Principle 7
Continuously improve teaching practice through participation in professional development, and critical reflection informed by a range of evaluation approaches.

Case Study
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2009 Griffith Award for Excellence in Teaching

In 2005, to improve my teaching and enhance student engagement with learning about information systems I enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education. This exercise in professional and personal development started the most enlightening period of my work at the University.

Engaging with scholarly works in the areas of higher education, teaching in my own discipline and engaging with a process of understanding, evaluating and improving how I did my job became fuel for the fire. Since the immediate aim of this professional education was to improve my ability to engage students with learning about information systems I devised an action research project that has become the basis of my research for a Masters in Higher Education I used the course analysis and redesign exercises to start a scholarly process of gaining and analysing student feedback and using it to inform course design and implementation. The cyclic nature of action research is such that educational design is continuously responsive to changes in student needs. Focused improvements are based upon continuous reflection and best practice researched in relevant education literature in IT education, experiential learning, constructivism, reflective learning, teaching and learning theory, engagement and motivation.

Completion of a Grad Cert, and ongoing enrolment in a Masters of Higher Ed has underpinned much of the innovation and development I have undertaken since then. Formal study in learning and teaching in higher education has fuelled the fire, and been the most enlightening period of my work at the University to date.

I have engaged with the meetings and endeavours of the Scholarship of Learning and Teaching Community of Practice (SoLT_CoP) since its inception. Taking an active role in promoting excellence in teaching, I lead the Peer Review of Teaching (PRO-Teaching) initiative, a collaborative endeavour of the SoLT_CoP established to provide focused development for those interested in improving aspects of their teaching practice through peer observation. As a result of this project I was invited to collaborate with Associate Professor Glenn Finger on a Level 3 Griffith Grant for Learning and Teaching focusing on peer review in the School of Education and Professional Studies. The process has been used as a model for other elements in the university. Several publications are planned from this project. Collaboration has commenced on publication with two colleagues in EPS. I have been successful in achieving a Level 2 Griffith Grant for Learning and Teaching to undertake a broader peer review project in the SEET Group focusing on “Putting the Principles (Learning and Teaching) to Work in SEET”. Engaging in scholarly discussion and leading a process to provide developmental peer review and observation of teaching with guidance from the GIHE has provided a mechanism by which staff within the Groups and across the wider university can gain information for improving their teaching practice. There are opportunities for publication of research outcomes from these projects which will advance the scholarly work of my colleagues and I. This scholarly involvement in teaching and learning activities has also led to leadership roles as a member of two University-wide committees, the Educational Excellence Committee and Programs Committee.