

Student Action - Centred Learning: A New Model for Learning and Teaching

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how, by changing our focus, we offer opportunities for students to become more autonomous and engaged in their own learning experiences. While it is placed in the context of Creative Arts learning the ideas and suggested model are applicable across all areas of the curriculum.

1. Introduction

In section 1, I will outline recent developments in the Australian tertiary sector with specific reference to the current development of National Threshold Learning Outcomes and the proposed schools National Curriculum in Arts Learning. I will then outline the current Assessment Project being implemented across UNSW to effect change in Teaching and Learning practice.

In section 2, I will discuss the need to change our perspective towards teaching and learning to incorporate a student-action centred learning approach. I will present a model that supports this approach and will conclude by providing an exemplar of a Visual Arts curriculum that involves Graduate Capabilities and Learning Performance Indicators within the parlance of a creative approach to teaching and learning. This will be considered alongside assessment processes that are “fit for purpose” to provide an ongoing learning dialogue for the student.

2. The University Setting

Within education there has been a growing focus on learning performance indicators. The very words can strike horror into the heart of teachers in creative learning fields. However; when applied with an understanding of what it means to enact creative thinking and performance, these approaches to curriculum construction can enhance the teacher’s ability to provide worthwhile creative learning experiences.

In general there has been a strong growth in the need for providing “evidence” across all aspects of learning and this in turn has required the practice in Universities to change. Long gone are the halcyon days of professors deciding what they feel like teaching and then running with their ideas. At the same time it has also meant that certain ideologies that may have held sway have become more tempered. Universities are under greater scrutiny; funding is harder to gain and the distribution of these funds is underpinned by demands for evidence based outcomes. Accountability is paramount.

For example, I recently attended a “change management workshop” for managers. It became evident very early on that there was a large schism between the academic managers and the administrative managers of the University. The latter were eager to discuss cost cutting measures, managing people out of jobs, change processes to produce more with less and so on. Not surprisingly, the academic managers were concerned with a different set of issues in the main regarding how to provide quality education in the face of an ever tightening budget. There were role playing exercises where groups were provided with scenarios in which individuals were invited to identify current problems they were having with staff and how best the situations could be handled to resolve conflicts or underperformance in a “win win scenario”.

It struck me at the time that we were all working in an institution where our primary focus should be the education of students; however the students were not mentioned in the two day workshop, except with reference to how time poor academics had become and how much extra time the University’s requirements were adding to their workload. One real area of contention amongst the academics was the introduction of several layers of evidence based learning outcomes that were now required within course outlines. Linking these learning outcomes to assessment tasks became a top priority.

2.1. The layers of learning outcomes

Universities in general develop a set of guiding principles that establish their particular aspirational

position. For example: at The University of New South Wales (UNSW), when constructing a Curriculum the academic should be cognoscente of his or her responsibility to develop learning experiences that are:

- Student centered in their approach to learning and teaching;
- Scholarly and evidence based approach to learning and teaching;
- Conducted in a well designed and engaging environment;
- Designed to embrace all aspects of a diverse learning culture;
- Flexible and incorporate innovative teaching practices;
- Focused on excellence through recognition and reward;
- Engaged in ongoing cycles of review and development.

At the same time, all Universities provide a set of Graduate Attributes or Capabilities: constructed statements of desire that reflect the aspirations explicitly stated by an institutions. In a sense they are a set of aphorisms that set the boundaries of minimum achievement while at the same time identifying an ideal.

3. The UNSW Graduate Capabilities

In the Vice Chancellor’s statement of goals it states that The University of New South Wales aspires to develop graduates who are rigorous scholars, capable of leadership and professional practice in a global community. In response to that document, the following set of capabilities has been articulated as desired learning outcomes for all UNSW students. When designing curriculum, academics are required to identify which capabilities are being pursued in the learning experiences being undertaken by students. These are then aligned with the learning outcomes and the given assessment tasks. UNSW graduates will be:

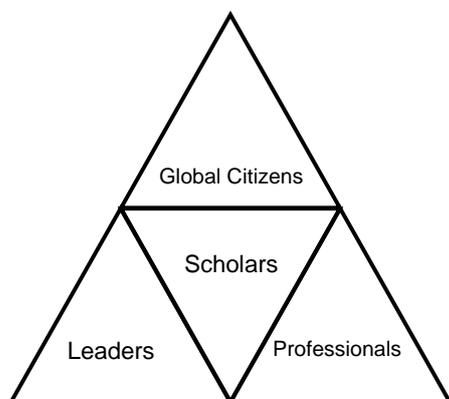


Figure 1. The diagram representing UNSW graduates’ capabilities

Table 1. Definitions of graduates

Scholars who are:	understanding of their discipline in its interdisciplinary context capable of independent and collaborative enquiry rigorous in their analysis, critique, and reflection able to apply their knowledge and skills to solving problems ethical practitioners capable of effective communication information literate digitally literate
Leaders who are:	enterprising, innovative and creative capable of initiating as well as embracing change collaborative team workers
Professionals who are:	capable of independent, self-directed practice capable of lifelong learning capable of operating within an agreed Code of Practice
Global Citizens who are:	capable of applying their discipline in local, national and international contexts culturally aware and capable of respecting diversity and acting in socially just/responsible ways capable of environmental responsibility

Why do institutions create these markers or signposts of achievement?

The cynical amongst us may suggest they are good marketing material: they advertise a University’s interest in producing current, ahead of the pack, graduates who will shape the future of the world. They evidence the desire to provide relevant learning for students and by association, produce graduates, employers would want to employ.

They are the intersection between theories of learning and the practice of teaching because it is here that the actions of students are anticipated by the educators and the outcomes of those educators’ teaching are made explicit.

Graduate capabilities; most usually the responsibility of individual institutions, are constructed at the following levels:

- Institutional
- Faculties/Schools
- Outcomes related to specific discipline needs.

4. The UNSW Assessment Project

In 2010 UNSW launched its Assessment Review. It arose from the Vice Chancellor's desire for more efficient and effective assessment for student learning and thereby providing less onerous time for academics in actual marking time and volume. The Assessment Project therefore is based on a commitment to increased efficiency, sustainability and improved educational integrity in assessment practice across the University of New South Wales. The goal is to enhance the quality of the student learning experience and to improve the workload conditions for students and staff alike. One of the essential elements is for all courses to align their assessment with the University Capabilities while also accommodating external accreditation and the new tertiary sector learning threshold outcomes.

This is a unique project in the Australian University landscape in that it is:

- 1) A 'whole of institution' project that is driven and supported by a senior leadership initiative and
- 2) Interpreted and developed at the level of practice in the schools and program teaching teams to establish the metrics and indicators for estimating and reporting the impact and outcomes.

Overall the goal can be summarized as ensuring that assessment drives the curriculum to meet the needs of the future without compromising the needs of the present (Boud 2010) and in particular to ensure that it is sustainable for academics.

5. Assessment Project Strategies

The project utilises four major strategies:

- 1) A review of assessment practices and the establishment of a local data base of assessment activity
- 2) A review and revitalization of the assessment Policy
- 3) The development of an assessment toolkit to support induction, professional development, innovation and change
- 4) Intensive professional development for practitioners and managers of assessment.

Given the disparate nature of disciplines and learning requirements, each Faculty has a unique response to achieve the aims of the project. Some Faculties have chosen to implement Faculty wide mapping and review of practice while others have targeted specific programs in the first instance. Some are in the process of wide scale curriculum change and so have used the review to provide guidance for developing the new curriculum. In some instances greater progress has occurred due to external needs for accreditation and in others the Faculties had

already begun curriculum-mapping exercises within broader Faculty reviews.

A major achievement to date in this project has been the opportunity to encourage course coordinators to recognise that they are over testing, especially the over-use of expensive mid semester exams. There has been considerable receptiveness in favour of developing formative on-line assessment tasks to promote rather than test learning.

The audit has provided some valuable information, which will inform the curriculum review in various ways; however the national disciplinary threshold standards imperatives need to be kept in mind. What is important to consider is that effective and efficient assessment implies maintenance of quality. That is, if assessment is to be effective and sustainable, it should be designed so that it is fit for purpose.

Academics engaged in the selection of content have to make judgments about relative importance of "teaching merely useful prescribed knowledge and skills against the importance of helping students develop independent thinking and really useful dispositions for life-long learning" (Internal report: Orrell). Often, due to their strong sense of accountability to the requirements of their discipline or profession, academics fear that developing students' autonomy in learning, and encouraging students' creativity and originality may compromise the content required to equip the students with appropriate learning experiences. Orrell tells us:

Accountability in content, coverage and safe practice requires a reproduction approach to teaching and learning design. The development of independence, creativity and critical thinking and reasoning requires a transformational approach. These contrasts are observed in the significant differences between a fixed content-based curriculum and a flexible, student-learning-centred curriculum.

6. Examples of Educational Integrity identified from the pilot surveys

- 1) Reduction in assessment tasks that have high risk for plagiarism collusion and cheating.
- 2) Reduction in assessments that are merely used to generate a grade.
- 3) Better-designed examinations that assess higher order thinking rather than mere recall in very large classes.
- 4) More inclusive and accessible assessments, especially examinations for ESL students and students with disabilities.
- 5) Better group-work designs and employment of technologies to ensure that the grades are an accurate representation of individual student's contribution and learning achievement.

- 6) Increased use of rubrics for formative feedback and assessing learning.
- 7) Increased effective use of self and peer assessment.
- 8) Increased uptake of Portfolio assessment, linked to capstone courses and graduate attributes in the final years of the undergraduate programs.
- 9) Improved induction to assessment and preparation of sessional teachers as assessors.
- 10) Increased use of authentic assessments (linked to real world issues and tasks) especially in the second and third years.
- 11) Increased use of explicit and formative moderation processes at the School/Faculty levels that address overall assessment design, changes to assessment design, examinations, and grading outputs.

7. The Australian Tertiary Sector

Recently we have seen the development of a national set of graduate attributes for the tertiary sector in Australia. With the change of Government, it was claimed that Australia would have a new quality and regulatory agency with “real powers to work with the tertiary education sector to lift standards and address underperformance.”

8. The Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency

The Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) has been charged with devising A national approach to regulation and quality assurance (that) will mean Australia’s knowledge and skills needs can be met in a more efficient and transparent way, enabling higher education providers to focus on what they do best – providing quality higher education.

While the rationale given is that the new agency will balance the move towards a more student-centred funding model, ensuring that increased participation will be accompanied by improvements in the quality of university teaching and learning, the following indicators identify higher levels of scrutiny and ways in which the performance of an institution can be measured:

- Domestic and international students will benefit from improved information about the performance of higher education providers, helping them make informed decisions about what and where they will study.
- Higher education providers will benefit from being able to more clearly demonstrate students’ academic performance and document what students learn, know and can do. Providers will also benefit from being able to

operate in a more streamlined regulatory environment.

- Employers will have greater confidence that graduates are well prepared for the global knowledge economy.
- Taxpayers will be able to see that value for money is being delivered and the national interest is well served.

Educators have to be able to meet those performance indicators when teaching while also maintaining focus on their core beliefs they hold within teaching their discipline. In general it can be argued that the desire for developing knowledgeable and informed students is always at the forefront of a teacher’s mind. However in this new era, these previously tacit understandings must now be made overt. The instinctive response to be wary of any scrutiny from government is understandable but it is clear that the direction has been set.

Since 2009 Australia wide Discipline-based Learning Outcome Statements have been defined concurrently across a broad range of disciplines. Disciplinary imperatives such as the belief in practice-led learning and collaborative practice in the Creative Arts have had to be addressed by the learning outcomes. The first draft of Creative Arts learning outcomes drew on the European Tuning documents, UK benchmark statements, US standards and Australian universities’ generic graduate attribute statements. These were critiqued and re-drafted by a Discipline Reference Group in parallel with initial consultations with Associate Deans and Program Coordinators at various Universities and Colleges. The following draft learning outcomes were published in 2010 and a series of information sessions were held in tertiary institution across Australia in late 2010. For the most part they have been favourably received and the consultative process has worked very well to ensure all aspects of concern have been raised and reviewed across all creative learning areas.

Table 2. CAPA Draft learning outcome statements

	Upon completion of a Bachelor degree in Creative or Performing Arts, graduates will be able to:	Upon completion of a Masters by Coursework degree in Creative or Performing Arts, graduates will be able to:
Knowledge and skills integration	Demonstrate skills and knowledge of the practice, languages, forms, materials, technologies and techniques in the creative arts discipline.	Integrate specialised and advanced skills with a developed knowledge of the creative arts discipline.
Creative thinking and exploration	Develop and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes by thinking creatively, critically and reflectively.	Generate, research and explore ideas, concepts and processes in the field through integrated creative, critical and reflective thinking.
Realisation and application	Apply relevant skills and knowledge to produce and realise works, artefacts and forms of creative expression.	Apply and refine technical skills and specialist knowledge within a sustained and resolved body of work.
Interpretation, communication, and presentation	Interpret, communicate and present ideas, problems and arguments in modes suited to a range of audiences.	Interpret, communicate and present complex work and ideas to specialist and non-specialist audiences using professional conventions.
Individual and collaborative practice	Work independently and collaboratively in the creative arts discipline in response to	Initiate, lead, negotiate and interact with others in planning, adapting to, and executing

	project demands.	creative arts projects.
Social engagement and contribution	Recognise and reflect on social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local and international perspectives to practice in the creative arts discipline.	Engage critically with social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local and international perspectives to extend practice in the creative arts discipline. Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project

9. Designing Assessment to Enhance Learning

Academics and teachers today, are required to embrace wider dimensions of assessment. They are required to design assessment to develop and evaluate a broad range of goals that assist students to progress in increasingly complex tasks and towards taking increasingly higher levels of personal responsibility for their learning achievement. Nightingale et al [12] tell us that:

“The choice of assessment method should allow reasonable judgements to be made about the extent to which the student has achieved aims, objectives or intended outcomes.”(p.10)

I advise the many academics with whom I work that they must focus on what the student might do to engage in their learning, not on what they think students might need to know. To achieve a well designed curriculum, the practices of assessment must take a pivotal position in all preliminary conversations because all goals, aims, and skills development need to be verified and student achievement assured. This is most effectively achieved through authentic learning experiences and authentic assessment practice. The proposed national school curriculum contains atomistically presented ideas that lack cohesion and form. These ideas do not add any new or progressive ideas for constructing a curriculum that will promote appropriate learning for the next generation of Australian students. Concurrent with this mooted curriculum reform, there is no evidence of governments investing

adequate funding to improve teacher education to assist them to meet these new curriculum designs..

In developing a curriculum that meets the desired outcomes for student learning there should be consistency among

- The aims and outcomes of the program
- Teaching methods used to assist in student learning
- Methods employed to assess the outcomes.

The assessment methods chosen should support the intended learning. When developing the assessment tasks there are certain key questions that an educator should address:

- What kinds of tasks will best enable students to demonstrate their understanding, skills and beliefs
- How will these tasks be assessed?
- What forms of assessment would be relevant and provide authentic learning activities for students?

10. Section 2: Constructing the Curriculum

Ramsden suggests that academics should first consider what is it they want their students to learn rather than focusing principally on what they will teach? This is the central question for teaching, as learning ought to flow from particular goals for student learning that teachers have identified. Biggs [14] referred to teaching and assessment as a design for learning. If the teacher approaches the curriculum design from this position it follows that the learning will be student centred. However, too often what is considered student centred is still focused on the actions of the teacher; not those of the students and assessment is seen as a tool for scrutiny and testing and not for learning. Under the umbrellas of University, Educational sector and discipline goals the teacher creates a curriculum thus:

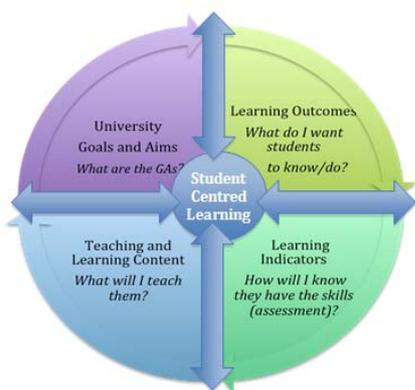


Figure 2. 4 Zones of Influence – Developing Creative Curriculum

Stufflebeam [13] tells us that “the purpose of assessment is not to prove but to improve.”

Rather than focusing on the teacher’s actions let us consider how we might reframe these questions so that the teacher becomes an enabler of student action. By focusing through the lens of student action the questions would become:

Table 3. The questions that can help a teacher become an enabler of student action

What are the university goals and aims?	What will enable students to understand that they have gained graduate capabilities?
What do I want students to know/do?	What learning activities will allow students to demonstrate that learning is occurring
What will I teach them?	What will enable students to fully comprehend and articulate what they need to know
How will I know they have the skills?	What will enable students to develop the capacity to self assess

The model then takes on a different focus: that of student actions and a more autonomous position for learning thus:

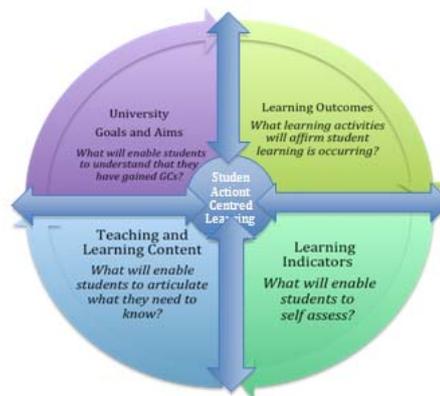


Figure 3. Model of student action centered learning

It is a fine balancing act the teacher must undertake – to accommodate the prescribed learning outcomes with the desire to focus on the student. With the ever growing imposition of institution driven needs and a workforce that demands certain outcomes it is imperative that creative arts educators are able to meet these requirements without losing the essence of the particular discipline learning needs of the individual.

A teacher directed and dominated transmission model, where the program is constructed around

content that is often a set of ideas or preferred topics designated by a teacher, can function quite independent of student input and the student's needs.

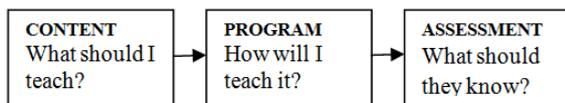


Figure 4. Teacher Directed Model

While it could be argued that a teacher directed model of teaching could embrace relevant content and be grounded in real world issues the important question to ask is: would such a model of teaching cause the students to think and to develop the highly valued, complex skills needed to function outside of classrooms?

This transition model lacks currency and relevance and far too often is not related to the future real world needs of the student. However; a more transformational model can engage students fully in the learning process and require them to seek and find relevant information and act on it. Importantly, any included content that is to be acted upon, needs to be constructed within disciplinary cultures, using the appropriate language of the discipline.

Within arts learning it is imperative that the experiential approach to learning is reinforced in both the activities done within the classroom as well as being evident within the set assessment tasks. Such assessment tasks need to enable the students to reflect upon their own progress, to establish their own goals and to incorporate the higher order levels of thinking that all independent learners need to achieve. This is particularly important when we are encouraging students to become independent and creative artists.

Historically assessment has been seen as a means to test whether students could learn and then regurgitate knowledge back in a variety of forms such as extended written pieces or finished art works and so forth. This was a diagnostic form of assessment OF learning: a process aligned to but not necessarily part of learning. A far better form is the dialogic and formative assessment that uses assessment as part of the learning process. This is assessment AS learning.

To illustrate this I will employ the UNSW Graduate Capabilities to reveal how these more universal attributes, which are also aligned with the National Learning Thresholds, can be used to develop a set of outcomes for assessment as learning in the Visual Arts. The three step process that follows was undertaken to create a matrix that exemplifies alignment of learning outcomes with University goals and capability aspirations (see Table 4).

Table 4. The three-step process

Step 1	Aligning learning outcomes with externally driven goals	A set of appropriate graduate attributes for students of the Visual Arts are constructed that are generated from the more generic overarching aspirational UNSW statements.
Step 2:	Creating a set of Learning Indicators (Assessment Tasks)	From those particular attributes created a set of indicators of learning – suggested assessment tasks are developed that will provide appropriate learning experiences to engage with the layers of attributes that the University suggests are appropriate for all graduates to achieve.
Step 3	Aligning National TEQSA Learning Outcome Statements	The draft TEQSA Learning outcome statements and aligned with the UNSW Graduate Attributes and the assessment tasks. When aligned in this way it can be seen that all levels of learning outcomes are recognised and accommodated within the constructs of the curriculum.

These are generic and not prescriptive. By using this construct of developing the learning indicators in assessment directly related to the capabilities and not to content, allows for scaffolding and developing cohesive models of learning within courses and programs.

Curriculum mapping within programs where the assessment tasks are mapped against the espoused outcomes can afford the teachers greater opportunity to map the skills, content and activities in a way that allows scaffolded approach to learning where degrees of complexity and sophistication can be built into progressively more autonomous learning experiences for students.

While my focus in this paper is upon visual arts, the principles hold true for any discipline. All curriculum development should be concerned with each of the processes to enable connectedness and engagement from students. It is imperative in the current learning environment that students can see the relevance of learning and equally important that the assessment tasks they are set have real world applications embedded in them.

	UNSW Graduate Attribute	Visual Arts Attributes	Indicators of learning: assessment ideas	TEQSA Draft Learning Outcomes
<i>Scholars who are:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of their discipline in its interdisciplinary context • capable of independent and collaborative enquiry • rigorous in their analysis, critique, and reflection • able to apply their knowledge and skills to solving problems • ethical practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • able to create works of art that display understanding of a set of interrelated yet disparate ideas. • able to discuss and apply their knowledge to contemporary issues. • able to reflect upon their own works within a broader context • able to critically evaluate their own and others' creative works 	<p>The student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create work(s) that will reflect the current political position relating to a chosen situation • write or record a discursive piece that reflects a historical and current context • Self review their creative work(s) and develop ideas for further exploration • Contribute to discussions relating to their own and others' creative works in an informed way using appropriate discourse. 	<p>Knowledge and Skills Integration</p> <p>Demonstrate skills and knowledge of the practice, languages, forms, materials, technologies and techniques in the creative arts discipline.</p> <p>Realisation and application</p> <p>Apply relevant skills and knowledge to produce and realise works, artefacts and forms of creative expression.</p>
<i>Leaders who are:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capable of effective communication • information literate • digitally literate • enterprising, innovative and creative • capable of initiating as well as embracing change • collaborative team workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to communicate ideas in a visual context • Able to Create works that incorporate the current uses of technology • Able to initiate creative ideas that reflect changes in society • Collaborate with others to communicate ideas in a creative manner to the wider community. 	<p>The student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create work(s) that communicate a point of view or express emotional content in figurative or non figurative forms. • Incorporate the use of technology within their works as appropriate • Respond to exterior influences to establish or further enhance ideas within an existing global situation • Engage in dialogue within a social medium to discuss their own and others' works • Be able to use technology to enhance their written responses to topics 	<p>Interpretation, communication, and presentation</p> <p>Interpret, communicate and present ideas, problems and arguments in modes suited to a range of audiences.</p> <p>Individual and collaborative practice</p> <p>Work independently and collaboratively in the creative arts discipline in response to project demands.</p>
<i>Professionals who are:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capable of independent, self-directed practice • capable of lifelong learning • capable of operating within an agreed Code of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to generate series of works that reflect the artist's development of ideas • Able to develop ongoing ideas into a body of works sustained by knowledge and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student will: Initiate work(s) that reveal an individual and independent view of a particular idea. • Create a wider body of works that reflect developmental thinking 	<p>Creative Thinking and Exploration</p> <p>Develop and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes by thinking creatively, critically and reflectively.</p>

	Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in professional practice that respects the creative process and supports the creative works of others 	and development of skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in appropriate discourse when discussing their own creative works Provide peers support through critiques and observation during discussions. 	
<i>Global Citizens who are:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> capable of applying their discipline in local, national and international contexts culturally aware and capable of respecting diversity and acting in socially just/responsible ways capable of environmental responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to create works that reflect a global position and engaged with the human condition on a universal level Able to engage with diversity Of meaning and context and create imagery that explores national and international issues relating to life’s experiences. Able to create works that engage with ideas of environmental sustainability and 	The student will; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create work(s) that go beyond the particular to engage with universal themes and ideas Include in their work a reflection upon the diverse elements of living Argue ideas with a comprehensive set of ideas that reflect knowledge of historical and contemporary issues. Reflect an understanding of current issues related to environmental impact as this is revealed through both their own art work and the art work of others both contemporary and historical. 	Social engagement and contribution Recognise and reflect on social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local and international perspectives to practice in the creative arts discipline.

The student- action focused model and the above matrix as presented attend to issues of student actions and use starting points related to capabilities that offer the opportunity to review content in terms of the current world situation and not rely upon a ritualised curriculum, namely, one that has been used and reused and justified on the basis that it has worked in the past.

A further required step is the evaluation process that concludes the desired learning process and ensures the assessment tasks contribute to learning and remain fit for purpose.

Table 5. Evaluation process

Step 4	Evaluation	Once the course has concluded and student’s work has been assessed the teacher can measure the outcomes against initial capabilities statements and undertake evaluative processes to ensure student learning is achieved. Courses can then be reviewed to further enhance learning opportunities as required.
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Newman & Wehlage (1993) identified these five key standards or benchmarks that support the development of deeper learning when designing curriculum for student learning:

1. Higher order thinking
2. Depth of knowledge?
3. Connectedness to the real world?
4. Encouragement of substantive conversation between students and between students and their teachers?
5. Social support for student achievement?

Generally for students to realise the types of graduate capabilities that are espoused they must be able to engage in complex levels of learning that require the students to engage in higher order thinking while establishing a connectedness to the real world. The activities that promote this level of learning and complexity also encourage conversation between students and between students and their teacher while providing social support for student achievement through the application of peer response and use of social media as a medium for communication. All these benchmarks are the multi layered issues that are involved in authentic learning and assessment.

Visual educators need to come to the realisation that devising curricula in the Visual Arts by articulating espoused learning outcomes complete with generic indicators: a process that Art Educators have often considered not relevant, provides strong evidence that the Visual Arts are an essential

component of learning. Such a direct correlation between the broad aims and the activities a student must undertake within a discipline (and in doing so comply with the University’s desire to produce graduates of who exhibit the institutionally espoused qualities), places the Visual Arts firmly within the constructs of learning that are relevant to the whole learning community. Thus removing the notion that the Arts are on the periphery or margins of learning where they have been relegated for too long.

If we can change the teacher’s focus from product oriented, content driven curricula to learning outcomes that are aligned to students’ needs and actions they will help equip learners with the means and ability to become graduates who are creative and rigorous scholars, capable of leadership and professional practice in an ever increasing global community.

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