The Griffith Graduate Career Strategy: 2011-2013

1. Introduction and Aims of the Griffith Graduate Career Strategy

Griffith University’s Graduate Career Strategy presents an institutional approach to preparing our students for successful participation in the world of work. The employability and career outcomes of our graduates are important goals of the University and achieving strong outcomes is a key indicator of our performance. It is essential that we succeed in producing work-ready graduates who have the skills and knowledge sought after by employers.

The Griffith Graduate Attributes specify the key competencies and qualities that characterise our graduates after successful completion of their studies at Griffith. http://www.griffith.edu.au/learning-teaching/graduate-attributes

These attributes include important qualities that position our graduates to succeed in their chosen careers. Not only must our graduates have achieved these attributes, they must also know what they know and feel confident in their capacity to use their skills and knowledge when they enter the workforce.

2. The Griffith Graduate Career Strategy: Key Assumptions

The Griffith Graduate Career Strategy, in keeping with Griffith’s other core enabling strategies that focus on developing the Griffith Graduate, is informed by the University’s commitment to a student lifecycle approach.

Learning Lifecycle

The career development strategy begins at the point of entry to university, continues through the students’ university studies and beyond to their lives as graduates and alumni. It acknowledges that career awareness and identity, often vague and ill-formed at point of entry, are supported and enhanced by purposefully designed learning experiences implemented over the lifecycle.

Student-Centred – Recognising Diversity, Discipline Differences and Level of Program

The strategy takes a student-centred approach to career development, recognising that Griffith students enter the University from diverse backgrounds, with a broad range of prior learning experiences, and thus require tailored and flexible learning opportunities to optimise their career aspirations and success.

Furthermore, there are significant discipline differences in career development and this strategy empowers academic elements to develop their own approaches to providing students with rich curricular and co-curricular career development opportunities. For example, most professional programs already include extensive practicum components and the preparation of students to succeed in their careers will need a different approach compared to programs that are not specifically aligned with entry to a particular profession.

Many graduates will chose a pathway after graduation that involves further coursework or research training. The strategy acknowledges the need to provide learning opportunities to prepare students for entry to these pathways in addition to entry to the workforce after graduation.

The strategy aims to enhance career outcomes for graduates from both undergraduate and postgraduate programs; however it recognises that a different approach is required given the different prior learning and life experiences that students bring to undergraduate versus postgraduate programs. Furthermore, some postgraduate programs are brief, and preclude the inclusion of extensive work-integrated learning opportunities, assuming that the majority of graduates have already obtained or are currently receiving professional practice experiences.
Partnerships

A successful graduate career strategy requires an effective partnership between students, academic and support staff, our alumni, and external stakeholders, such as industry representatives and professional bodies.

- The strategy recognises that students themselves have responsibilities for their career development, through accessing optional activities and participating in the many career-related opportunities available to them.
- Group and school staff play an important role through curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that promote career development.
- The Griffith Institute for Higher Education (GIHE) contributes through professional development of staff to enhance staff skills in curriculum development, research-informed teaching, work-integrated learning and service learning.
- The Careers and Employment Service (CES) is of course essential to an effective strategy, providing a range of curricular and co-curricular learning programs and services.
- Griffith's professional service and support units also have a strong role to play as partners in supporting the strategy, and this includes the provision of jobs on campus for students and graduates.

The formation of strong collaborative links between academic elements and central professional and support offices is considered essential to realising the effectiveness of the Graduate Career Strategy. The purpose of these partnerships is to expand the range and accessibility of career development opportunities available to students throughout the learning lifecycle and to promote well credentialed and work-ready Griffith graduates to the community.

3. Curricular and Co-Curricular Elements

Existing Practices

Effective career development requires a combination of curricular and co-curricular learning experiences. This strategy proposes that students in all programs should have access to and experience of a coordinated range of curricular and co-curricular activities, relevant to their discipline and point in the student lifecycle that will prepare them for the workforce. The design of Griffith's academic programs to enhance graduate attributes in preparation for employment is a major focus of Griffith's strategic directions.

The Griffith University Academic Plan (2011-2013) specifies some key curricular and co-curricular targets designed to promote graduate success. The Plan proposes that Griffith will:-

- Include a career development module in the first semester of first year of at least one major program in each academic group
- Provide students with identifiable work-integrated learning opportunities in all undergraduate programs
- Increase access for students to careers and employment workshops and online materials, ensuring that at least 70% of all final year undergraduates participate in such workshops.

These targets reflect Griffith's commitment to facilitating career learning outcomes for students. The strategy accepts that many examples of effective career development practice already exist. For example, work-integrated learning (WIL) has been a distinctive feature of Griffith programs for several years. Career Focus, the 'for-assessment', career development module has been embedded into several key programs, including first year GBS courses, since 2007. Career development lectures conducted within courses by Careers and Employment staff are also important examples of good practice and effective collaboration.

Similarly, Griffith can point to an extensive range of co-curricular activities, developed over many years and aimed at increasing students' awareness of career options, encouraging their participation in informal and not-for-credit work experience, building links with potential employers and facilitating the development of job search skills. Examples include Recruitment and Careers Fairs, Volunteer Experience Fairs, the Industry Mentoring Program, and on-campus and online pre-employment job search seminars and resources.

While recognising existing good practices, the strategy proposes that Griffith needs to do even more to expand its curricular and co-curricular learning activities to further enhance graduate outcomes. For example, service learning is a recent development that provides an alternative experience for students in which they have the opportunity to develop career-related skills and competency in a not-for-profit context. These experiences build on the career-related content embedded in earlier and later stages of the curriculum while at the same time enabling students to contribute meaningfully to the community.

Similarly, while we have made good progress in embedding work-integrated learning and other career development learning opportunities into the curriculum, there remain some programs that need to ensure that students have sufficient opportunities to have such experiences.

Next Steps

It is proposed that all academic elements, in partnership with professional and support elements, engage with this strategy to proactively expand Griffith’s curricular and co-curricular career development activities. The strategy will also build more effective partnerships between students, academic elements, professional/support areas of the University and external professional/industry bodies.

5. Implementation and Timelines

An Implementation Plan (Appendix 1) supporting the strategy is attached to assist academic elements and central support offices to implement specific plans with actions that reflect the Griffith Graduate Career Strategy. It outlines a range of curricular and co-curricular options and provides prompts such as timelines, budget and responsible officers to facilitate implementation.

Clearly, the expansion of career development-focussed curricular and co-curricular activities within all Griffith programs has substantial implications for resourcing and professional development of staff. Further discussion and consultation will be required to determine the resources to support the Griffith Graduate Career Strategy during 2012-2013.

6. Measuring Success

Indicators of successful outcomes from the Graduate Career Strategy will include:

a. Increase in proportion of programs with a career or professional development module (with content appropriate to the discipline) included in the first year
b. Increase in proportion of students participating in identifiable work-integrated learning or service learning opportunities in undergraduate programs
c. Increase in proportion of final year undergraduates participating in careers and employment workshops
d. Increase in graduate employment outcomes on the Graduate Destination Survey
e. Increase in numbers of students employed on campus
f. Increase in number of jobs on CareerBoard.

7. Consultation Process

The document was circulated to members of the Executive Group, Group Boards and the Learning and Teaching Committee for consultation and then proceeded to Academic Committee for approval. It is expected that each academic element and the relevant professional/support offices would develop their own complementary, tailored and discipline-specific Griffith Graduate Career Strategy for 2012-2013.

Professor Sue H Spence
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Kathy Grgic
Academic Registrar
## Appendix 1. Implementation Plan

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<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Budget</th>
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<td><strong>Curricular Strategies</strong></td>
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| Embed graduate attributes within all programs | • Provide professional development resources and workshops  
• Include embedding of graduate attributes in program convenor role  
• Include embedding of graduate attributes in new program proposals  
• Track embedding of graduate attributes in curriculum through course profile system and provide program summary reports; request improvement plans where appropriate  
• Review embedding of graduate attributes in program reviews | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs  
Director GIHE | Dec 2012  
Ongoing | |
| Embed career development content in first semester of first year | • Increase career development content in first year curriculum, offered by CES or discipline academics  
• Develop a method for tracking implementation, and report on progress; request improvement plans where appropriate | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs  
Academic Registrar | Ongoing | |
| Embed workplace learning within programs  
• WIL  
• Service learning | • Provide professional development resources and workshops  
• Include embedding of workplace learning in program convenor role  
• Include embedding of workplace learning in new program proposals  
• Track embedding of workplace learning in curriculum through course profile system and provide program summary reports; request improvement plans where appropriate  
• Review embedding of graduate attributes in program reviews | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs  
Director GIHE | Ongoing |
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| Include capstone courses in undergraduate programs                   | • Ensure capstone courses are included in undergraduate programs  
• Track implementation and report on progress; request improvement plans where appropriate | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs  
Director GIHE | - Ongoing |
| Facilitate exposure to industry and professional representatives within disciplines | • Facilitate teaching by guest representatives from industry / professions  
• Enhance contribution to program advisory boards by industry / professions | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs | Ongoing  
Ongoing |
| Increase feedback to academic elements about curricular strategies    | • Map WIL, SL and embedded career development learning through course profiles  
• Provide feedback to academic elements  
• Request improvement plans | DVC (Academic)  
Group PVCs | Dec 2012  
Dec 2012  
March 2013 |
| Increase opportunities within the curriculum to develop skills and knowledge in research | • Increase staff professional development about research-informed teaching  
• Increase research methods courses or content in the curriculum  
• Facilitate research placement opportunities within or outside the curriculum  
• Implement research mentor schemes | DVC (Academic)  
DVC (Research)  
Group PVCs  
Director GIHE | Ongoing |
| Prepare Group and School / Department action plans to reflect the strategy | • Ensure Group and School / Department action plans identify areas for implementation and improvement | Group PVCs  
Deans L & T  
Heads of Schools | June 2012 |
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<th>Co-Curricular strategies</th>
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| Build contacts with employers and knowledge of career options | • University Careers Fairs  
• Recruitment agencies  
• Griffith website for employers | Academic Registrar | Ongoing  
Ongoing  
June 2012 | |
| Increase engagement with Industry | • Industry mentoring program  
• Industry networking events  
• Establish a register (database) of alumni who would be willing career mentors  
• Establish a career mentoring scheme with alumni mentors  
• Optimise web access for employers to careers and employment information | Academic Registrar | Ongoing  
June 2012 | |
| Increase job opportunities | • Jobs on Campus  
• CareerBoard employment placement service | Academic Registrar | Dec 2012  
Ongoing | |
| Build skills, including job search skills | • Leadership programs  
• Job-seeking workshops  
• Individual career consultations  
• Increase web resources and web-advising | Academic Registrar | Ongoing | |
| Enhance practice experience | • Work experience  
• Not-for-credit volunteering | Students  
Students | Ongoing  
Ongoing | |

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| Griffith Graduate Career Strategy Coordinating and Evaluation Group | • Working group membership includes:  
 o Director, GIHE (Chair)  
 o Academic Registrar or nominee  
 o Head, CES  
 o Coordinator, Service Learning  
 o Coordinator, WIL (GIHE)  
 o A Dean L & T | Director, GIHE | Establish March 2012  
Ongoing | |
| Develop communication plan | • Communication to schools / departments and program convenors | Director, GIHE  
Deans L & T | April 2012 | |