

**Initiating the Language, Literacy and Numeracy strategy  
at Victoria University: a pilot in the Bachelor of Laws**  
Gina Curró, Victoria University, [gina.curro@vu.edu.au](mailto:gina.curro@vu.edu.au)

**Abstract**

Enquiry into support for commencing higher education students in their first year of study reveals that policy and practice in teaching and learning interventions is not consistent. Processes and programs across the same institution vary as much as the students themselves - transition, pathways, retention, foundation, bridging, peer support, mentoring, monitoring student progress (students at risk) and academic skills interventions. First year experience programs have been criticised for lacking an integrated approach in responding to student diversity. According to Kift, Nelson and Clarke, (2010) more is known about the response to diversity in other institutions than what is happening in our own. Never before has student diversity featured so prominently in the policy debate about national reforms, with the AV-CC arguing for the creation of a "... policy environment that allows for many different, but effective, approaches targeted at the needs of each group of students" (AV-CC, 2002, p. 4). With 55,000 students enrolled at Victoria University (VU), 20% from low socio economic status backgrounds, the highest number of culturally and linguistically diverse students in Victorian TAFE system, and one in two students speaking a language other than English at home, the range of backgrounds is extensive. VU's response to this need has been many ESL and language and learning support programs across TAFE and Higher Education courses. While effective, these have emerged in an organic way and reach only a percentage of students in need. With the advent of an institution-wide LLN strategy, it is possible to envisage a truly comprehensive, systematic and embedded approach, promising widespread impact. What follows is an outline of the preparation process for initiating the Strategy - Stage 1: Post enrolment language and literacy assessment (PELLA). We used the Australian Core Skills Framework<sup>1</sup> (ACSF) to rate the PELLA, to gain a profile of core language and literacy skills of commencing students in a first year subject in the Bachelor of Laws, Legal Research Methods. This stage of the Strategy is a small part of a focussed and expansive response to diversity at Victoria University. Nonetheless, it represents the groundwork for initiating changes to curriculum and pedagogy. The collective energy of Strategy teams and their prospective role in planning professional development and collaborative action research projects in VU's evidence-based response to student diversity is discussed.

**Introduction**

In 2005 Krause, Hartley, James and McInnis wrote "[w]e have now reached the stage where universities must recognise the need for institution-wide approaches to enhancing the first year experience. Responsiveness to the needs of demographic and cultural subgroups demands that student support staff, academics and administrators work together to integrate their efforts and initiatives for the benefit of all students" (2005, p. 99). The Australian policy focus on social inclusion and widening participation, the National and international focus on LLN as an economic and societal indicator; the Bradley Review of HE; the Australian University quality Agency's *Good Practice Principles for English Language Competence* 2009, and State Government compliance requirements 2000; and the ACSF have sharpened our focus on the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) requirements of all students. Only until relatively recently, however, has LLN has been identified as a sector-wide issue, driven by an increasing concern about the English language skills of international students. "These students increased the diversity of the university student population and added to the need for some form of transitional support to be included in the academic learning context" (Skillen, Merten, Trivett and Percy, 1998, p. 3). Birrell's 2006

<sup>1</sup> This is a national framework which offers a means of describing and measuring performance in reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy and learning in different contexts against common benchmarks; the ACSF has been found to provide common concepts and a shared language around LLN (Wyse and Brewer 2008).

report on the implications of low English standards among overseas students at Australian Universities launched the debate into the public spot light. Last year, when James, Krause and Jennings published their longitudinal study (fifteen years), the argument for a whole of university intervention intensified: "There is compelling research to show that student engagement, in its broadest sense, is a predictor of student retention, persistence and the quality of their overall experience in higher education. Student engagement is a whole-of-institution responsibility" (James, Krause and Jennings, 2010, p. 39).

In an environment where social inclusion and expanding participation goals are shaping the mid-to-long term future, many intervention strategies have been put forward in the name of improving student experience and academic achievement. And while spontaneous interventions appear to be responding to student need, when delivered in isolation of institution wide support or effective teaching and learning pedagogy, they risk materialising as practices which become improvised, ad hoc or indiscriminate. When first year initiatives vary across the institution, they cannot be sustainable. Practices which are not underpinned by sound pedagogy that ensures successful learning for all students, and, equally important, rewarding teaching and learning outcomes for staff, are not viable. Providing a successful first year experience is a challenge for any university, but VU as a multi-sector university has an added layer of complexity, with respect to cross-institutional integration, coordination and coherence (Kuh, 2007).

In fact, for 20 years VU has operated as a multi-sector institution (higher education and TAFE), with the distinctive claim of serving a particular population - the Western corridor of Melbourne. Most VU campuses are located here in Australia's fastest household growth corridor. Because students from all sociolinguistic and cultural backgrounds stand to benefit from an embedded approach to LLN in their disciplines, VU has embarked on "a systematic attempt to change the mainstream university experience generated by the diversity of student backgrounds" (McInnis, 2003, p. 391). Influenced by *the Good Practice Principles* (2009), VU began to consider of the application of diagnostic post-entry English LLN assessment. It was not so surprising that the use of instruments for assessing post entry language competence soon entered the debate. At the time around one third of Australian universities were using PELLA, and many more were considering their application (Dunworth, 2009). "It was agreed that the ACSF had the potential to support the gathering of contextualised data that could be compared across disciplines, while also playing a role in the design and delivery of effective strategies to enhance discipline-related LLN skills development" (Perkins, 2011, p. 28). With a restructure in 2009, Jones" began to envision a "coherent and consistent whole of university approach... ensur[ing] the best outcomes for all ... students..." (p. 3).

In 2010 a pilot run in the School of Engineering and Science demonstrated that the ACSF had application in "conceptualising an approach to post-entry LLN assessment and that it might have the potential to become a key component of a broader LLN strategy" (Jones, 2011, p. 4). This paper places a lens on the preliminary stage of the institution-wide approach to contextualised LLN skills" development. The information gathered up to this point will be useful for the design and delivery of Professional Development modules, planning Action Research Projects, Program and intervention evaluations and further research. It is beyond the scope of this paper to report on these latter stages. In Semester 1, 2011, when the pilot in the Bachelor of Laws was introduced the progression of activities involved the following: Initial pedagogical conversations, the Early Assessment task, the Profile of Language and Literacy (LL) skills, Recommendations embedding LLN skill development in curriculum and course delivery, Findings or Discussion.

### **Initial pedagogical conversations**

We triggered the pedagogical conversations between the discipline staff member (Legal Research Methods) and Educational developer were triggered by asking focussing questions, such as: What are the LL skills needed by students in order to be successful in courses and to begin careers in this field? How will we gain information about commencing students" LL performance that will be relevant to this context, and useful to both staff and students? How will we help students develop the LL skills they need? How will we help students take responsibility for their own LL skills" development? How will we ensure consistent, comparable longitudinal data across the University? (Perkins, 2011, p. 29).

### The early assessment task or PELLA

Next we collaborated on the design of the early assessment task for BLB 1114 Legal Research Methods, which was administered in week 4 of Semester I, 2011. In terms of task complexity, the task lent itself well to eliciting the language and literacy challenges for students. The LL requirements and expectations were clearly articulated and contextualised. The purpose of the problem solving task was outlined in the first four lines, followed by two scaffolded subtasks: students were asked to write one sentence describing a professional conflict; next they had to draft an email or short letter, taking certain issues into consideration - their goal in sending email, ethical distance from conflict to be maintained, the different points of view of parties to be communicated. Students had 25 minutes to write their responses during class time, which was adequate for them to respond to the task requirements. The student responses were rated using the ACSF by a team of VU staff. The number of students who completed the task was 143; their scripts were collected and double rated using the ACSF. As mentioned earlier, rating the scripts using the ACSF represents only one part of a much broader process in the LLN Strategy. The assessment stage is also referred to as Post enrolment language and literacy assessment or PELLA, and sits at the top of the sequence of linked steps in the Strategy process as follows:

Stage 1	Post enrolment language and literacy assessment (PELLA) using the ACSF
Stage 2	Embedded LLN skill development in curriculum and course delivery
Stage 3	Periodic and integrated LLN assessment to measure attainment and identify support Requirement
Stage 4	LLN Professional development for teachers and academic staff
Stage 5	Program and intervention evaluations, with research, benchmarking and reporting based on comprehensive data collection and analysis.

The early assessment task (PELLA) is intended to be used as a lever for change in curriculum and methodology to provide more flexible delivery, reallocation of resources and additional scaffolding or support for students. "... transformational changes to teaching and learning are more likely to occur when a critical mass of lecturers is involved in the full ... process, which facilitates exploration and reflection prior to the determination of more concrete outcomes" (Perkins, 2011, p. x). Therefore, focussed and instructive conversations among discipline, LL and ED situated in the context of the dialogical pedagogy framework are essential (Skidmore, 2000), in order to maximize the exchange and sharing of information, ideas, and understandings among the participants. It is in this dialogic or conversational context, that the following learning and teaching recommendations for the subject, BLB 1114 Legal Research Methods, were presented.

ACSF LEVEL	RECOMMENDATIONS	COMMENT
1	Flag immediately with Faculty and conduct further LL Assessment	Potentially unable to complete
2	Flag with faculty; Increase adjunct support options in addition to embedded LLN delivery; Work with staff to embed appropriate LL content into mainstream delivery and to develop appropriate tasks	May be more or less urgent depending on ACSF demands of course
3	Embedded LLN, including mentoring and modelling in the discourse	Professional development focus for Faculty staff, team teaching where possible
4&5	Access to direct self select learning support as required	Students may legitimately need to call on Learning support from time to time

### Profile of Language and Literacy Skills

As mentioned earlier, our aim was to develop a profile of students' core language and literacy skills at commencement of the subject, which we could use to:

- inform the design of mainstream curriculum content, methodology and assessment processes.
- identify commencing students whose LLN skills may put them at risk of dropping out or failing.
- determine the most effective combination of additional support strategies for identified target groups with specific needs.
- provide baseline data against which individual and cohort performance could be monitored over time in order to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the various strategies put in place.

(Perkins, 2011, p. ix).

In the work to embed LLN skills development it is important to appreciate that the early assessment intervention „represents one critical element in a comprehensive LLN strategy“ (Jones, 2011, p. 6), intended for institution wide roll out in 2012-2013. "The key principles and concepts underpinning the ACSF provide a solid foundation for discussion about, and the contextual nature of much of the learning within a discipline, the importance of prior knowledge and experience and what constitutes complexity. These principles have general application in teaching and learning, as well as to the core skills, and the ACSF support, context, task, text grid captures the concepts in a way that makes them immediately accessible and applicable in different contexts" (Jones, 2011, p. 14).

### Overview of ACSF levels

1. Minimally functional	2. Limited	3. Developing	4. Appropriate	5. Skilful
One or two sentences on familiar topics  Undeveloped and/or errors predominate.	Can convey meaning in familiar texts.  High level of error	Awareness of audience and purpose and some capacity to organise and produce text type. Novice writers; Variable levels of accuracy and range.	Writes for audience and purpose. Capable of complex writing with some inconsistencies.	Well controlled, highly flexible.
<b>Full support</b>	<b>High level of support</b>	<b>Moderate support</b>	<b>Minimal support</b>	<b>Independent</b>

### Findings/discussion

Our approach to addressing the findings of the post-entry assessment task is based on the work of Skillen, Merten, Trivett and Percy (1998), which tells us that the provision of explicit feedback on LLN performance has been identified as a critical feature in the encouragement of student self-evaluation and reflective practice. The spread of results confirmed what staff in Legal Research Methods already knew about the language and literacy challenges for first year students, with no students performing at level 1 - minimally functional. 55% of students entering the Bachelor of Laws were rated in the *developing* category - level 3, which means that they have emerging awareness of audience and purpose with the capacity to organise and produce text type; because they are novice writers they produce text with variable levels of accuracy and range. This group will require moderate support in the form of teaching that includes models, in particular, sequenced materials, to guide them in developing further the legal discourse they need to progress to level 4. It is likely these students will benefit from assistance with the mechanical aspects of texts (vocabulary, grammatical structures and appropriate conventions).

8 % students performed at level 2, (limited); they are able to convey meaning on familiar topics, but with a high level of error. To guide them in developing the legal discourse requirements needed to progress to level 3, a high level of support will be required by this group of students. For example, they would benefit from the following approaches presented in the context of dialogical pedagogy such as sequenced materials embedded within the context of the current legal curriculum; clearly presented teaching that includes modeling of written and oral texts; highly explicit explanations about language features and elements in written and oral texts; opportunities for guided practice within the relevant contexts; scaffolded learning tasks developed in alignment with assessment; working with an expert/mentor; explicit formative feedback that is timely; extra time on writing tasks.

31% students performed at level 4, which means that they are capable of writing for audience and purpose, as well as writing complex texts with some inconsistencies. Minimal support is needed for this group who demonstrate they are capable of establishing their own support resources. Nonetheless, offering assistance with the mechanical aspects of texts (vocabulary, grammatical structures and appropriate conventions), as well as some of the interventions above may also prove useful. And lastly, 6% students fell into level 5, demonstrating their sophisticated writing skills. These students have control over a broad range of writing styles and purpose; in addition, they know when to use specific conventions and stylistic devices to express precise meaning. Little or no support is needed - these students are capable of initiating support from their own established resources and would probably enjoy extending their skill repertoire by mentoring others.

### Professional Development

One of the key features in the Strategy is on ongoing LLN Professional development for teachers and academic staff (see p. 4 - Stage 4: LLN Professional Development for teachers and academic staff). The quality of the early pedagogical conversations will contribute to the design and analysis of post entry assessment and build sustainable, collaborative relationships among team members. Strategy Teams are now

collaborating with the Schools of Language and Learning and Pathways and Transitions to develop a more predictive intervention strategy. Consultation with the faculty via briefings and presentations focussing on predicting and addressing future need are underway. Formal professional development courses for teachers have begun in the Vocational Education sector and will be offered in Higher Education next year. Features of the professional development include awareness raising of the ACSF, the developmental approach underpinning the Strategy, building shared philosophy, articulating concepts and language around LLN, recognition of the contextual nature of LLN skills; a commitment to the LLN skills' development of all students through explicit strategies based around an embedded approach; the effective collaboration of LLN and discipline based specialists and students facilitated by a shared meta-language to describe, assess and provide explicit feedback on LLN relevant to the discipline (Perkins, 2011, p. 27).

Informal professional development has been taking place since work began in the Faculty. Discipline, Language Learning (LL) staff and LLN Educational Developers (ED) are currently engaging in reflective practice and designing collaborative models of learning and teaching including program evaluation and curriculum revitalisation. Underpinning this productive team context is the dialogic and conversational framework, where communication is attended to and people are valued. [P]rioritising interpersonal relationships over curriculum and content material requires a reassessment ... of the roles of teachers and students" (Cadman, 2005, p. 353). In VU's whole of institution response to LLN challenges transition pedagogy (Kift, Nelson and Clarke, 2010), is directly relevant to the dialogic/conversational framework. One of the questions these changes pose is how well prepared are discipline, LL and ED, as pedagogues, to take on the challenges of this developmental approach to LLN skills, an approach that is built around contextualised post-entry LLN assessment? This process is ongoing and we are now looking towards harnessing the collective energy of the Strategy teams to extend collaboration to investigating classroom practice through action research projects. In relation to these changes, Perkins, 2011 (see p. 56 - Table 4.1) has articulated a comprehensive process which lends itself to initiating investigation about changes in practice.

### **Planning Action Research Projects**

The steps outlined on page 8 (Action Research possibilities) outline the steps, objectives and observations for developing action research projects for contextualised LLN development in faculties. Some of the features of participatory action research (PAR) provide a solid framework and practical advice for the next steps in developing the practices. Bringing discipline, language and learning, educational developers and other staff together to reflect and act on their own social and educational practices in disciplined ways will assist to make practices more coherent, just, rational, informed, satisfying and sustainable. This commitment to PAR involves distinctive expectations about participation, how to change educational practice, and the research approaches which inform these activities as they proceed. This is a theoretically informed basis for sustainable partnerships and ongoing relationships which need to be developed among participants, institutions and other stakeholders. Some of these features exist in the work established by VU staff already, but there is a need to consolidate method and content now to address the next phases of change in more comprehensive ways. These will allow what is now essentially educators' knowledge of practice to stimulate others and to become public knowledge. At every stage of the Strategy there will be opportunities for gathering data from a rich number of sources useful for program and intervention evaluations, with research, benchmarking and reporting based on comprehensive data collection and analysis (see p. 4 - Stage 5: Program and intervention evaluations, with research, benchmarking and reporting based on comprehensive data collection and analysis).

Action Research processes are directly linked to the construction of communities of inquiry and practice. According to Carr (2006) PAR is more than a research methodology; it brings people together. PAR involves groups of people working together on a 'thematic concern' (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005; Carr and Kemmis, 1986) arising in their practice. Educators concerned about the achievement of first year students at VU have already established communities of practice to this end and the Legal Discourse Community of Practice is a fine example. The CoP is one of the vehicles for communicating the new whole of institution strategy (LLN) and building a more sustainable approach. Forums such as these enable the sharing and cross-fertilisation of sectoral and disciplinary knowledge and pedagogies within VU. For details of existing networks of communication at VU see Newell (2010, p. 9 - Snapshot of LLN Strategy, Semester I, 2011,). We know that changing teaching is harder than it seems, as a generation of research on educational change shows (Fullan, 1982, 1989, 1993). However, this approach can be sustainable if we ensure that key decision makers support and understand the aims and nature of the LLN Strategy. A critical mass of discipline and

LLN specialists will be necessary throughout design and implementation of the Strategy; also there is a need to link outcomes to course and discipline specific goals and benefits. Recognising the need for high quality, focused professional development, with staff time commitments built into workloads is equally important. The following factors for consideration<sup>2</sup> are being used as triggers for further pedagogical conversations by the Strategy team as we move closer towards our collaborative goal.

- Have we established Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) levels for the course and for assessment tasks?
- What is the course context? e.g. contact hours? Capacity to vary delivery modes.
- What is the ACSF level of the student in relation to the course demands?
- What is the staff capacity to address LLN within mainstream delivery? What are the Professional Development needs? e.g. Curriculum design, assessment, inclusive teaching strategies?
- What is the pathway status of the course? What kind of LLN underpinning is required?
- What investments have been made by VUC in the Faculty in terms of LLN staff relationship building and delivery? e.g. at what stage is the current relationship?
- What level of ACSF awareness raising is required by the Faculty?

---

<sup>2</sup> VU Language Literacy Numeracy Strategy - Post Entry LLN Assessment Progress Report May 2001 - BLB 1114 Legal Research Methods (Bachelor of Laws).

**Planning Action Research projects** (adapted from Perkins, 2011, p. 56).

Step	Objective	Observations
1	Establish who needs to be involved and how	a) Who needs to provide leadership? b) Who makes the day to day decisions that might impact on the process? c) Who will be responsible for mainstream delivery and/or assessment? d) Who will provide specialist LLN input/support?
2	Establish agreed aims and objectives linked to course needs/priorities	To support LLN skill development for all students and ... a) To ... b) To ...
3	Establish shared language and concepts	a) Introduce the ACSF using the interactive workshop process b) Involve senior decision makers, discipline and LLN specialists
4	Identify what you really need to know about commencing students 'LLN skills and why	a) Identify LLN skills/levels/features required to complete the course successfully by mapping units, assessment, resources to ACSF b) Identify priorities within course and for career (not necessarily the same) c) Decide which information about student performance will be most helpful at the start of the course. (Which core skills? Which aspects of communication? Which performance features?
5	Identify appropriate PELLA tasks and assessment rubrics	a) Map assessment tasks used in first five weeks against ACSF. Ask 'What can this tell us? What can't it tell us? b) Adjust if required to better meet information needs and/or develop/identify new tasks if necessary and/or seek another means to get information required c) Decide whether can use a single tasks or need a portfolio d) Evaluate potential tasks against 5 criteria and select. As "What would performance against each ACSF level look like? Develop rubrics incorporating relevant ACSF Performance Features for LLN component?
6	Determine logistics	a) Who will manage? Who will be involved? b) When and where will students complete task/s? Independently or under supervision? c) Will it be part of summative assessment? d) Will students receive feedback on LLN performance and in what form? e) When can lecturers come together for moderation? f) Determine KPIs to underpin longer term evaluation eg. Shifts in ACSF measures, course results, retention figures, student feedback (may be local/university wide)
7	Introduce students to ACSF principles, benchmarks and language	a) Decide how and when to start talking about the importance of LLN and the fact that students are novices in discipline specific LLN b) Introduce the ACSF in an engaging way c) Provide ACSF grids for one or more core skills to be tracked over time
8	Collect data and provide student feedback	a) Involve discipline and LLN specialists in assessment b) Moderate to ensure inter-rater reliability c) Record results in accessible format d) Where appropriate, provide student feedback on strengths and weaknesses using ACSF grids
9	As for PELLNA information	a) Work with VU College. Use data to inform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions re: mainstream approaches to LLN to support student development of priority LLN skills</li> <li>• Best mix of VUC's seven strategies to build on strengths, assist all in areas of weakness, provide specialist support where most needed</li> </ul> b) Provide profile of student cohort LLN skills to University with background information on what was assessed and how
10	Monitor student progress	a) Assess and benchmark student performance regularly using mainstream assessment and/or special tasks b) Provide student feedback using ACSF
11	Evaluate impact	Gather and analyse relevant data against KPI grid

## Conclusion

While the innovative efforts have been generally successful, activity across the Australian higher education system aimed at meeting the diverse needs of students is at a point where new questions need to be asked about the nature and purpose of institutional support and intervention strategies. Change in government and institutional priorities for higher education in the near future, particularly demands for the renewal of undergraduate education, will generate ongoing debates about access and the cost of support infrastructure to manage diversity.

McInnis (2003, p. 399)

According to McInnis' case study research on institutions (2003, pp. 397, 398), VU falls into the category of a University of Applied Studies, with its origins as an institute of technology, offering practical and applied courses, strong industry-education links as well as courses in many professional areas. However, VU could also be viewed as a Consolidated University (according to McInnis), well known for its vocationally oriented programs, offering a wide range of courses, with a larger than average proportion of mature aged students in first year and adopted policies promoting access and equity and alternative forms of entry. VU is responding to the wide range of student backgrounds, but the challenge to lead the teaching and learning culture to improve LLN outcomes, relies heavily on integration and co-ordination of all academic, administrative and support programs in first year courses. How is it possible to enact a whole, systematically-managed, vision for the first year experience that is truly student focussed and is indeed greater than the sum of its many parts (Kift, 2008)?

This paper has previewed the new model for contextualised and developmental LLN skills being trialled in a multi-sector university. An outline of Stage one - the early assessment or PELLA task, representing the initial step of the pilot project undertaken in Semester 1, 2011 in the Bachelor of Laws at VU - has been presented. We began this important step by initiating pedagogical conversations with faculty staff and progressed through to collaborating on the design and delivery of early assessment task. Once the task was administered, the ACSF framework was used to develop a profile of the Language and Literacy skills of students commencing Legal Research Methods; this was followed by the making Recommendations to Faculty, based on the findings. The information gathered from Stage one of the Strategy will inform the next stages: Embedded LLN skill development in curriculum and course delivery, periodic and integrated LLN assessment to measure attainment and identify support, LLN Professional development for teachers and academic staff, program and intervention evaluations, with research, benchmarking and reporting based on comprehensive data collection and analysis.

The new layer of support staff - five LLN educational developers collaborating with Faculty and school academic staff, and LL staff (Strategy teams) - demonstrates VU's commitment towards meeting the challenge. This creative combination of expertise, which emerged from a restructure in 2009, is fundamental to the success of the Strategy. The Strategy teams will be instrumental in the subsequent stages of the intervention - developing evidence-based action research projects. Perkins describes her project (2011) as a feasibility study investigating a process for capturing LLN skills that is consistent with AUQA's *Good Practice Principles* and VU's English Language Strategy. She maintains that "[t]he next step should focus on learning how to do this on a broader scale. This includes developing appropriate policies where required, finding ways to bring the right people together, identifying and training the skilled personnel required to facilitate the process, and developing the means to capture ACSF based data in forms that make it useful and accessible for different purposes" (Perkins, 2011, p 57).

This means that key institutional players such as first year co-ordinators, Associate Deans Learning and Teaching, administrative staff, student advisors, advocates, other students services and marketing across VU's 11 campuses will need to be galvanised into working together to solve this complex relationship of managing student diversity and the closely related issues of teaching, curriculum design and delivery in first year programs. In conclusion, implementing a sustainable institution-wide approach to developing language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) competence requires long-term commitment and energy. It involves engaging all sectors at VU to establish collaborative networks working towards a common goal: the integration of LLN discipline specific assessment, resources and curriculum, contextualised to meet the needs of our diverse students.

## guage, Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, Semester I, 2011 (Newell, 2011)

Deliverables	Activities in Semester 1, 2011		Evaluation approach	Evaluation Indicators	Communication	Student group in semester 1 2011		LLN ir
	Identify needs	Deliver an intervention				Course	Study Uni	
<p>1) Develop and pilot a PELLNA process, validated tools &amp; PD within ACSF* framework</p> <p>2) Develop a VU framework for at risk task design</p> <p>3) Trial / embed ACSF* by using as a framework for PELLNA &amp; PD</p> <p>4) Contributing feedback to ACSF* review</p> <p>5) On-line Lit &amp; Numeracy testing in Semester 2</p> <p>*Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)</p>	<p>1) Collaborate with course coordinator to identify an early assessment task for PELLNA*</p> <p>2) Conduct PELLNA* writing assessment</p> <p>3) Conduct ACSF training for 21 assessors</p> <p>4) Analyse writing within ACSF</p> <p>5) Moderate assessments - Ed Developers &amp; VUC</p> <p>6) Map LLN interventions, if any, at pilot sites</p> <p>7) PELLNA* findings in HE:</p> <p>Level 1: students need urgent referral</p> <p>Level 2: students (ESL &amp; Literacy) require more support than teacher can give</p> <p>Level 3: Cohort intervention appropriate &amp; PD to assist teachers to build LLN skills</p> <p>*Post Entry Lang, Literacy, Numeracy Assessment (PELLNA)</p>	<p>1) Refer level 1 ACSF students for 1:1 support</p> <p>2) Deliver PD that addresses the findings of the PELLNA</p> <p>3) Ed Developer providing LLN support in BSW, BA(CD) in collaboration with SLL</p>	<p>Performance Story Reporting.</p> <p>In 2011, student success is not an indicator for LLN Strategy</p>	<p>1) Qualitative: focus groups</p> <p>2) Quantitative: PELLNA data</p>	<p>Reports monthly to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EdMAC</li> <li>DVC / Dir TAFE</li> </ul> <p>VU -wide Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LLN forums to raise awareness &amp; staff capability</li> <li>LLN website is being developed</li> </ul> <p>Information Exchange: Retention meetings</p>	BSW,BCI, BA, B. International	Knowing & Knowledge	SLL P
						B Laws. BA	Legal Research Methods	
						B Nursing	Framework for Nursing Practice	Scaffc develc unit by
						B. Engineering	Engineering n i community	SLL d Skills t
						Diploma Engineering	Foundation Program	
						Trad Apps Engineering		SLL & materi
						Adv Dip Legal Practice	Legal Writing	Unit d Delive
						Diploma Legal Practice (HOA)	Apply knowledge of legal system	LLN s
						Dip CSW	Sociology	Unit d Delive

## References

Australian Core Skills Framework, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

AV-CC (2002) *Forward from the Crossroads: Pathways to Effective and Diverse Australian Universities* (Canberra, Australian Vice-Chancellor's Submission to the Higher Education Review).

Birrell, Bob. Implications of Low English Standards among Overseas Students at Australian Universities [online]. *People and Place*, Vol. 14, No. 4, 2006: 53-64. Retrieved 20 September, 2011  
<http://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=332480460154352;res=IELHSS> ISSN: 1039-4788.

Cadman, K. (2005). Towards a „pedagogy of connection“ in critical research education: a REAL story. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 4, pp. 353-367.

Carr, W. (2006). Philosophy, methodology and action research. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 40 (4).

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. (1986). *Becoming critical: Education, knowledge and action research*. London: Falmer.

Dunworth, K. (2009). An investigation into post-entry English language assessment in Australian universities. *Journal of Academic Language & Learning*. Vol. 3, No. 1, 2009, A1-A13.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (1989). *The new meaning of educational change*. London: Cassell.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: probing the depths of educational reform*. London; New York: Falmer Press.

Ivanic, R, Appleby, Y Rachel Hodge, R, Tusting, K, & D. Barton (2006).“ Linking learning and everyday life: a social perspective on adult language, literacy and numeracy classes“. London, National Research and Development Centre.

James, R., Krause, K-L. & C. Jennings. (2010). *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: Findings from 1994-2009*. Centre for the Study of Higher Education. The University of Melbourne.

Jones, A. (2011). *A VU Wide Strategy for Language, Literacy and Numeracy: Stage Two*, Victoria University.

Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. (2005). Participatory action research: Communicative action and the public sphere. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd Ed.) (pp. 559-604). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Kift, Sally M. (2008). The next, great first year challenge: Sustaining, coordinating and embedding coherent institution-wide approaches to enact the FYE as "everybody"s business". 11th International Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference, An Apple for the Learner: Celebrating the First Year Experience, 30 June - 2 July 2008, Hobart.

Kift, S., Nelson, K. and J. Clarke. (2010). Transition pedagogy: a third generation approach to FYE - A case study of policy and practice for the higher education sector. *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education*, vol. 1, 1, pp. 1-20.

Krause, K-L., Hartley, R., James, R. & C. McInnis, (2005). *The first year experience in Australian universities: Findings from a decade of national studies*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Department of Education, Science and Training. Retrieved May 12, 2011  
[http://www.griffith.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/37491/FYEReport05.pdf](http://www.griffith.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/37491/FYEReport05.pdf)

Kuh, G. (2007, June). What matters to student success in the first year of university. Keynote address at the 10th Pacific Rim First Year Experience in Higher Education Conference, Regenerate-Engage-Experiment. Brisbane, Australia. Retrieved 6 May, 2011  
[http://www.fyhe.com.au/past\\_papers/papers07/fullprogram2.html](http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_papers/papers07/fullprogram2.html)

Lea M. & Street, B. 1998. Student writing in higher education: An academic literacies approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(2), 157-172.

McInnis, C. (2003). From Marginal to Mainstream Strategies: responding to student diversity in Australian universities. *European Journal of Education*. 38 (4), 387-400.

McTaggart, R., and Curro, G. (2009). Action research for curriculum internationalisation: Education versus commercialisation. In S. Jordan and D. Kapoor (Eds.), *Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change: International Perspectives* (pp. 89-106). New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Newell, F. (2010). Snapshot Language, Literacy and Numeracy Strategy, Semester I, 2011. Unpublished report, Victoria University.

Perkins, K. (2011). Profiling the LLN skills of commencing students at Victoria University, Report, Victoria University.

Skidmore, D. (2000). From pedagogical dialogue to dialogical pedagogy. *Language and Education*, 14, (4), 283-296.

Skillen, J., Merten, M., Trivett, N., and A Percy (1998). The IDEALL approach to Learning Development: a model for fostering improved literacy and learning outcomes for students. Retrieved 19 September, 2011  
<http://ro.uow.edu.au/asdpapers/145>