The context for change

WHY WE NEED TO RECONSIDER OUR TEACHING STRATEGY AND WHY WE NEED TO DO IT NOW

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Introduction

• Global, national and local contexts for Higher Ed
• Sectoral diversity and possible futures
• Situating Macquarie in the Australian sector
  • Competitors
  • Macquarie’s advantages
  • Macquarie’s challenges
• Staying competitive
The really big picture

Worldwide trends towards:

- massification
- globalisation
- marketisation

Additional global and regional factors:

- Rapid development, increasing availability and increasing affordability of ICTs
- Rapid industrialisation in the SE Asian region

Higher student contributions and cuts to public funding from the mid-1990s increased market competition and dependence on international student income.

Uncapping of student places, further (proposed) cuts to public funding and (proposed) fee deregulation continues this trajectory of marketisation.
The Australian sector today

A *predominantly public* (approx 93% of students), but *largely privately-funded* mass higher education sector...

- highly competitive and increasingly stratified
- internationalised (wrt students), with many universities reliant on international student fee revenue
- highly dependent on casual labour
- subject to frequent policy shifts in regulation and funding arrangements
- high student fees and escalating graduate debt
- nationally regulated (risk-proportionate, standards-based process)
Market competition drives both isomorphism and diversity between and within HE sectors.

Regulation, standards and benchmarking tend to drive convergence (coercive isomorphism).

Institutions seek to emulate “successful” competitors while also differentiating on the basis of programs, prestige, quality and cost.

Both emulation and differentiation processes operate simultaneously at all sectoral levels, but particularly between institutions and institutional groups.
In a context of growing demand, sectoral stratification on the basis of status indicators becomes more defined.

(Davies & Zarifa 2012)

Stratification on the basis of status or prestige poses major risks to social equity: in highly stratified sectors, there is evidence that higher education becomes less a vehicle of social mobility than a reinforcer of existing social inequality.

(Marginson 2015, Mettler 2014)
Situation Macquarie in the sector

COMPETITORS AND MARKET PERCEPTIONS

- Where/who are Macquarie’s main competitors?
- How do we compare?
- What are Macquarie’s relative advantages?
- Disadvantages/challenges?
- How do we stay competitive?
How does Macquarie compare?

STATUS, STAFF (SOURCE: DET HE STATISTICS 2014)

Status/prestige: international rankings

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% of academic staff above Level C (MQ 14%)

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QUT, ANU, UC, UNSW UoW

% casualisation (FTE Academic Staff)

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Swinburne, RMIT, QUT, USQ, USC, CUT, ACU, UTS, UWS

MQ, VU (31%)

(UoW 27%, UoN 26%, USyd 23%, UNSW 21%)
How does Macquarie compare?

STUDENTS (SOURCE: DET HE STATISTICS 2014)

Student load:

% International (MQ 27%)

% Low SES (MQ 8.3%)

% Indigenous (MQ 0.6%)

SSR (load:FTE T + T&R) (MQ 26.5)

Incl. USyd, UNSW, UWS

UTS, MQ, UNSW

USyd

ANU, UC, UWA

FedU, RMIT, VU, CQU, ECU, CDU
Competitive advantages

(ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL)

• Location: Macquarie Park + NW metro rail extension – access to employers and a growing population
• Open and friendly culture, a history of “being different”
• Tradition of innovation in teaching and curriculum
• Essentially single campus – already highly “connected”
• Attractive campus environment
• Not aligned to any group – free to create our own model of a contemporary university
• Staff strongly committed to students and their learning
• PACE well-established and continuing to develop community and industry partnerships
Our challenges

(ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL)

- Competitors investing heavily in building capacity for blended learning and technology-rich teaching
- No “natural” geographical constituency (although the north-west is a potential growth area)
- Caught in the middle of the market – competing on status, access and potentially (with deregulation) price
- High teaching loads and casualisation compromising capacity for innovation (research, teaching, curriculum)
- Change fatigue and work-related stress – low trust, cynicism and skepticism about “new” strategic plans
STAYING COMPETITIVE

In an increasingly marketised, competitive and stratified sector, we need students to choose Macquarie if we are to sustain our capacity for quality research and teaching.

We need to relieve workload pressures so that our staff can achieve their potential in research and teaching.

And we need to ensure that our programs are designed with a view to engaging, stimulating and challenging our students, awakening and exciting their curiosity and creativity and connecting them to the “real world”.

The Connected Learning Community is proposed as a way of achieving these goals.