff to engage in an academic teaching development program (Goody, 2007).

2.1.1 Measuring teaching quality – CEQ

As a way of monitoring quality assurance, evaluations of teaching and student experiences within units and courses have become standard practice in Australian universities. One such evaluation instrument is the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ). The CEQ is an annual survey of university graduates, aimed at determining what graduates thought of their coursework program, including their attitudes towards the skills they acquired, and the quality of teaching provided. The CEQ consists of a series of statements associated with a five point Likert scale. The statements are divided into groups with a similar theme (e.g. good teaching, student support). There are three core scales that are asked by all universities, namely the Generic Skills Scale, the Good Teaching Scale, and the Overall Satisfaction Item. National results for the CEQ indicate that some disciplines such as, Engineering and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), perform poorly on the good teaching scale and consequently struggle to meet university and national targets on educational performance. The concern is nation-wide and needs critical attention.

2.1.2 Measuring teaching quality – MEQ

Many institutions also have their own survey instruments, for example Monash University has the Monash Experience Questionnaire (MEQ). The MEQ is issued every two years, and results from 2009 show that ICT and Engineering were ranked second lowest and lowest respectively on the good teaching scale. At the unit and individual teacher level, there are other survey instruments, usually issued at the end of each semester which measure unit and teaching quality on a five point Likert scale. Although unit evaluation results are collected at many universities, there is little published evidence that shows whether they are used by staff for developing and improving their teaching (Marsh, 1987). The most common use for unit evaluations is for quality assurance, instead of quality enhancement (Ballantyne, Borthwick, & Packer, 2000).
Figures from 2008 and 2009 unit evaluation surveys at Monash University show that approximately 10 per cent of ICT units needed urgent attention, whilst the number of units meeting aspirations was approximately 75 per cent. This meant that whilst some units were perceived by students as ‘low quality’, the majority were well structured, adequately resourced and meeting the students’ overall satisfaction. Some units performed exceptionally well.

The challenge, therefore, was to develop an academic quality enhancement and support program that can be useful to tertiary teachers to improve their units.

2.2 Benefits of Peer Assisted Learning

The challenge was tackled by building on the current research that highlights the benefits of peer assisted learning (PAL) programs but applies it to academic teaching staff. Peer learning involves participants facilitating the learning of other participants. (Ashwin, 2003) suggests that the role of the peer facilitator is more social than the traditional role of learner which is focused on self-learning. (Topping, 2001) defines peer assisted learning as the acquisition of knowledge and skill though active support among status equals or matched companions. (Boud, 2001) argues that PAL has the capacity to allow participants to articulate their understandings about a subject, to negotiate their new directions and to present their developing ideas and arguments. Furthermore, the social interactions and responsibilities associated with PAL programs have been shown to provide considerable potential for enhancing leadership skills among peer tutors (Jacobs, Hurley, & Unite, 2008).

Literature suggests that PAL can be situated across the broad spectrum of the higher education system (Cheng & Walters, 2009; Hodgson, 2009; Loke & Chow, 2007) and has been validated across a range of disciplines (Arendale, 2004). Given the positive outcomes reported in the literature on PAL for both instructors and participants, it seems reasonable that such a scheme and its positive results might be considered for teaching. Much of the research into improving teaching has been via induction programs with mentors to ease the transition of beginning teachers into full-time teaching (Gratch, 1998). However, (Hall et al., 2005) argue that mentor teachers themselves may not have a clear definition of their roles as mentors. They highlight the need to create a common understanding of what it means to be a mentor teacher. In this project we developed a peer assisted teaching scheme (PATS), to develop new generations of leadership in learning and teaching and to disseminate the resultant better practice throughout the sector.

2.3 The Monash context

Like most universities, Monash University distributes Student Evaluation of Teaching and Unit Instrument (SETU) surveys at the end of each semester using an online survey. SETU provides to heads of schools/departments and deans a measure of educational quality assurance. The Monash SETU evaluation items are listed below, along with Monash’s interpretations of the results.

2.3.1 SETU Unit Evaluation items

There are five university-wide (UW) unit evaluation items. These are:

- UW-Item 1 The unit enabled me to achieve its learning objectives
- UW-Item 2 I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating
- UW-Item 3 The learning resources in this unit supported my studies
- UW-Item 4 The feedback I received in this unit was helpful
- UW-Item 5 Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit

Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme
Responses to these questions use a 5 point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) with 3 representing Neutral. Options for Not Applicable (6) and Don’t Know (7) are also provided but are not counted in the response analysis. Students are also able to provide qualitative comments to two open ended questions, along with specific information about an academic’s teaching. The two open ended questions are:

- What were the best aspects of the unit?
- What aspects of this unit are in most need of improvement?

Faculties are also permitted to include faculty based questions. These questions are usually different for each faculty and typically contain questions about unit organisation and delivery.

Each year, all faculties undertake to evaluate all their units using this instrument. Faculties then use this data to help them identify units that are meeting students’ expectations and needs, as well as units that require improvement. Comments specific to an individual’s teaching are collected through the teaching questionnaire from SETU. Only the staff concerned have access to these personal comments.

### 2.3.2 Quality Indicators

Monash University focuses on university-wide item 5 (reporting overall satisfaction) in providing university managers with a quick way of monitoring aggregate performance of the unit. Using item 5 as the key question, a ‘traffic light’ indicator was then developed to interpret the results.

Any unit with a median value of 3.0 or below to the UW-Item 5 ‘Overall I am satisfied with the quality of the unit’ is flagged as needing critical attention. Any unit between 3.01 and 3.59 indicates that the unit needs improvement because responses are generally ‘neutral’ or bimodal with no clear trend. Any unit between 3.6 and 4.69 indicates that the unit is meeting aspirations because responses are generally above ‘neutral’ and the majority of those responses are ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’. Any unit scoring above 4.7 indicates that the majority of responses are in strong agreement that the unit is outstanding. Table 1 summarises the meaning of the unit quality indicators.

#### Table 1 Indicators for Unit Evaluation ‘overall’ UW-Item 5 responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour Code</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Unit Measure</th>
<th>Characteristics of unit response distribution</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>‘overall’ item median ≥ 4.7</td>
<td>A considerable majority of responses are ‘strongly agree’</td>
<td>5% of units have medians ≥ 4.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting aspirations</td>
<td>‘overall’ item median between 3.6 - 4.69</td>
<td>Responses are generally above ‘neutral’, the great majority are ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’</td>
<td>80% of units fall in this band</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing improvement</td>
<td>‘overall’ item median between 3.01 – 3.59</td>
<td>Responses are generally ‘neutral’ or bimodal with no clear trend</td>
<td>10% of units fall in this band</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing critical attention</td>
<td>‘overall’ item median ≤ 3.0</td>
<td>Responses generally below ‘neutral’, majority ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’</td>
<td>5% of units have medians ≤ 3.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The target set by Monash University is that 5 per cent or more units should be rated as ‘outstanding’, 80 per cent or more should ‘meet aspirations’, 10 per cent or fewer should ‘need improvement’ and 5 per cent or fewer should ‘need critical attention’. At the end of each semester a ‘red report’ is produced flagging units that fall in the needing critical attention zone. For these units, the academic policy on Student Evaluation of Teaching and Units
(Monash University, 2011a) (SETU) Procedures requires that:

*Each unit-owning faculty reviews the published reports and data files of the unit evaluation data and prepares an action plan to address areas for improvement for faculty-wide issues.*

and that

*The department/school prepares an action plan to address areas for improvement where unit issues are identified.*

Units that fall in the ‘red’ for three consecutive offerings are deemed non viable and are discontinued, unless the Dean or Associate Dean (Education) argue a case for their continuation along with a detailed action plan.

Monash University has set a target of fewer than 5 per cent for units requiring critical attention. Unfortunately, figures from 2008 to 2010 ICT unit evaluation surveys showed that approximately 10 per cent of units within ICT needed urgent attention (Monash University, 2011b).
3 PATS process

PATS provides a structured framework for ongoing improvement of teaching and learning practice with input, assistance and guidance from faculty teaching leaders. This section provides an overview of the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme, and the process followed by the Teaching Fellow, ADEs and the participants. The main focus of PATS is on quality enhancement, yet outcomes and results provided to heads of schools/departments and deans gives them a measure of quality assurance.

The PATS process is illustrated in Appendix 1, page 39.

3.1 Components of the PATS process

3.1.1 Monitoring of SETU evaluations

Formal engagement in the scheme commences through the normal practice of identifying units within faculties that require critical attention or need improvement and those which have performed at the high end of meeting aspirations or outstandingly. Unit evaluation results are released approximately one month after semester is over, and are reviewed by the associate dean (education) (ADE) and heads of school (HoS). ADEs and HoS identify units within their faculty that require critical attention as well as those that perform well.

3.1.2 Forming the partnerships

For the units that require critical attention, or where significant issues are raised in the students’ qualitative comments, a meeting is scheduled between the HoS and the academic responsible. If deemed appropriate by the HoS, the academic is invited to participate in PATS, though participation is voluntary. To help with the recruitment process three template letters were devised.

- sample letter used by associate deans (education) to determine whether the same person is teaching the unit in the following offering, Appendix 6, page 44
- sample letter used by heads of schools to recruit mentees, Appendix 7, page 45
- sample letter used by heads of schools to recruit mentors, Appendix 8, page 46.

The academic (mentee) responsible for teaching a unit that is in need of critical attention or needs improvement is partnered with an academic (mentor) leading a high performing unit to discuss practical ways to improve teaching, course curriculum, and unit development.

3.1.3 Briefing session

The process begins once two academics from the same faculty are paired together – one taking the role of a mentor and the other as the mentee. An initial briefing between the teaching fellow and the participants takes place prior to the semester. During this briefing, an overview of the scheme is presented with the roles and expectations of the mentor/mentee relationship clarified.

3.1.4 Meetings/Interactive activities

During the semester, the partnerships meet to discuss and share ideas on how to improve the unit requiring critical attention. The meetings take place informally over coffee – between six and ten vouchers are provided to each participant, depending on the financial position of the faculty. Participants are also encouraged to attend teaching workshops where they learn about strategies and methods to improve their teaching. The meetings are intended to cover the following items:

- Meet and greet
- Break down the barriers
• Set goals for improvement
• Gather informal student feedback
• Perform a peer observation of teaching
• Critical reflection
• Performance planning and strategies

3.1.5 Deliverables
As part of the scheme, partnerships are expected to produce four deliverables:
• A strategy plan – identifying issues to be addressed and how they will be addressed
• A summary of feedback – areas of improvements that can be made, which are fed back to the current cohort of students
• A peer observation of teaching – in the form of a joint statement between the PATS mentor and mentee which sets out where and when the peer observation of teaching (POT) occurred along with a summary of good practice observed and other issues that need attention
• Critical reflection – a summary reflecting on meeting the goals for improvement

3.1.6 Debriefing
A debriefing session takes place at the conclusion of the semester in the form of two separate focus group discussions between the PATS mentees and the PATS mentors with the teaching fellow. The session covers the process, their own experiences, the appropriateness of the activities and ways to improve the scheme for future participants.

3.1.7 Incentives and Acknowledgements
Incentives (such as coffee vouchers provided by the respective faculties) are issued to each participant to encourage partners to meet informally during the semester. Each faculty determines its own incentive for participation in PATS or improvement in unit evaluations. Faculties are encouraged to reward academics in some way (ie. via an academic performance development scheme, towards promotion or a certificate for teaching improvement) if unit evaluations are increased by more than 0.5. Appendix 9 provides a sample letter acknowledging the participants. Different letters are issued depending on the unit’s overall quality performance.

3.2 Amount of time devoted by participants
Total time required by participants involved in the scheme is approximately 20 hrs (2-3 days).

- Workshops 3 x 2 hours each = 6 hours
- Meetings with partners 9 x 1 hour = 9 hours
- Focus group sessions 1 x 2 hour = 2 hours
- Briefing session with Teaching Fellow 1 x 1 hour = 1 hour
- Mid-semester progress report with Teaching Fellow 1 x 1 hour = 1 hour
- De-briefing session with Teaching Fellow 1 x 1 hour = 1 hour
4 Evaluation approach and method

The program was evaluated both internally and externally. Internal evaluation was sought from all stakeholders and an external evaluator was contracted.

4.1 Internal and external evaluation

4.1.1 Internal evaluators

The internal stakeholders comprised heads of schools, deans, associate deans (teaching/education), PATS mentors, PATS mentees and the students.

The primary stakeholders were the teaching academics whose units were perceived by students in need of critical attention, for whom the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme was designed, and their partner who is recognised as an excellent teacher. Data was gathered from PATS participants by way of focus groups.

The secondary stakeholders were the students, who received the benefits of PATS across their coursework. Information from students was gathered via Monash’s SETU – the unit evaluation instrument.

The tertiary stakeholders were the senior (non-teaching) academics at the levels of associate dean and head of school who were aware and supportive of the PATS process. Feedback from these stakeholders was sought via a survey instrument.

4.1.2 External evaluators

The ALTC Fellowship established a reference group, which comprised both internal and external members. The reference group met bimonthly to provide feedback on the status and direction of the program.

An external evaluator was also contracted to attend meetings, meet participants, to review qualitative and quantitative data and subsequent outcomes. The evaluator, Associate Professor Leigh Wood, has a strong background in teaching and learning. Her external evaluation of the program is provided in Appendix 12.

4.2 Key evaluation items

The key evaluation questions as stated in the original nomination are listed below. These were evaluated using a variety of methods, and using various sources of information.

Item 1 To what extent has the program been implemented as planned?
Item 2 How well has the program been coordinated across faculties?
Item 3 How appropriate were the program activities?
Item 4 How well have the needs of staff been met?
Item 5 Were there any unintended outcomes?
Item 6 To what extent have there been improvements to unit evaluations?
Item 7 What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote the sustainability of the fellowship’s focus and outcomes?

4.3 Data collection methods

Four data collection methods used in this fellowship were:

a. Focus group sessions with 2010 and 2011 PATS participants exploring the mentors’ and mentees’ perception of the scheme. Transcripts of focus group sessions are stored on the
Fellow's computer, and only de-identified analysis of the results are published in referred journal and conference proceedings.

b. Quantitative changes in unit evaluation results from 2009 to 2010, and 2010 to 2011. These determine whether students felt there was an increase in the overall quality of the unit, and are publically available at:


c. Surveys sent to associate deans (education) to suggest improvements to future iterations of the scheme. Results have been collated and confidentially stored on the Fellow’s computer.

d. Feedback from reference group is captured in the minutes of the reference group meetings. Minutes of the meetings are located:

http://www.opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/pats/resources.html#rgmagendas

4.3.1 Focus group sessions

Four focus group sessions were planned, two for the mentees and two for the mentors. Each session was held after the semester had concluded. The focus group sessions explored the influence of PATS on staff’s teaching practice, and if the program activities were appropriate.

During the sessions, a number of topics were discussed including: the recruitment process into the scheme, the ease or difficulty in identifying issues with the units, approaches in gathering student feedback, conducting a peer observation of teaching, building a relationship with partners, positives and negatives of the scheme, whether the PATS process would be suitable as a professional development component for new teaching staff and if staff needs had been met.

Participants were also asked to write down their answers to a variety of questions including:

1. Describe your impression of PATS.
2. How easy was it to identify issues with the unit using a scale of 1 (easy) to 5 (hard)?
3. Did you gather informal student feedback during the semester?
4. Did you conduct a peer review of your partner's teaching?
5. Describe your relationship with your partner.
6. Identify something positive about the scheme.
7. Identify a weakness of the scheme.
8. Do you think this scheme would be suitable as part of the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (GCHE)?

The focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed. The transcripts were sent to participants (after anonymising) to ensure this was an accurate reflection of the session.

4.3.2 Changes in unit evaluation results

Quantitative changes in unit evaluation results

Changes to unit evaluations were monitored to determine to what extent there had been improvements to unit evaluations.

Prior to semester starting, all units that were in need of critical attention were extracted from the Monash Business Intelligence System (BIS). These lists were passed onto the ADEs who then approached potential mentors and mentees to participate in the scheme.
Of those that participated, changes were monitored in the UW – Item 5 ‘Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit’. Comparisons were made from one unit offering to the next, for example Unit X offered in s2, 2009 prior to PATS intervention, is compared with Unit X offered in s2, 2010 after the PATS intervention. A requirement for participation for the mentee was that the mentee taught the unit in the following offering, although sometimes this was not the case. For example, if the mentee had a poor unit evaluation and that unit was subsequently discontinued, the mentee was allocated a new unit.

**Qualitative comments**

Responses to the open-ended questions in the unit evaluation data were obtained by seeking Human Ethics approval to analyse the unit evaluation qualitative comments for the units needing critical attention before commencement of the fellowship.

Since the raw data was not collected by the ALTC Fellow, the fellowship team sought permission to use the data gathered by University Statistics (Strategic Analysis and Surveys), from the Office of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Planning & Quality), (OPVCPQ).

To obtain the data from the OPVCPQ a clarification was required about the term ‘unit’. Some faculties teach its units across multiple campuses. Monash has six campuses, four domestic campuses within Victoria and two international campuses, Malaysia and South Africa. This essentially means that the same unit can be offered at six different campuses. In a unit evaluation, a ‘unit’ is defined in a slightly different way; it is a ‘unique unit offering’, which is a unique identifier comprising the following components:

Unique unit offering = unit code + teaching period + mode (e.g. face-to-face on-campus) + location (e.g. campus)

For example, the fictitious unit FIT1234, in Table 2 below, has four unique unit offerings, with different overall satisfaction ratings across the different campuses, some of which may be above 3, and some below.

**Table 2 The same unit offered at four campuses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit code</th>
<th>Sem</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Campus</th>
<th>UW-Item 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIT1234</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>f2f</td>
<td>campus-A</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT1234</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>OCL</td>
<td>campus-B</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT1234</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>f2f</td>
<td>campus-C</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT1234</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>campus-D</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mode in table 2 refers to the delivery mode  
f2f refers to face–to–face  
OCL refers to Off Campus Learning

In this case, the average median for all the unique unit offerings is 3.57, which is well above 3. However, there are two unique unit offering (FIT1234 campus-A and campus-B) with median 3 or below. For this fellowship, the qualitative comments for all the unique unit offerings that were taught in a particular semester that scored 3.0 or below were requested.

The OPVCPQ extracted the comments from the ‘unique unit offerings’ with median of 3 or below for all faculties. Comments relating to the same unit were consolidated into one file and put into a folder of the unit’s owning faculty. In the above example, the comments of FIT1234 as surveyed at campus A and campus B were put together in one file and stored in the folder of ‘ICT’, though they are treated as two unique unit offerings.
All the campus and unit information was removed from the comment files. The majority of the comments that were provided came from online surveys, however, a small portion of the hand-written comments taken from the paper surveys were provided as images. Some ‘unique unit offerings’ had no comments at all. The comments in the files provided were partially de-identified, with unit and campus information being removed. However, some files contained students’ comments with sensitive information that could possibly lead to the identification of staff, so all identifying information was removed before using these comments in any publication.

4.3.3 Survey of ADEs

Feedback from ADEs was sought to gauge how well the program had been co-ordinated across faculties. A survey was issued to all ADEs who had mentors and mentees from their faculty participating in PATS. The survey issued is available in Appendix 10, page 48.

4.3.4 Feedback from reference group

The reference group met regularly to ensure that the fellowship was implemented as planned and to provide direction so that appropriate measures could be taken to promote the sustainability of the program’s focus and outcomes.
5 Evaluation results

5.1 Evaluation of key items

As stated in section 4.2 there were seven key evaluation questions listed in the original nomination. A variety of methods using various sources of information were used to evaluate the fellowship.

5.1.1 Implementation as planned

Item 1 - To what extent has the program been implemented as planned?

Over the course of the Fellowship the reference group met six times. Dates of meetings are provided in Table 3, agendas and meeting minutes are available the PATS website:

http://www.opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/pats/resources.html#rgmagendas

Table 3 Reference Group meetings dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #1</td>
<td>7 July 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #2</td>
<td>7 Sep 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #3</td>
<td>10 Dec 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #4</td>
<td>22 Mar 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #5</td>
<td>7 Jun 2011 (Symposium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #6</td>
<td>14 Jun 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting #7</td>
<td>30 Sep 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reference group ensured that the fellowship was implemented according to the plan outlined in the original proposal, followed the timeline and operated within budget.

The terms of reference of the reference group were to:

1. Promote the design, implementation and evaluation of the activities of the program
2. Provide advice and collegial support to the ALTC Teaching Fellow
3. Work with the ALTC Teaching Fellow to plan an event focused on peer assisted teaching.
4. Work with the project evaluator to facilitate an evaluation of the value for investment and effectiveness of the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme against proposed benefits

The reference group also provided direction so that appropriate measures could be taken to promote the sustainability of the program’s focus and outcomes. Such measures included: the development of the PATS website, developing a PATS Guide not specific to Monash University and other suggestions such as offering a poster session at the ALTC sponsored PAEP Symposium.

5.1.2 Project coordination

Item 2 - How well has the program been coordinated across faculties?

In semester 2, 2010, at the start of the fellowship only the faculties in the Physical Science cluster were invited to participate; this included the Faculties of Information Technology, Science and Engineering. The Faculty of Information Technology (FIT) contributed three partnerships, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Engineering contributed two partnerships each. The Faculty of Science did not have any units that were in the critical
attention zone. Therefore participants were chosen from units needing improvement. A survey was sent electronically to the ADEs of participating faculties.

In semester 1, 2011 the scheme was open to all faculties. There were six faculties that participated (IT, Engineering, Education, Arts, Pharmacy, Business & Economics). Three partnerships from FIT, one from Engineering, three from Education, one group of four from Pharmacy, one in Business and Economics. A survey was sent electronically to the ADEs who had mentees and mentors participate in the scheme. Of the six ADEs, three responded. Results indicate that they felt sufficiently informed of the process and that it was a suitable way to improve students’ perceptions of units needing improvement. It was clear that the ADEs would like the scheme available to all units, not just those that require critical attention. As one ADE suggested, this would

\[ \text{avoid the stigma amongst academics of being in a remedial program because all academics are encouraged to attend, not just those who perform poorly in Unit Evaluation ratings.} \]

5.1.3 Appropriateness of activities

Item 3 - How appropriate were the activities?

Participants involved in PATS attended workshops, mentoring sessions, briefing and debriefing sessions. The appropriateness of these activities was reviewed during the focus group sessions. Workshops were evaluated separately.

In total five focus group sessions were held. It was not possible to get all the mentors together in the first round, so two mentor focus group sessions were held at the end of semester 2, 2010:

Table 4 Focus Group schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group meeting</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group – Mentor Meeting*</td>
<td>28 Oct 2010</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group – Mentee Meeting</td>
<td>4 Nov 2010</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group – Mentor Meeting*</td>
<td>3 Dec 2010</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group – Mentee Meeting</td>
<td>9 June 2011</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group – Mentor Meeting</td>
<td>14 June 2011</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* One participant had to leave early, so attended the second focus group session.

Feedback from the PATS focus group sessions suggested that the project activities were valuable and appropriate. Feedback given by the participants led to improvements in the following areas:

1. A refined PATS process as displayed in Appendix 1 from that originally proposed in Appendix 2, to include revised activities and when these were required by.
2. A refinement to the tasks, including breaking the barriers, revisiting the goals set to see if they were actually achieved and entries into the performance development plan.
3. The development of a PATS participant instructional workbook.
4. The ability to complete the task in the instructional workbook online, whilst in the café discussing their unit over a coffee.
5. Revising the scheme so that it was open to all, and so that it could operate in a reciprocal fashion. That is, instead of a mentor-mentee relationship, both partners acted as critical friends, and the mentor mimicked the same activities required by the mentee in their unit.
Workshops

Three PATS workshops took place in November and December 2010. These workshops were repeated in 2011.

- Workshop #1: Planning your Teaching 8 Nov – 21 academics attended
- Workshop #2: Interactive Lecturing 12 Nov – 20 academics attended
- Workshop #3: Peer observation of Teaching 8 Dec – 18 academics attended

Workshops #1 and #2 were evaluated using an online SurveyMonkey questionnaire [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/P8HZSB8](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/P8HZSB8). Questions included:

1. In terms of meeting my needs and interests as an educator, I would rate this workshop as:  
   - Very Helpful
   - Helpful
   - Possibly Helpful
   - Relevant

2. Has this workshop developed your skills and confidence in planning future lectures or other teaching sessions?  
   - YES
   - NO

3. What aspects of this workshop did you find helpful?

4. What aspects of this workshop could be improved?

5. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this workshop.  
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Neutral
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

Results from these workshops were extremely positive.

Thirteen participants completed the Planning your Teaching survey. All rated this workshop as high to very high in meeting their needs and interests as an educator. All respondents felt the workshop developed their skills and confidence in planning future teaching sessions, and indicated their overall satisfaction with the quality of the workshop.

Eleven participants completed the Interactive Lecturing survey. All rated this workshop as high to very high in meeting their needs and interests as an educator. All respondents felt the workshop developed their skills and confidence in planning future teaching sessions, and indicated their overall satisfaction with the quality of the workshop.

Workshop #3, Peer Observation of Teaching, was evaluated via a paper-based survey instrument distributed after the session. An evaluation report, provided by the presenter on workshop #3, was given an overall rating of 6.3/7. (where 0 is Poor and 7 is Excellent). Comments also show that participants started to view peer observation as a data reflection tool, and would consider incorporating time to applying it.

Some of the qualitative feedback provided from participants that attended the workshops included:

- Excellent ‘live’ role-play of peer observation practices.
- Really good session, very well facilitated - most enjoyable.
- ... made me feel excited about teaching.
- His workshop was fantastic and taught me many things that I have incorporated into my own lectures and prac.

5.1.4 Meeting needs of staff

Item 4 - How well have the needs of staff been met?

Feedback from the PATS focus group sessions suggest that PATS is worthwhile and meets
needs of staff in areas that are often overlooked. Focus group participants commented that PATS achieved the following:

- create a supportive environment
- encourage interaction and response to issues and opportunities that arise
- set time to reflect critically and creatively on practices
- construct understandings together
- communicate reasonable expectations and achievements
- foster enthusiasm and commitment to learning through actions and approaches
- review and plan together for a shared purpose
- share accountability for outcomes
- build confidence and opportunity and guidance to display leadership
- share in planning, learning and assessment activities

5.1.5 Outcomes and Deliverables

*Item 5 - Were there any unintended outcomes?*

The fellowship outcomes as stated in the initial proposal are listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5 Proposed outcomes and actual deliverables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed outcome</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A consistent university-wide strategy/policy to assist academics to improve units that need critical attention</td>
<td>A strategy plan in the form of a flow chart diagram was developed to assist academics in understanding the process of improving units. Refer to details in Appendix 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of perceived challenges and opportunities for the development of PATS as a mechanism to improve quality of teaching in higher education</td>
<td>Lessons learnt and challenges met with running the program are listed under section 9, page 36. An analysis of the data collected via focus group sessions, online surveys and case studies will identify perceived challenges and opportunities. A pictorial analysis is contained in Appendix 11, page 49.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved teaching practice and student experience, and improved unit and course evaluations</td>
<td>Overall there has been an increase in student satisfaction and unit evaluations. These results are provided in section 5.1.6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Dissemination of good practice both within and across discipline areas, through wide distribution of reporting and publications | The teaching fellow has disseminated practice via:
  - Trial of PATS process across a variety of Faculties in Monash University
  - Newsletter series
  - A PATS guide and instructional workbook
  - Keynote presentations, invited speaker and seminar presentations
  - Refereed journal and conference publications
  - A full list of dissemination activities is included in section 6 of this report. |
| Embedded acknowledgement in ‘most improved unit from each cluster’ into Monash’s Teaching | Following the release of unit evaluations, the participants are issued with an acknowledgement letter, sent out on behalf of the ALTC Fellow. We have discussed the benefits |
Excellence Award process of issuing letters to ‘most improved units’ with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who has agreed to implement.

Ongoing acknowledgment and development of previous award winners’ and outstanding teachers’ skills
All the academics who took on the mentoring role were previous award winners – Faculty Teaching Excellence awards, ALTC citations. A list of mentors is provided in Appendix 13.

Embedding of the outcomes into the Monash University Graduate Certificate of Higher Education
The fellowship outcomes are embedded into a unit in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education (HED5011 – Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) where it forms part of the assessment component.

Unintended outcomes
- Some faculties have found a potential use (as mentors) for staff who have translated into education focused roles
- Some faculties felt more comfortable applying PATS in a modified approach whereby the partners mentored each other, so that each partner was critical friend
- Some mentees, acted as mentors in the following round
- The ability to work online and the automatic generation of an online workbook

5.1.6 Improvements to teaching and unit evaluations

Item 6 - To what extent have there been improvements to unit evaluations?

The Pilot Study

Table 6 Changes in Overall Unit Satisfaction - PATS pilot study in FIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>2008 Semester results prior to PATS</th>
<th>2009 Semester results after PATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UW-Item 5 Median</td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 1</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 2</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 3*</td>
<td>NEW UNIT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This unit was a new unit taught in 2009, not offered in 2008, however, the lecturer wanted to be involved in PATS because his previous unit was flagged as needing critical attention (Unit evaluation results for a different unit in 2008 - Median: 2.95, Mean: 2.83 (112 students enrolled, 29 responses))

Table 6 shows the 2008 and 2009 Faculty of Information Technology unit evaluation results for UW-Item 5, with all unit codes anonymised. All units improved their ratings by at least 0.5. Three of the units (FIT1, FIT3, FIT5) moved out of the critical attention zone (median less than 3.0) into meeting aspirations (median above 3.6) whilst the other two units (FIT2, FIT4) moved into the needs improvement zone (median greater than 3.01 but less than 3.6).

Of the ten participants, there were six respondents that completed the survey regarding their participation in the scheme. The amount of time partners spent together to improve their unit varied. This ranged from: meeting a couple of times in the corridor, to three to four times over the semester, to spending over 20 hours together during the semester. Across the five units, the following areas were identified as needing improvement: assessment material, overall course content, presentation of material, and developing good examples. In one case, the
mentee was unable to specify what they wanted to improve and responded by stating they wanted to improve ‘general issues’.

Not all participants chose to collect informal student feedback, but for those that did, the feedback was useful and instrumental in guiding the mentee’s reflection on their unit. One participant reported:

*Getting student feedback in Weeks 4 and 8 have really been good in helping me respond to students’ need and improve the unit accordingly... I will continue with the habit of getting student feedbacks in Weeks 4 and 8 in my future units.*

The peer review component was well received, and provided a valuable perspective from a colleague. Respondents provided the following supportive comments:

*I think everyone should be doing this, i.e. peer review in the form of reviewing both materials and the teaching of a subject... Peer reviews are almost always informative for the one reviewed.*

*One week after the peer-review, [we] had a meeting in which we discussed comprehensive and detailed written findings on my teaching. I have learned many things about my teaching that I didn't realise before.*

In one partnership, the partners felt that the peer review would not have helped them with improving the unit:

*The issues with the unit aren’t really related to the kind of thing a peer-review of teaching will help address.*

Some of the participants openly offered their time to conduct a peer review of someone else’s teaching. This, along with improvements made to the unit, showed that the scheme was building capacity in others to become PATS mentors.

*...I will definitely be happy to conduct a peer-review for someone else' teaching. If I prove to do well this semester, I’d volunteer to be a mentor on the PATS scheme starting next semester.*

*I am available to review others upon request.*

Overall, feedback from the initial pilot scheme provided academics with the support they needed to openly exchange teaching ideas, improve unit resources, and discuss ways to improve the unit. Suggestions to improve PATS further included:

*Make it universal*

*The time commitment on the part of the mentor is quite high... can provisions [be] given in his/her workload for the semester?*

**Phase 1 of PATS**

Phase 1 of the PATS scheme involved seven partnerships across the Faculty of Information Technology (FIT), Faculty of Engineering (ENG) and the Faculty of Science (SCI). Table 7 shows the 2009 and 2010 unit evaluation results for UW-Item 5.
Table 7 Changes in Overall Unit Satisfaction - PATS study in Physical Science Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>2009 Semester results prior to PATS</th>
<th>2010 Semester results after PATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UW-Item 5 Median</td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG 2</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI 1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCI 2</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five of the seven units improved their ratings by at least 0.5. Two of the units (FIT6, ENG1) moved out of the critical attention zone (median less than 3.0) into meeting aspirations (median greater than 3.6 but less than 4.7). Two units (FIT7, SCI1) moved out of the critical attention zone (median < 3.0) into the needs improvement zone (median greater than 3 but less than 3.6). One unit (ENG2) remained in the critical attention zone but improved its rating by 0.81. Two units (FIT3, SCI2) had a slight decrease moving from the needs improvement zone (median greater than 3 but less than 3.6) into the critical attention zone. However these units did show slight improvements in the other university wide indicators.

Of the fourteen participants, ten attended the focus group sessions. Generally, the partners met regularly, at least six times over the semester. Across the seven units, the areas identified as needing improvement included: clarifying the unit’s objectives, harmonising lecture and tutorial material, improving assignment specifications and assessment, low student attendance, learning resources to support the unit, and student feedback.

The general impression of PATS from the participants was a positive one. Common terms used by the PATS mentees to describe the scheme were: good idea, non-invasive, supportive, collegial, putting more priority to teaching, scheme to improve teaching, learning from a successful and genuinely enthusiastic teacher, and friendly. The PATS mentors expressed similar attitudes towards the scheme, using descriptive words like: effective, valuable, structured, useful and improving quality. Whilst the mentees’ response to ‘How easy was it to identify issues with the unit using a scale of 1 (easy) to 5 (hard)?’, ranged from 1 to 5, the mentors’ response was more confined, ranging from 1 to 3, suggesting that the mentors could more readily identify issues with the unit based on the students’ qualitative comments and by reviewing the resources.

Each partnership varied in the way it obtained informal student feedback. This ranged from:

1. Using a student representative from the student society to collect feedback from students in the lecture. The representative records the prioritised issues and forwards a written report to the lecturer.

2. The lecturer devising a survey which asked three questions (likes, dislikes, improvements) and administers it to the students in the lecture.

3. Using the tutorials to casually ask very general questions about how students were finding the unit. (Though students gave very general answers which did not highlight major concerns.)
4. The mentor attending the mentee’s lecture and administering the survey, strongly stating that any surveys with insulting comments or foul language would be ignored. The mentor then reviews the responses before discussing them with the mentee.

5. Using an anonymous survey in week 5 on Blackboard; students were provided with time to complete it in the laboratory class.

Even though there was variety in the way informal student feedback was collected, in all cases, the mentees found the early informal student feedback very informative.

Only three of the partnerships conducted a peer observation of teaching (POT). Reasons for not conducting a POT were: it would not provide any useful information about ways to improve the unit, or there wasn’t though time to organise one. Those partners that did conduct a POT found it useful in that it allowed them to see their partners in action. Comments included:

*I watched a video and thought it was fine and then went to watch a lecture in person.*

*I got to see my partner’s style of teaching and the interaction with the students. I watched the whole lecture and then wrote a report and gave it to my partner.*

*A major issue for my partner was their lack of confidence.*

There were positive responses towards PATS from both mentees and mentors. The mentees were appreciative of the support from a colleague in their discipline. Typical comments included:

*It is helpful having someone to talk to, ask questions and seek advice from*

*Great having a mentor for support*

*The scheme allowed the mentee to build relationships with the students*

*Provided a chance to share ideas and receive feedback*

Mentors enjoyed the collaborative, mutual problem solving aspect of the scheme, and received personal satisfaction in helping someone wanting to improve their unit. The scheme expanded their networks, and as a side benefit for one mentor:

*... I got to see an ALTC grant project up close. It’s often difficult (I think) to look at the programs and teaching grants, and to be able to imagine what kind of program or grant could be done in engineering. Seeing PATS has also made me view ALTC grants differently - they are not all airy-fairy, pie in the sky grants for humanities (this is not my considered opinion - I am exaggerating to make my point here). PATS was practical, helpful useful and effective - and it also seemed doable even for me, who does not have a strong education pedagogy background. If I had thought of PATS I would never have also thought that it was a scheme that could be funded by ALTC - I would have assumed that I would need to do it on my own etc. So I may consider applying in future, if I have an idea.*

The main concern shared by the mentees and mentors was the time-consuming nature of the scheme, particularly in an academic’s busy schedule. Mentees were also concerned about feeling stigmatised as ‘bad teachers’ by participating. To alleviate these concerns, suggestions were raised about providing mentors with time credit (similar to that for supervising a post graduate student) and normalising the process, so that it is offered to all teaching staff.

Teaching staff new to Monash University are required to complete the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education (GCHE) program, embedding the scheme into the GCHE would be another way of reducing stigma and would open the scheme to a wider audience.
In 2011, the PATS scheme was open to all faculty staff members, not just those whose units resided in the critical attention zone. As a consequence, there were several academics responsible for units already meeting aspirations who participated in Phase 2 of the scheme.

**Phase 2 of PATS**

Phase 2 of the PATS scheme involved ten partnerships across six faculties: Arts (ART), Business and Economics (BUS), Education (EDU), Engineering (ENG), Information Technology (FIT) and Pharmacy (PHM). The PHM participants worked as a group of four. The four PHM participants (who were meeting aspirations) worked as a small group instead of being paired off to avoid feeling stigmatised. They also wanted to use this as an exemplar model in their faculty.

Table 8 shows the 2010 and 2011 unit evaluation results for UW-Item 5.

**Table 8 Changes in Overall Unit Satisfaction - PATS study in Monash’s remaining clusters**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>2010 Semester results prior to PATS</th>
<th>2011 Semester results after PATS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UW-Item 5 Median</td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTS 1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTS 2*</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUS 1</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 1</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 2</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 3</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG 1</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 9</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 10</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIT 11</td>
<td>NEW UNIT</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHM 1</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHM 2</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHM 3</td>
<td>NEW UNIT</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHM 4</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Teaching this unit for the first time. Previous unit taught was in the critical attention zone.

Thirteen of the fourteen units improved their ratings, nine improved by at least 0.5. One of the units (BUS1) moved out of the critical attention zone (median less than 3.0) into meeting aspirations (median greater than 3.6 but less than 4.7). Four units (EDU1, EDU2, FIT9, FIT10) moved out of the needs improvement zone (median greater than 3 but less than 3.6) into meeting aspirations. Four units (ARTS2, ENG1, PHM1, PHM4) remained in the meeting aspirations zone, however two of these units (ARTS2, PHM4) had a slight decrease in their overall rating. Two units (EDU3, PHM2) moved out of the meeting aspirations zone into the outstanding category.

Of the twenty-four participants, 13 attended the focus group sessions. Generally, the partners meet regularly, at least six times over the semester. Across the fourteen units, the areas identified as needing improvement included: low lecture attendance, lack of student engagement, information overload, better supporting materials.

Eight partners gathered informal student feedback. Each partner approached the gathering of informal student feedback differently. The approaches included:
• A form being distributed at the start of the lecture by the lecturer
• A form being distributed in a tutorial as the attendance rate was much higher than in a lecture
• A form being distributed at the end of the lecture

A mentee said that the students really appreciated being heard and acknowledged. The lecturer’s feedback on the informal student feedback provided an opportunity for the lecturer to let the students know that there were some things out of their (the lecturer’s) control but these were brought to the attention of the HoS/ADE.

Seven of the eight partners conducted a POT and found the exercise to be useful. It provided an opportunity to observe and learn from their partner and also to reflect on their own teaching.

Overall, the general impression of PATS from the participants in semester 1, 2011 was also a positive one. Common terms used by the PATS mentees in Phase 2 to describe the scheme were: collegial, friendly, supportive, excellent, professional and cordial, understanding, approachable, constructive, respectful. PATS mentors expressed similar attitudes, using descriptive words like: supportive, respectful, non-intimidating/judgmental, constructive and purposeful, enjoyed thoroughly, felt a sense of accomplishment due to initially feeling the ‘wall’ could not be penetrated. Some of the positive aspects of the scheme expressed by the mentors included:

- Helped to build up leadership skills
- Felt gratification in being recognized by a colleague
- Broadened education and increased skills

The two main concerns expressed mainly by the mentees, were the time-consuming nature of the scheme, especially in an academic’s busy schedule and for a minority the way in which they had been approached to participate in the scheme.

Two suggestions to improve the future running of the scheme, included:

• creating a list of mentors who are available and willing to assist new academics and making it part of the culture.
• Provide an opportunity to discuss and report on the history and context of the unit.

Qualitative comments

After the release of the semester 2, 2010 results, the reported number of poorly performing units in each faculty were:

• 13 in Information Technology
• 19 in Art and Design
• 33 in Arts
• 20 in Business and Economics
• 29 in Education
• 9 in Engineering
• 1 in Law
• 37 in Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences
To develop an understanding of the reasons why students perceive units as needing critical attention, qualitative responses to Monash’s unit evaluation questionnaire were examined. We started the process by examining student feedback from the 13 units needing critical attention in ICT. Comments from the ‘unique unit offerings’ in semester 2, 2010 with median of 3 or below for all faculties relating to the same unit were consolidated into one file. Responses to the open-ended question ‘What aspects of this unit are most in need of improvement?’ were analysed using a grounded theory-based approach to determine common recurring themes in need of critical attention.

Eight main categories emerged from the analysis process, each containing a set of sub-categories or attributes. These are the lecturer, lecture, tutorial, tutor, assessment, off campus issues, the LMS and resources provided.

The ‘lecturer’ and ‘lecture’ categories differ in that ‘lecturer’ relates to items like the presentation style, apparent knowledge of the subject matter in answering audience questions and availability to students. ‘Lecture’ refers to the content of the actual lecture as gauged by how much material was presented, the logical flow of the material and the originality of the material.

Likewise the ‘tutor’ and ‘tutorial’ categories differ in that ‘tutor’ relates to how prepared and knowledgeable the tutor was and how responsive to students they were in terms of answering questions and emails. ‘Tutorial’ refers to the relevance or alignment of the material to the lecture, the type of exercises, the complexity of exercises and the duration of the tutorial.

The ‘assessment’ category refers to items like clarity of the assignment specification, alignment with lectures, detailed and clear marking guidelines and quality of feedback.

The ‘LMS’ (learning management system) category refers to items like ease of navigation, amount of material and accuracy of the material. The ‘off campus’ category refers to the level of support specifically for off-campus students. This may be via the LMS or availability of lecturers and tutors for consultation. The ‘resources’ category refers to the currency of recommended readings, the availability of readings and references from the library and the sheer quantity of readings and references.

Appendix 14 contains the top six themes illustrated with typical student comments.

The next phase of the fellowship, as part of the extension grant, is to repeat the qualitative comment analysis process with unit evaluation data from the remaining faculties. This will be tackled by initially analysing the data from low performing units in the Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Education. This process will be followed by a further analysis on the data derived from faculties which generally perform well.

5.1.7 Measures to promote sustainability of project

Item 7 - What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote the sustainability of the project’s focus and outcomes?

The following measures have been put into place to ensure the sustainability of the fellowship’s focus and outcomes.

- Early contact with the associate deans (education), immediately after the unit evaluation results are released.
- Each faculty to have a PATS liaison person with whom the Teaching Fellow can communicate to chase up partnership formation.
• Development of template letters to make recruitment into the scheme easier for ADEs and HoS.

• The development of a timeline so that participants are aware of when deliverables are due.

• The creation of online instructional workbook, to minimize paper wastage, and so that participants can work from iPads and laptops. This will also minimize the time spent collating deliverables.

• Extending the scheme to faculties to include any units, not just those in the ‘critical attention’ zone.

• Creation of a list of mentors (this may come from academics in education-focused roles).

• Allowing various modes of PATS operation including:
  a. Single partnership standard mentoring relationship
  b. Single partnership reciprocal mentoring relationship
  c. Group partnership with reciprocal mentoring relationships.
6 Dissemination

The ALTC Teaching Fellowship used engagement strategies to build the PATS profile and a variety of methods to disseminate the fellowship findings.

6.1 Engagement strategy

To support the ALTC engaged-focused approach to dissemination, the following groups were engaged in the process: PATS participants who received either high or low unit evaluations, heads of schools, associate deans (education), and staff from the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching).

The engagement strategy included:

1. Initial information about the scheme was included as an agenda item on the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and University Education Committee (UEC) meetings to inform all ADEs across all faculties.
2. Meetings with Associate Deans (Education) from the Physical Sciences cluster in the first iteration and further clusters in the second iteration to discuss the PATS program.
3. Briefing sessions with PATS partners at the start of each iteration.
4. Mid-semester progress reporting catch-up session with ALTC Fellow and partners.
5. Debriefing sessions, including focus groups with PATS partners after both the first and second iterations.
6. A workshop series was established for the PATS participants.
7. The teaching fellow provided leadership and ongoing support. The monitoring of PATS partnerships through regular email contact and mid-semester meetings was maintained by the project officer.
8. End of semester summary reports outlining unit evaluation were sent to faculty and university education committees (FEC, LTC and UE).

6.2 Dissemination strategy

A variety of methods were used to disseminate the development, methodology and outcomes of this program, including recommendations and suggested enhancements. These included:

- Seminars and workshops
- Refereed journal and conference papers
- ALTC-sponsored PAEP symposium
- PATS Guide and PATS participant instructional workbook
- Bimonthly newsletters
- PATS website (ALTC extension grant to fund PATS website with interactive workbook)
  

6.2.1 Seminars and workshops

The Fellow has presented seminars and workshops introducing PATS at universities across Australia (see Appendix 4, page 42).
6.2.2 Refereed journal and conference papers

Dissemination of the PATS process was achieved through two full refereed conference papers and conference presentations at national and international levels.

- **Keynote speaker**, *Building peer assistance capacity in faculties to improve student satisfaction of units*, Learning & Teaching Conference. University of Ballarat, 29 - 2nd Dec, 2010.


- **Carbone, A.** (2010). *Building peer assistance capacity in faculties to improve student satisfaction of units*. HERDSA’11, Griffith University, Gold Coast Australia, July 4-7, 2011.


**In progress**


From these conference presentations a number of national and international institutions have expressed interest in using PATS, including: RMIT, Melbourne; Deakin University, Melbourne; Griffith University, Gold Coast; Massey University, New Zealand; and University of the West Indies Open Campus, Jamaica.

6.2.3 ALTC-sponsored Peer Assisted Educational Program symposium

An ALTC sponsored symposium on Peer Assisted Educational Programs (PAEP) was held at Monash University, Caulfield on Tuesday 7th June, 2011. National and international academics were invited to share their expertise on PAEP integrated at their respective universities. Keynote presenters included:

- Ms Sally Rogan, ALTC Program Award Recipient (First Year Experience category), University of Wollongong

- Dr Keith Willey, ALTC Teaching Fellow (SparkPlus), University of Technology, Sydney

- Mr Paul Denny, National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award Recipient (2009), University of Auckland

- Monash PAL Fellows

- Dr Gerry Rayner, Faculty of Science, Monash University

- Dr Jane Bone, Faculty of Education, Monash University

- Dr Yvonne Hodgson, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University
• Poster presentations
• The Griffith PRO-Teaching Project – Sharing Ideas to Develop Capabilities with Peer Review and Observation of Teaching (Dr Steve Drew, Griffith University)
• Peer-assisted teaching and learning in paramedic education: Preliminary findings (Mr Brett Williams, Monash University)
• The Monash PASS Program: Peer-assisted transition into and out of university (Mr Adrian Devey, Monash University)
• ‘The Moot Tute’ – Peer assisted learning benefits in a ‘traditional’ tutorial (Mr Lloyd England, Monash University)
• Teaching – The Heart of UB. What do teaching staff really think about teaching @ UB? (Dr Nina Fotinatos, University of Ballarat, recipient of ALTC Citation2011)
• Teaching – The Heart of UB. How do new and existing teaching staff learn to teach at the tertiary level? (Dr Nina Fotinatos, University of Ballarat)
• Meet-Up for Success (Ms Lindy Kimmins, University of Southern Queensland)

PATS panel presentation included the following Monash University academics:
Ms Rosemary Bennett, Dr Matthew Butler, Dr Ian Larson, Dr Prahbakar Ranganathan, Dr Grace Rumantir, Dr Judy Sheard.

Nineteen higher education institutions were represented with 89 attendees. Eight posters that covered a range of peer assisted education programs available at tertiary institutions from around the country were also displayed. A schedule of the day is provided in Appendix 5, page 43.

Full details of the ALTC-sponsored symposium on Peer Assisted Educational Programs can be found at the PATS Symposium Website:

6.2.4 PATS Guide and participant instructional workbook
The PATS Guide was developed to provide an overview of the scheme and process. It outlines scheduled activities and is a useful tool in introducing the scheme. The instructional workbook provides the PATS participants with a set of tasks to complete. These resources are located at:
http://www.opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/pats/resources.html#guides

6.2.5 Newsletters
Seven bimonthly newsletters were produced as a communication channel to the PATS community. The newsletter contained the latest PATS research; progress to date; profiles of some of the key stakeholders and important events. These are also available on the PATS website under the ‘Resources’ link.

6.2.6 Website
A website was initially developed for the ALTC Fellowship symposium on Peer Assisted Educational Programs. This site acts as the base for a more comprehensive website for the entire fellowship. An extension grant was awarded to extend the website to include an interactive workbook, in which participants can register and undertake the online activities. The website includes detailed information on:
• the PATS process, its development and potential for use to improve the overall quality of units
• lists of PATS workshops, papers and conference presentations
• contact information
• links to other websites and online publications that focus on developing teaching effectiveness.

All resources pertaining to PATS are currently available for viewing. In early 2012 a completed and fully interactive version will be up and running.
7 Conclusion

The quality of teaching and learning is an individual matter which needs personalised discipline-specific attention and not broad scale policy and systems. PATS provides a specific personalised approach, that was endorsed by the Associate Deans of Education, across the ten faculties at Monash University.

Initial trials of PATS showed its potential for success. The results from the pilot at Monash University, in the form of a decrease in both intensity and proportion of units needing critical attention, suggest that the scheme is beginning to develop new generations of leadership in learning and teaching which are instrumental in disseminating the resultant better practice throughout the sector.

At Monash, PATS has been adopted as part of its strategy of building teaching capacity, by embedding the scheme in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education. Workshops such as planning your teaching, interactive lecturing and peer observation of teaching have been integrated in the Principles for Effective Teaching unit, along with other good teaching principles, such as alignment of lecture material with tutorials and assignments.

The uptake pattern of PATS is similar to the adoption trend for the ALTC award-winning PASS program (PATS RGM, 2010). To ensure uptake continues and expands, a couple of initiatives are underway. First, the mode in which PATS operates does not only include a single mentor-mentee relationship, but also reciprocity in mentoring relationships, and group mentoring; second, the workbook will be generalised and available online so that academics can record meeting outcomes, plans and strategies on their iPads or laptops; third, all units can be included in the scheme, not just those perceived by students as needing critical attention.

Extending the scheme might prevent the stigma of being identified as a poor teacher and provide associate deans with an avenue to help address a somewhat sensitive issue for academics whose past unit evaluations have been underperforming. Finally, to help faculties with the process, support should be provided by central units to ensure maintenance and efficient running of the scheme.
8 Future work

An extension grant was awarded to extend the fellowship in the following ways:

Resources currently specific to Monash will be redeveloped for generic use at other institutions wishing to adopt the PATS scheme.

Unit evaluation qualitative data for units in need of critical attention will also be analysed for common recurring themes on areas of improvement. Findings will assist in producing advice for DVCs on how to improve low-performing units.

A website will be developed where the resources required to run a peer assisted teaching scheme will be available. Resources will include guides, instruments to elicit student feedback, how to conduct a peer review and other Peer Assisted Educational Program materials. Newsletters and publications will also be posted. The site will be built with an administrator login for maintenance purposes.

A series of workshops is planned for 2011 and 2012 to disseminate the PATS scheme beyond Monash University, to local and international audiences. These include:

- Workshop, Establishing and sustaining mentoring relationships, Faculty Teaching Leaders Development Day, Faculty of Business and Law, Newcastle University, Tue 4th October, 2011.
- Seminar presentation, A scheme for improving ICT units with critically low student satisfaction, Melbourne Computing Education Conventicle (MCEC), Swinburne University, 18 Nov 2011.
- Seminar presentation, The criteria of effective teaching in universities of the future: My University, my goodness? Deakin University, 2 Nov 2011.
- Workshop, Road testing the peer assisted teaching scheme, Fourteenth Australasian Computing Education (ACE) Conference, RMIT, Melbourne, 29-3 Feb 2012.
- Presentations at University of Tasmania, Melbourne University, University of Wollongong, ACU are still to be confirmed.
9 Lessons learnt

Many lessons were learnt from undertaking the fellowship. The following recommendations have been made to Associate Deans wishing to take up the scheme.

Open scheme to all units

It is important to note that PATS has a usefulness beyond just improving units that are in the ‘needing critical attention’ category. As shown in the results tables in Section 5, units that were in the ‘needing improvement’ category also showed improvement in some areas. There are faculties within the university which do not have any or very few units in the ‘needing critical attention’ category. As a result, future schemes will be opened up to any unit wanting to improve its health and student satisfaction.

Faculties to establish a list of mentors

Creating a list of mentors who are available and willing to assist new academics and making it part of the culture will improve the efficiency of creating partnerships. The Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Science have proposed that academics that have translated into the newly created education focused roles would be suitable mentor candidates.

Capture the history and context of the unit

Modifying the initial task to capture the history and context of the unit in need of improvement will provide the mentor and mentee with the setting in which they are required to operate in.

Embed PATS into teacher preparation programs

Through the focus group discussions conducted with the participants, it was suggested that the scheme will be beneficial to all new incoming academics as it allows them to critically reflect on their teaching practice. As a result, some of the PATS tasks are incorporated in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education (GCHE).

Allocate workload relief for participants

The scheme needs to be recognised at a more senior level and factored into the academics’ workload – given the scheme requires an additional 20 hours (approximately per semester).

Devise qualitative measures of success

Academics are skeptical of the use of unit evaluation results as the only measure of success. In the PAL and PASS programs, qualitative feedback is a vital part of the measure of success. The workbook deliverables could be used as a qualitative measure of progress and commitment made to improving units.

Appoint central and faculty liaison people to support the program

There is a requirement to help faculties with the initial setup of the scheme, some support should be provided by central units, as well as each faculty having a liaison person to assist with the maintenance and running of the scheme within the faculties.

Allow alternative modes of operation

Allow various modes in which PATS can be undertaken. These could include:

a. Single partnership standard mentoring relationship
b. Single partnership reciprocal mentoring relationship
c. Group partnership with reciprocal mentoring relationships
References


Appendices

Appendix 1 - The PATS Process

**Pre-Semester Tasks**

**Teaching Team**

- **Mentor**
  - Briefing session
- **Mentee**

**During Semester Tasks**

- **Mid-semester meeting with Fellow**
  - **Strategy Plan**
  - **Summary of Feedback**
  - **Teaching Observations**
  - **Gather Informal Student Feedback**
  - **Conduct Peer Observation of Teaching**
    - weeks 4-9
    - (optional)
  - **Gather Informal Student Feedback**
  - **Critical Reflection on Goals**
  - **Critical Reflection on Examiner’s Report**
  - **Performance Planning**

**Post-Semester Tasks**

**Teaching Team**

- **Mentor**
  - Debrief session
- **Mentee**

---

**Recommended Timeline (week)**

- BRIEFING
  - -4

- MEETINGS
  - -3

- GOALS FOR IMPROVEMENT
  - -2

- GATHER INFORMAL FEEDBACK
  - 4

- CONDUCT A PERS OBSERVATION OF TEACHING
  - 4-9

- GATHER INFORMAL FEEDBACK
  - 6-9

- CRITICAL REFLECTION ON GOALS
  - 13

- PERFORMANCE PLANNING
  - after SETU results are released

**Briefing**

Academics are invited to participate in PATS. If deemed appropriate by the ADEs/YoD, the academic responsible for teaching a unit that requires improvement is partnered with an academic leading a high performing unit to discuss practical ways to improve teaching, course curriculum, and unit development. A briefing session outlining the scheme and its aims is given by the teaching fellow to potential partners prior to the semester.

**Meetings**

Partners are expected to reflect on the unit, students’ feedback, and examiner’s report and review teaching materials. They would openly exchange views and teaching ideas, discuss ways to improve the unit, collect informal student feedback during the semester and organise a peer observation of teaching. It is expected that at least three meetings will take place before the unit is next offered, at least four meetings should occur during semester and two will occur after the semester has concluded.

**Incentives**

Incentives such as coffee vouchers will be issued to each participant to encourage partners to meet informally pre-, during and post-semester. Academics who are able to show improved outcomes by way of an increase of at least 0.5 in unit evaluations may be rewarded in some way as determined by their faculty (i.e. via an academic performance development scheme, towards promotion or a certificate for teaching improvement).

**Workshops**

A series of teaching workshops will be organised by the teaching fellow, in which mentors will share their teaching strategies and methods. In addition academic staff from the OPVCLT will deliver workshops on peer observation of teaching, assessment strategies and curriculum alignment. Ongoing support and monitoring will be provided by the teaching fellow to ensure the successful operation of the partnerships.

**Deliverables**

As part of the scheme, PATS mentees are expected to produce four deliverables:

1. **A strategy plan** – The issues to be addressed and how this can be achieved.
2. **A summary of feedback** – Which is fed back to the current cohort of students, areas of improvements that can be made.
3. **A peer observation of teaching** – In the form of a joint statement between the PATS mentor and mentee, which sets out where and when the Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) occurred along with a summary of good practice observed and other issues that need attention.
4. **Critical reflection** – A summary reflecting on meeting the goals for improvement.

**Debriefing**

Takes place at the conclusion of the semester in the form of two separate focus group discussions between the PATS mentees and the PATS mentors with the teaching fellow about the processes, their own experiences and ways to improve the scheme for future participants.
Appendix 2 - The Original PATS Process

**BRIEFING**
Academics are invited to participate in PATS. If deemed appropriate by ADEx/Head, the academic responsible for teaching a unit that is in critical attention or needs improvement is partnered with an academic leading a high performing unit to discuss practical ways to improve teaching, course curriculum, and unit development. A briefing session outlining the scheme and its aims is given by the teaching fellow to potential partners prior to semester.

**MEETINGS**
It is expected that partners would reflect on the unit, students’ feedback, examiner’s report and review teaching materials in a non-threatening environment. They would openly exchange views and teaching ideas, discuss ways to improve the unit, collect informal student feedback during the semester and organise a peer observation of teaching. It is expected that at least two meetings will take place before the unit is next offered, at least three meetings should occur during semester and one will occur after the semester has concluded.

**INCENTIVES**
Incentives (such as coffee vouchers provided by the respective faculties) will be issued to each participant to encourage partners to meet informally during the semester. Academics who are able to show improved outcomes by way of an increase of at least 0.5 in unit evaluations be rewarded in some way (e.g., via an academic performance development scheme, towards promotion or a certificate for teaching improvement).

**WORKSHOPS**
A series of teaching workshops will be organised by the teaching fellow, in which mentors will share their teaching strategies and methods. In addition, academic staff from the OPVC (LT) will deliver workshops on peer observation of teaching, assessment strategies and curriculum alignment. Ongoing support and monitoring will be provided to the teaching fellow to ensure the successful operation of the partnerships.

**DELIVERABLES**
As part of the scheme, PATS mentors are expected to produce four deliverables:
1. A strategy plan – the issues to be addressed and how this can be achieved.
2. A backchat session – which feeds back to the current cohort of students, current learning issues they face so that improvements can be made.
3. A peer observation of teaching – in the form of a joint statement between the PATS mentor and mentee which sat out where and when the Peer Observation of Teaching (POT) occurred along with a summary of good practice observed and other issues that need attention.
4. Unit leader’s reflection – that reflects on the unit, in terms of the SETU results, POT and the student performance.

**DEBRIEFING**
Takes place at the conclusion of the semester in the form of two separate focus group discussions between the PATS mentors and the PATS mentors with the teaching fellow about the process, their own experiences and ways to improve the scheme for future participants.
## Appendix 3 - Meeting schedule with Associate Deans (Education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>ADE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 July, 2010</td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Professor Guojun Lu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 18, 2010</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Dr Joce Nuttall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15, 2010</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>Professor Stephen Legg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16, 2010</td>
<td>Business &amp; Economics</td>
<td>Professor Owen Hughes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 28, 2010</td>
<td>Arts &amp; Design</td>
<td>Dr Vince Dziekan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2010</td>
<td>Medicine (undergraduate)</td>
<td>Dr Louise McCall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2010</td>
<td>Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
<td>Professor Peter Stewart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 27, 2010</td>
<td>Law</td>
<td>Professor Stephen Barkoczy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2, 2010</td>
<td>Medicine (postgraduate)</td>
<td>Dr Louise McCall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### NOTE

Due to changes in ADE appointments in 2011, the teaching fellow engaged with the newly appointed ADEs in 2011. This included:

- Faculty of Information Technology, Associate Professor Bernd Meyer
- Faculty of Education, Professor Peter Sullivan
- Faculty of Arts, Dr Susanna Scarparo
- Faculty of Arts and Design, Dr Kit Wise
- Faculty of Law, Professor Justin Malbon
- Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Professor Ben Canny (Acting ADE)
## Appendix 4 - Workshop and Seminar Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Workshop Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul 4, 2011</td>
<td>Griffith University, Gold Coast</td>
<td>Developing an Understanding of good, excellent, high quality and effective teaching HERDSA conference, roundtable discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 4, 2011</td>
<td>Newcastle University, Newcastle</td>
<td>Establishing and sustaining mentoring relationships Teaching Leaders workshop day, Faculty of Business and Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Jan-3 Feb 2012</td>
<td>RMIT, Melbourne</td>
<td>Road testing the peer assisted teaching scheme Fourteenth Australasian Computing Education (ACE) Conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Seminar Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jul 5-6, 2010</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>The Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme ACDICT Learning and Teaching forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 26, 2010</td>
<td>Monash University, Melbourne</td>
<td>ALTC Teaching Fellowship Program Business Education Research Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 19, 2010</td>
<td>Monash University, Melbourne</td>
<td>How teachers can help teachers Melbourne Computing Educational Conventicle (MCEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 29 – Dec 2, 2010</td>
<td>University of Ballarat, Ballarat</td>
<td>Keynote: Building Peer Assistance Capacity in Faculties to Improve Student Satisfaction of Units Learning and Teaching Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2-3, 2011</td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>Building Peer Assistance Capacity in Faculties to Improve Student Satisfaction of Units ACDICT Learning and Teaching Academy (ALTA) forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 19, 2011</td>
<td>University of Ballarat, Ballarat</td>
<td>Building quality in Higher Education Units Graduate School of Information Technology &amp; Mathematical Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 17, 2011</td>
<td>RMIT, Melbourne</td>
<td>Mentoring relationships to build quality in Higher education units School of Computer Science and Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 18-19, 2011</td>
<td>Mercure Hotel, Sydney</td>
<td>Building Peer Assistance Capacity in Faculties to Improve Student Satisfaction of Units Australian Council of Deans of Science (ACDS) forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 10, 2011</td>
<td>Caulfield Women’s Networking and Support Monash University</td>
<td>Peer Mentoring - helping academics thrive in the education space Caulfield Women’s Networking and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2-3, 2011</td>
<td>Deakin University, Melbourne</td>
<td>The criteria of effective teaching in universities of the future: My University, my goodness? Internal Learning and Teaching Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 3-4, 2011</td>
<td>Watersports Complex Perth</td>
<td>A scheme to improve quality in higher education units CADAD Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 18, 2011</td>
<td>Swinburne University Melbourne</td>
<td>A scheme for improving ICT units with critically low student satisfaction Melbourne Computing Educational Conventicle (MCEC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 5 - ALTC Sponsored Peer Assisted Education Programs (program)

Tuesday 7th June 2011, 8.30am - 5.00pm  
H-Block, room H1.25  
Monash University, Caulfield Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>PRESENTER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:45am – 9:15am</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9:15am – 9:30am    | Welcome                      | Professor Adam Shoemaker  
                       | Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)  
                       | Monash University, VIC |
| 9:30am – 10:30pm   | Keynote (PASS)               | Ms Sally Rogan  
                       | University of Wollongong, NSW  |
|                    | 10:30am – 10:50am Morning Tea |                                                                           |
| 10:50am – 11:30am  | Keynote (PATS)               | Associate Professor Angela Carbone  
                       | 2010 ALTC Teaching Fellow  
                       | Monash University, VIC |
| 11:30am – 12:40pm  | The PATS experience         | PATS participants                                                       |
|                    | 12:40pm – 1:40pm Lunch      |                                                                           |
| 1:40pm – 2:30pm    | Keynote (PeerWise)           | Mr Paul Denny  
                       | University of Auckland, NZ |
| 2:30pm – 3:20pm    | Keynote (SPARK\textsuperscript{PLUS}) | Dr Keith Willey  
                       | University of Technology, Sydney, NSW |
|                    | 3:20pm – 3:40pm Afternoon Tea |                                                                           |
| 3:40pm – 4:50pm    | Monash PAL Fellows presentation | Dr Gerry Rayner (Science)  
                       | Dr Yvonne Hodgson (MNHS)  
                       | Dr Jane Bone (Education) |
| 4:50pm – 5:00pm    | Closing                      | Associate Professor Angela Carbone                                         |

_Dinner at Zagames, 25 Derby Rd, Caulfield East, 6:00pm — each person pays for themselves_
Appendix 6 - Sample Invitation Letter from ADE to HoS

Dear <Head of School>,

I am writing with respect to the unit <insert unit here>, which has been identified as a ‘unit at risk’, having received a unit evaluation of under 3.0 in the latest unit evaluations. In order to assist teaching staff with the challenges facing this unit, I am requesting that you provide me with name of the teacher primarily responsible for this unit in next semester.

We will ask this educator to enter into the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS), which will provide a ‘critical friend’ for the unit from within our Faculty.

PATS is a program whereby two or more colleagues collaborate in helping improve the quality of a unit and student satisfaction within identified units. It also aims to build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers. This is achieved by building on the current research that highlights the benefits of peer assisted learning (PAL) programs but applying it to academic teaching staff themselves. The scheme provides an informal, relaxed environment where academics can discuss and share ideas, come up with strategies and to do some collaborative mutual problem solving.

For more information about PATS, please refer to: http://opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/peerassistedteachingscheme/resources.html.

We regard this as an excellent way to improve the quality of our units and to build collegial relationships within Faculty.

Please provide me with the name of the responsible staff for this unit by <insert date>

Best wishes,

ADE/DDE
Appendix 7 - Recruitment Letter

Dear (academic’s name),

Your Head of School has nominated you as teaching <> next semester. This unit has been identified as a unit at risk.

In order to ensure that this unit has improved unit evaluations, we are requesting that you join the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS).

PATS is a program whereby two or more colleagues collaborate in helping improve the quality of a unit and student satisfaction within identified units. It will provide the unit with a ‘critical friend’ and will provide you, as the lecturer responsible for the unit, with support in identifying and overcoming any challenges facing this unit.

Please refer to the PATS resources for more information about this scheme http://opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/peerassistedteachingscheme/resources.html.

It will take 1-2 days of your time, spread across the entire semester.

I appreciate your involvement with the PATS scheme and hope that you will enjoy the collegiate contact as well as assisting in improve the unit.

Best wishes,
ADE/DDE/HoS
Appendix 8 - Sample letter to recruit Mentor

Dear (academic’s name),

I am writing to advise you that, as an education-focused staff member with an excellent track record in teaching, you have been nominated to participate in the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme as a mentor.

PATS is a program whereby two or more colleagues collaborate in helping improve the quality of a unit and student satisfaction within identified units. It will provide the unit with a ‘critical friend’ and will provide you, as the lecturer responsible for the unit, with support in identifying and overcoming any challenges facing this unit.

Please refer to the PATS resources for more information about this scheme http://opvclt.monash.edu.au/educational-excellence/peerassistedteachingscheme/resources.html.

It will take 1-2 days of your time, spread across the entire semester.

I appreciate your assistance with improving the quality of teaching within the Faculty.

DDE
Appendix 9 - Participant Acknowledgement Letter

<Date>

Name
Faculty
University

Dear <Mentee Name>,

Thank you for participating in the 2011 Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS). Your participation has helped make the Scheme a success. Your partnership has achieved a ‘Meeting Aspirations’ in the University-wide (Item 5) unit evaluation question, ‘Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit’.

You were partnered with <Mentor Name>, and your unit, <Unit name and Title>, was the focus of this partnership. The unit evaluation results for the two relevant semesters, as well as response rates, are shown below:

- Semester 1, 2010: 65 students enrolled, 39 responses (60%)
- Semester 1, 2011: 155 students enrolled, 100 responses (65%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>UW1- Learning Objectives</th>
<th>UW2- Intellectually Stimulating</th>
<th>UW3- Learning Resources</th>
<th>UW4 - Useful Feedback</th>
<th>UW5- Overall Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sem1, 2010</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sem1, 2011</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for working together with <Mentor Name> to achieve the higher ratings in <Unit Name>. It is acknowledged that there are many factors that contribute to your unit evaluation result. You are encouraged to continue your involvement in the Scheme by trialling the new PATS workbook available from the Resources page of the PATS website at:


As a result of improving the quality of this unit, you and your PATS mentor will receive $1000 into your academic funding accounts.

Yours Sincerely,
Appendix 10 - Survey Instrument sent to ADEs

Dear All,

The semester has concluded, and unit evaluation results have been released. In order to improve future iterations of the scheme could you please complete the attached short survey. Data collected will be treated as confidential and anonymity of the will be managed by using pseudonyms.

Please send your responses to Jessica Wong (jessica.wong@monash.edu) by TBA.

Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS) Survey to ADEs and HoS

1. How sufficiently informed were you of the PATS process as it ran in your faculty?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Informed</th>
<th>Informed</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Uniformed</th>
<th>Extremely Uninformed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you were not well informed, how could this process be improved, what extra information would you like?

2. To what degree does the scheme provide a suitable way of improving students’ perceptions of units taking part in the scheme?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Suitable</th>
<th>Suitable</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Unsuitable</th>
<th>Extremely Unsuitable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Should the university acknowledge the most improved unit from each faculty into its Teaching Excellence Awards process?

- [ ] NO
- [ ] YES – Recognition only if the same academic improves a unit needing critical attention
- [ ] YES – Recognition no matter which academic improves the unit needing critical attention

4. Do you have any recommendations on how to improve the scheme?

5. Any further comments.
Appendix 11 - Opportunities and Challenges

Positives and Negatives

- supportive, collegial
- non invasive
- places more priority on teaching
- effective
- valuable
- improving quality
- expands network

- Academics think their unit is the hardest unit to teach
- Academics want “quick and dirty” tips and tricks
- Academics are time poor

- hard to find time
- feeling stigmatised
- success tied only to unit evaluations (quantitative)
- requires total dedication from both partners to be successful
- more work to do
Appendix 12 - External evaluation

Preamble

Description of project

To address the issues that engineering and information and communication technology (ICT) courses do not perform as well as other discipline areas in the national CEQ good teaching scale and that close to 10% of engineering and ICT discipline units are flagged as needing critical attention in unit evaluations of teaching and student experiences across many Australian universities, Monash University developed a project, the Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme. This project represents a first step to assist academics in improving their teaching by using mentors whose units have been recognised as excellent. The project was supported by an Australian Learning and Teaching Council Teaching Fellowship grant.

The aim of the project is to build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers. It focuses around two main objectives:

- To improve the quality of a unit and student satisfaction within the identified unit(s).
- To build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers.

The ultimate goal was to introduce a Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS) to improve the quality of teaching and student satisfaction within identified units as well as to build leadership capacity amongst currently recognised outstanding teachers.

The project was led by the ALTC Fellow: Associate Professor Angela Carbone and a Fellow's reference group from Monash University, plus external members from seven universities.

Outcomes

- A refined PAT process which comprehensively outlines the steps by which (2 or more) colleagues can collaborate to improve the quality of a unit.
- A PATS Guide and a Participant Instructional Workbook which comprehensively explain, outline and guide academics through the PATS process.
- The development of a structured framework/process for ongoing improvement of a unit and learning/teaching practices.
- Training, support and inspiration provided for the staff involved in the PATS process.
- Improved unit performance reflected in the following year’s unit evaluation for all participating units.
- A template survey which can be used to elicit, collect and respond to informal student evaluation of teaching and unit – Informal Feedback Form.
- Instruments to use when conducting a peer observation of a teaching partnership.
- Bimonthly newsletters of the PAT Scheme produced over the project, which kept internal and external stakeholders well informed.
- Cross-disciplinary communication and sharing, particularly within Monash University.
- Good dissemination of other Peer Assisted Education Programs (PAEP) available for use at the ALTC Symposium.
Role as evaluator

Thank you to Associate Professor Angela Carbone and to the ALTC for the opportunity to be an external evaluator in this project.

In my role as evaluator, I was closely involved with the project from its commencement. My involvement included:

• Membership and participation, via teleconferencing, at the PATS Reference Group bimonthly meetings.
• Regular communications via phone and/or email between myself, the fellow, the PATS Reference Group members and the project manager.
• Advice on the PATS survey and focus group questions.
• Participation in the project Symposia and workshops.
• Regular feedback and advice on the progress of the project and the resources being developed.

This report is organised according to the main themes of this project, that is:

• improved quality of teaching and units
• building leadership capacity
• dissemination of good practice and embedding practices.

They will be addressed in terms of two foundation questions:

• What were the intended outcomes?
• How well were these met in reality?

Improved quality of teaching and units

The flow chart below (produced within the project) sums up the PAT process well; that is, the activities and recommended timelines in which to enact the PATS process:

Intended outcomes:

• A consistent university-wide strategy to assist academics to improve units that were identified as needing critical attention
• Identification of perceived challenges and opportunities for the development of PATS as a mechanism to improve quality of teaching in Higher Education
• **Improved teaching practice and student experience, and improved unit and course evaluations.**

The project met all three of its intended outcomes.

The ultimate outcome of generating a consistent university-wide strategy to assist academics to improve units was achieved through the project’s Peer Assisted Teaching Scheme (PATS) process. The PATS process was introduced through the university’s normal practice of identifying units that require improvement and those which have performed outstandingly. The unit identification has been streamlined and the outcomes of the fellowship have been trialled by Monash University. From the trial, the project was enabled to develop a framework that would be effective, and to meticulously develop and refine the PATS process and components.

The perceived challenges and opportunities for the development of PATS process as a mechanism for quality of teaching in higher education were identified throughout the project via lessons learnt and challenges met when trialling the PATS. Some of the identified challenges were addressed by the project through the production of the Participant Instructional Workbook and the provision of incentives (coffee vouchers and/or appropriate rewards that encouraged participants to meet and work collaboratively to achieve improved unit evaluation outcomes). The Instructional Workbook is an excellent resource, which addresses various challenges of the PATS process because it removes ambiguities in meetings, tasks and activities through the development of accompanying aims, instructions and worksheets to guide individuals along the different stages of their PATS journey.

In relation to the project meeting its intended outcome of “improved teaching and student experience and improved unit and course evaluations”, from the unit evaluations that I have viewed it seems clear that the project has met its aim overall of improved unit evaluations. I am not convinced, however, that the evidence provided in these unit evaluations provide sufficient evidence for meeting the “improved teaching and student experience” component of the intended outcome. Improved teaching and student experience is indeed a tricky concept to define and it is even more difficult to evaluate its success; therefore to assert that the PATS process has in fact improved student experience and practices would be an overstatement. What is evident, however, is that there have been improvements overall.

**Building leadership capacity**

*Intended outcomes:*

• **Ongoing acknowledgment and development of previous award winners’ and outstanding teachers’ skill.**

As PATS identifies and offers excellent and award-winning academics the opportunity to take on the role of mentor, this Scheme provides the opportunity for outstanding (but perhaps non-senior) academics to build their leadership capacity by taking on a leadership role. The use in this project of previous award winners and outstanding teachers to mentor other academics in a similar discipline is a good use of skills and is an excellent way of spreading teaching expertise throughout the university.

**Dissemination of good practice and embedding practices**

*Intended outcomes:*

• **Dissemination of good practice both within and across discipline areas, through wide distribution of reporting and publications**
• Embedded acknowledgement in “most improved unit from each cluster” into Monash’s Teaching Excellence Award process; nice ideas to encourage improvement
• Embedding of the outcomes into the Monash University Graduate Certificate of Higher Education.

All the above intended outcomes have been achieved. Evidence of this achievement is provided through:

Event
The 2011 ALTC Symposium on Peer Assisted Education Programs (PAEP) involved 89 participants from one international institution and 19 Australian institutions and it aimed to:
• inform academics on Peer Assisted Educational Programs available to use as part of their teaching curriculum
• share ideas, innovations and expertise
• discuss research directions
• develop future collaborations
• engage further participants in the project.

The Symposium received a number of positive comments, such as:
• “An excellent symposium, thought the panel from PATS participants was wonderful”.
• “A great event—some very useful insights & ideas, and a great opportunity for networking”.
• “Inspiring and enjoyable. Great opportunity to meet like-minded folk in tertiary education”.
• “Good variety of speakers”.

Newsletter series
The PATS newsletter series was well designed and produced, and it provided an excellent platform to keep the reference group and others involved and/or interested in the project engaged and up-to-date with current activities.

PATS Guide and Instructional Workbook
This is the other significant outcome of the project: a PATS Guide and Instructional Workbook. The Guide aims to provide information/overview of PATS and its process and it is extremely informative. The PATS Instructional Workbook is an iteration of the Guide, but with more information and guidance on how to perform tasks and activities to achieve the best outcome(s). The various worksheets for tasks and activities in the Scheme are also very useful and provide extra guidance/instructions for those who may need it.

Both the Guide and Workbook are beautifully formatted to capture, attract and provide ease of reading to the reader (reader friendly). They are also excellent resources through which good practice within teaching can be disseminated.

Embedded acknowledgement in “most improved units from each cluster”
All PATS participants were acknowledged for their work in helping to make the Scheme a success and for any improvements to their unit evaluations via a letter of acknowledgment by the Fellow. I would suggest that the issuing of letters or any other award process which acknowledge a “most improved unit” category is a sensible idea; it is also important as it
encourages individuals to not only strive for improvement, but to work towards achieving significant improvement.

Embedding of the outcomes into the Monash University Graduate Certificate of Higher Education

An outcome of the fellowship is the successfully embedded the outcomes of the project into a unit (HEDS011 Learning and Teaching in Higher Education Level I), in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education, to form part of the assessment component.

Conclusions

The ALTC Fellow, Angela Carbone has done an great job in developing and refining the PATS process. There was significant support at university level from the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor which led to university-wide implementation. The Scheme was a success, as demonstrated by the fact that all units that participated in the Scheme showed improvements in their unit evaluations scores. The Scheme also built leadership capacity by recognising outstanding teachers through their role of mentors. Overall, the project was well designed, implemented and achieved all of its intended outcomes. The project is a good contribution to strategies to assist in the improvement of the quality of all units across Australian universities.

Associate Professor Leigh Wood
Macquarie University
### Appendix 13 - List of Mentors and Mentees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name*</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentee</td>
<td>S1, 2009</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>• Faculty award for Teaching Excellence (2010)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mentor        | S1, 2009 | IT      | • Vice Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Team-based Educational Development (2001)  
                  • Vice Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Team-based Educational Development: Special Commendation (2000) |
| Mentee        | S1, 2009 | IT      | • Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in team-based teaching (2008)     
                  • Prime Minister’s Awards for University Teacher of the Year (1998)  
                  • Angela Carbone: Australian Award for University Teaching (1998)  
                  • Vice Chancellor’s Award for Distinguished Teaching (1997) |
| Mentor        | S1, 2009 | IT      | • CSSE Award for Teaching Excellence (2003)                          |
| Mentee        | S2, 2009 | IT      | • Faculty citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning Award (2010)  
                  • Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in Undergraduate teaching (2008) |
| Mentor        | S1, 2010 | IT      | • Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in Postgraduate teaching (2008, 2009) |
| Mentee        | S1, 2010 | IT      | • Honourable mention Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in Postgraduate teaching (2009) |
| Mentor        | S1, 2011 | IT      | • Vice-Chancellor’s Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning (FIT team 2010)  
                  • Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in team-based teaching (2008)  
                  • Honourable mention in Faculty Teaching Excellence Award in Undergraduate teaching (2008) |
| Mentor        | S1, 2011 | IT      | • Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Innovation and External Collaboration  
                  • 2010 Faculty of Information Technology Award for Excellence in Innovation and External Collaboration (I&EC Award)  
                  • John Hughes Distinguished Service Award for 2011 by the Computing Research and Education Association of Australasia (CORE) |
<p>| Mentee        | S2, 2011 | IT      |                                                                       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentee</th>
<th>S2, 2010</th>
<th>Engineering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>S2, 2010</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>S2, 2011</td>
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<td>Mentor</td>
<td>S2, 2010</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>S1, 2011</td>
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<td>Mentee</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
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<td>Mentor</td>
<td>S2, 2010</td>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>S2, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentee</td>
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<td>Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentee</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Business &amp; Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Business &amp; Economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>Mentee</td>
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<td>Mentor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reciprocal partnership</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Pharmacy &amp; Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reciprocal partnership</td>
<td>S1, 2011</td>
<td>Pharmacy &amp; Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ‘Future Summit’ Leadership Award (2011)
- ALTC citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning (2010)
- Dean’s Award for Teaching Excellence (2008)
- Australian Research Council Discovery Project DP08 (2008)
| Reciprocal partnership | S1, 2011 | Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences |

*Names have been removed for privacy*
## Appendix 14 - Top six codes illustrated with typical student comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Code Descriptor</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
<th>Typical student comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Lecture-content                      | The common concern for students with lecture content related to the relevance of the material to real world scenarios and whether the material was current. | • The overall content of the course was very ‘ideal situation’ theory and not real world practicalities.  
• The lecture’s content should be more detail and more reading lists suggested  
• The content seems to be outdated.  
• The content of this unit should be altered for students to be able to see the relevance of the information given in the REAL world ie how to apply the information in the real world. |
| 2    | Assessment-specification             | The common concerns for students with the assignment specification related to the clarity in which assignments were written, submission process and change of requirements. | • The assessments were in great need of updating - outdated directions for use of software that had changed. Non-standardized submission formats that made assessments a frustration.  
• Clarity of the assessment tasks and assignments  
• Assignment specification were quite vague and not sufficiently clear. It was open to interpretation especially for DE students.  
• The first assignment was unclear and a disaster. The requirements of this assignment were changed closely to the due date. Because of the change of requirements many students were at a disadvantage |
| 3    | Lecturer-presentation style/engagement | The common concern for students with the lecturer was the lack of engaging teaching methods used to deliver the material. | • The lectures were incredibly dull and presented poorly.  
• THE TEACHING! We just sit in class without any proper guidelines. They expect us to learn from somewhere and just come in and do exercises.  
• Needs more engaging teaching methods.  
• I believe that the lecturer’s delivery could use some improvement. It’s just the delivery of his lectures tends to drone. |
| 3    | Assessment-marking                  | The common concerns for students with the assessment marking related to consistency of marking, quality of feedback, timeliness, and clarity of marking criteria. | • the marking system in this unit is very disappointing and the feedback is terrible. For most assignments; they have not even stated what is done wrong, but just given a grade  
• Exact marks for assignments would be useful rather than HD, D, C etc. It lets you know exactly where you stand before the exam and could give extra confidence if |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Code Descriptor</th>
<th>Code Description</th>
<th>Typical student comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tutorial-alignment</td>
<td>The common concerns for students with the tutorial alignment related to lack of  alignment between tutorial activities with learning objectives.</td>
<td>• Unbelievable amount of incoherence between all elements of the subject-lecturers, tutorial and assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tutorials not too directly related to what is covered in class or in the book.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tutorials/structure of work is completely unrelated to weekly classes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Overall Structure, and ensuring the work in tutorials is relevant to the exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tutorials should be aimed towards learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tutorial-available</td>
<td>The common concerns for students with the tutorial resources related to the       reliability of the software required to complete their exercises.</td>
<td>• Software or an Illustrator plugin for developing ERDs would be better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>• A reliable SQL server! Links to online resources such as examples of SQL commands and syntax etc as the textbook can only hold so much information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Working software eg Oracle is currently not working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lecture-structure</td>
<td>The common concern for students with the lecture structure related to the lack   of logical sequencing of concepts.</td>
<td>• Needs to teach basic PHP syntax before teaching connecting to database!!!.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students don't even know basic syntax, how can we be creative when doing assessments?!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The unit needs to be well structured for easier understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Lectures should not be so convoluted, and express ideas simply and concisely..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lecturer-support</td>
<td>The common concerns for students with the lecture support related to the lecturer's lack of availability and attitude towards their students.</td>
<td>• The lecturer should provide useful answers to students’ queries, and not condescend them for requesting feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The lecturer should answer students' queries directly, and not avoid difficult questions by providing irrelevant answers that provide no value to the student..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More consultation and help for assignments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>