Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes
a project to develop and implement a pilot program of external Peer Review of Teaching at four Australian universities

Final Project Report
June 2009

Professor Geoffrey Crisp, The University of Adelaide (Project Leader)
Professor Royce Sadler, Griffith University
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause, Griffith University
Ms Margaret Buckridge, Griffith University
Professor Sandra Wills, University of Wollongong
Dr Christine Brown, University of Wollongong
Ms Jan McLean, The University of New South Wales
Dr Helen Dalton, The University of New South Wales
Dr Kerrie Le Lievre, The University of Adelaide (Project Manager)
Ms Barbara Brougham, The University of Adelaide (Project Officer)

Centre for Learning and Professional Development
The University of Adelaide

Griffith Institute for Higher Education
Griffith University

Centre for Educational Development and Interactive Resources
University of Wollongong

Learning and Teaching @ UNSW
The University of New South Wales

A key outcome from this project is the website
Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes: a project to develop and implement a pilot program of Peer Review of Teaching at four Australian universities
http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview
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CONTENTS

List of Figures ................................................................. iv

Executive summary ......................................................... 1

1. Introduction .............................................................. 3
   1.1 Project team ............................................................ 3
   1.2 Project aims ............................................................ 3
   1.3 People involved ......................................................... 4
   1.4 Dissemination methods ............................................... 5
   1.5 Related ALTC projects ............................................... 6

2. Development of protocols, documentation and resources ............... 8
   2.1 Approach and methodology ........................................ 8
   2.2 Literature review ..................................................... 10
   2.3 Development of protocols and criteria ............................ 10
   2.4 2007 pilot program ................................................... 13
   2.5 2008 pilot program ................................................... 14
   2.6 Consistency check .................................................... 15
   2.7 Feedback ............................................................... 15
   2.8 Response to feedback ................................................ 20

3. Peer Review Team Member professional development resources ....... 22
   3.1 Internal Peer Review Team training resources ................. 22
   3.2 External Peer Review Team Member training resources ....... 22
   3.3 Information and training session agendas ....................... 23
   3.4 Feedback from dissemination workshops ....................... 23
   3.5 Notes to promotion committees ................................... 23

4. Project website .......................................................... 24
   4.1 Website content ....................................................... 24

5. Dissemination workshops ............................................... 25
   5.1 Aims of the workshops .............................................. 25
   5.2 Program ............................................................... 25
   5.3 Promotion of the workshops ....................................... 26
   5.4 Participants ............................................................ 26
   5.5 Feedback ............................................................... 27
   5.6 Responses to feedback .............................................. 27

6. Analysis ..................................................................... 28
   6.1 Factors critical to the success of the project .................. 28
   6.2 Factors impeding the success of the project ................... 28
   6.3 Extent to which the project outcomes are amenable to implementation in a variety of institutions and/or locations .......................... 29

7. Conclusion .................................................................. 30

8. Recommendations ....................................................... 31

9. Appendices .............................................................. 33
   9.1 Appendix 1: Summative peer review of teaching; a literature review ........... 34
   9.2 Appendix 2: Pro formas and other material produced for/used in the project .... 47
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1  Question 2: What factors influenced your decision to participate in the project as a reviewer? ................................................................. 17

Figure 2  Question 3(a): How did you feel about participating in a summative peer review of another academic? Did it raise any ethical questions for you? ......................... 17

Figure 3  Question 3(b): If so, how did you resolve these? ......................................................... 18

Figure 4  Question 4: What was your opinion of the procedures for Internal Peer Review? .... 18

Figure 5  Question 5: What was your opinion of the procedures for External Peer Review? .... 19
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summative peer review of teaching has the ability to improve both the status and the quality of teaching at tertiary level, by encouraging the promotion of exceptional teachers and academics engaged in the scholarship of teaching at all levels.

Aims and deliverables

The project aimed to:

- create a robust summative peer review process with the potential to foster and acknowledge excellent teaching and learning in Australian universities, particularly by being integrated with the promotion process;
- establish tools and protocols for the external peer review of teaching; and
- articulate ground rules and principles for a sustainable, effective and customisable process of internal and external peer review of teaching.

Rigorous and adaptable protocols, processes and tools were developed for Internal Peer Review of Teaching (focussing on peer observation of classroom teaching) and External Peer Review of Teaching (focussing on peer evaluation of written materials and documentation). These were grounded in a thorough review of the literature around summative peer review of teaching, and trialled in pilot programs over two years. Feedback was collected from participants after each pilot program and used to modify and refine all documentation.

For a summative peer review of teaching program to be successful, peer reviewers must be trained and experienced. A set of professional development resources for Internal and External Peer Review Team members was therefore developed, including model session agendas, video clips of classroom teaching, and sample promotion applications.

All resources produced by the project are available on the project website at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview.

Dissemination

The project outcomes were disseminated by means of a successful series of regional dissemination seminars. These seminars were designed to not only communicate the aims, results and products of the project to stakeholders, but also open discussion about the summative peer review of teaching, expose a wide range of academics to the process of peer review and encourage understanding through engagement with the documents and tools. The dissemination seminars also explicitly encouraged the adaptation of protocols and reporting tools to suit different environments.

Conclusion and recommendations

As universities across Australia develop teaching-only positions and teaching-intensive career pathways, they also need to develop promotion processes that allow academics to be promoted on teaching grounds. This project offers functional, adaptable and academically rigorous processes, protocols and tools that universities can use to provide appropriate career options for academics who choose to focus on teaching.
In response to the findings of the project, the project team offers the following recommendations:

- that a further project be established with a particular focus on the implementation of summative peer review systems and engagement with senior management and promotion committee members;
- that institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program support it by appointing a designated Learning and Teaching expert on each promotion committee, and by giving promotion committee members professional development in the area of interpreting teaching-centred applications and peer review reports;
- that institutions which choose to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program adapt it to suit their circumstances, rather than adopting it in its current form (resources to assist in this process are available on the project website: http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview);
- that institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program first implement the formative protocol for Internal Peer Review of Teaching, and run it for a year before implementing the summative protocols. This will give peer reviewers time to train, and candidates for promotion time to become accustomed to the processes and criteria involved; and
- that institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program modify their promotion processes and criteria that relate to teaching as they adapt the peer review protocols and criteria, to ensure alignment and lead-in time for those wishing to engage in summative peer review of their teaching.
1. INTRODUCTION

This project had its genesis at Emeritus Professor Adrian Lee’s workshop on external peer review of teaching, which took place at the University of New South Wales on 23 September 2004. The workshop focussed on summative peer review of teaching and its role in institutional leadership for excellence in learning and teaching, particularly in relation to the academic promotion process.

The project ran from November 2006 to May 2009, and was funded under the 2006 round of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council’s (formerly the Carrick Institute’s) Priority Projects Program. It was a collaborative effort between The University of New South Wales (Learning and Teaching @ UNSW), The University of Adelaide (Centre for Learning and Professional Development), Griffith University (Griffith Institute for Higher Education), and the University of Canberra (UC Teaching and Learning Centre). The University of Canberra was unable to continue as a partner in the project, and was replaced by the University of Wollongong (Centre for Educational Development and Interactive Resources) in mid-2007.

1.1 Project team

The original project team leader was Associate Professor Michele Scoufis (The University of New South Wales); the original project manager and project officer were Mr Hamish Dobbs and Mr Michael Brereton (The University of New South Wales). Professor Yoni Ryan from the University of Canberra was also a project team member in the initial stages of the project.

The project team would like to thank these team members for their invaluable contributions to the early stages of the project.

Current project team members

Professor Geoffrey Crisp (CLPD, The University of Adelaide) as project leader
Dr Kerrie Le Lievre (CLPD, The University of Adelaide) as project manager
Ms Barbara Brougham (CLPD, The University of Adelaide) as project officer
Professor Royce Sadler (GIHE, Griffith University)
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause (GIHE, Griffith University)
Ms Margaret Buckridge (GIHE, Griffith University)
Professor Sandra Wills (CEDIR, University of Wollongong)
Dr Christine Brown (CEDIR, University of Wollongong)
Ms Jan McLean (TL@UNSW, The University of New South Wales)
Dr Helen Dalton (TL@UNSW, The University of New South Wales)

1.2 Project aims

The primary aim of this project was to develop the capacity within Australian universities to recognise, reward and promote quality teaching, and in so doing, improve the recognition of teaching within the culture of Australian universities.

To achieve this, the project aimed to:
- develop, trial and finalise a robust summative peer review process with the potential to foster and acknowledge excellent teaching and learning in Australian universities;
- establish tools and protocols for the external peer review of teaching;
- articulate ground rules and principles for a sustainable, effective and customisable process of internal and external peer review of teaching; and
establish a website to inform the wider community of the project’s processes and results and to facilitate further sharing of practice.

1.3 People involved

The project involved consultation with internal reference groups, an external reference group and an independent external assessor, as well as the many academics who trialled peer review procedures both as peer reviewers and as candidates for review over the course of the project.

External reference group

The project team assembled an international reference group to give feedback on protocol documents and tools, and on the project plan itself. Its members were:

- Emeritus Professor Alan Jenkins, Oxford Brookes University (UK);
- Dr Mary Taylor Huber, Senior Scholar, Carnegie Foundation for the Foundation of Teaching (US);
- Dr Matthew Kaplan, Associate Director, Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan (US);
- Emeritus Professor Adrian Lee, former Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Quality Improvement), The University of New South Wales (Australia); and
- Ms Margaret Buckridge, Griffith Institute for Higher Education, Griffith University (Australia).

Margaret Buckridge became a member of the project team in 2007, and was replaced on the reference group by:

- Professor Steve Dinham, Professor of Educational Leadership and Pedagogy, University of Wollongong (Australia).

External assessor

Higher Education Development Consultant Professor Owen Hicks, former Director of Organisational and Staff Development Services at The University of Western Australia, served as external assessor for the project. Professor Hicks provided advice and feedback on the evaluation tools used throughout the project. He attended a dissemination workshop at Edith Cowan University on 9 April 2009, and assessed the protocol documents, training materials, workshop feedback and project website. His report is included in the appendices to this document.

Other acknowledgments

The project team would like to thank the many academics from The University of Adelaide, Griffith University, the University of Wollongong and The University of New South Wales who participated in the 2007 and 2008 pilot programs of peer review, either as peer reviewers or by submitting their classroom work or promotion applications for review, as well as the academics from The University of Adelaide who consented to be filmed or to have their promotion applications de-identified for use as peer reviewer training resources, and everyone who participated in regional dissemination workshops and gave feedback to the project team.

The project team also thanks Professor Marcia Devlin and Ms Terry McCormick (Deakin University), Professor Ron Oliver, Ms Alison Bunker and Ms Rosita Mulqueen (Edith Cowan University), and Ms Debbie Owen (The University of New South Wales) for their assistance in hosting and publicising dissemination workshops.
1.4 Dissemination methods

A variety of strategies were used for disseminating the project’s objectives and results both to specific groups, and more broadly across the Australian scholarly community.

**Project website**

A project website was established at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview in March 2009. This identified the project team and set out the deliverables produced for public access and use, including protocol documents and reporting tools, peer reviewer training resources, relevant issues and related links. The website was linked to the University of Adelaide’s Centre for Learning and Professional Development site. A public group with a link to the website was set up on the ALTC Exchange; its title is ‘Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes’.

The site has been publicised through the ALTC Exchange and the project’s dissemination workshops. It has been regularly updated with new information and the latest versions of project documents since it was first established.

**Dissemination workshops**

Between 2 March and 9 April 2009, members of the project team presented a series of regional dissemination workshops. These were hosted at Deakin University, The University of Adelaide, Griffith University, The University of New South Wales and Edith Cowan University.

The workshops targeted academics working in the field of learning and teaching: particularly Heads of Academic Development Units, Deans and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching), Heads of Schools and Disciplines, and academics qualified by the project’s standards to serve as peer reviewers. Academics from 30 universities across Australia attended the workshops.

**Report publication**

This report will be published on the project website in June 2009. It will also be published in print form and distributed to all Australian universities.

**Conference presentation**

In July 2009 Professor Geoffrey Crisp will present a workshop ‘Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes: Trialling the Documentation and Procedures Developed for an ALTC Project’, based on the dissemination workshops discussed above, at the conference HERDSA 2009: The Student Experience in Darwin.

The project team may also produce a journal article based on the project literature review, which is included in the appendices of this report.

**Project communications**

The project team identified three major groups of stakeholders in the project, and communicated with all three to differing degrees.

The *primary stakeholders* were the academics and senior managers who would be responsible for developing, implementing, and administering Summative Peer Review of teaching programs. They included Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Academic), Heads of Academic Development Units and other members of those units, and relevant Human Resources staff members.
Representatives of this group were involved in the project both at the planning stage, and in the dissemination stage. Heads and members of Academic Development Units at the four partner universities, as well as members of an Internal Reference Group at the University of New South Wales, participated in the trials as peer reviewers, consulted on the development of protocol documents and criteria lists, and attended dissemination seminars to engage with the final versions of the project protocols documents and reporting forms and give feedback. However, the project team did not engage as closely with senior managers as with other stakeholders in this group, in recognition of their expressed preference to see completed documents rather than early drafts.

The secondary stakeholders were those academics who are or will be in teaching-oriented career pathways, or who have a strong teaching element to their work and research profiles, and who will be able to use the peer review processes in applying for promotion.

Representatives of this group were involved in the project as volunteers, allowing their classroom teaching or written applications for promotion to be assessed by peer reviewers. They also gave the project team feedback by participating in a round-table discussion held at the University of Adelaide's Centre for Learning and Professional Development in 2008. Some interested academics in this group also attended dissemination seminars and gave feedback to the project team.

The tertiary stakeholders identified by the project team were academics eligible to work as peer reviewers, and members of promotion committees.

Representatives of this group were involved in the project as volunteer peer reviewers for both Internal and External Peer Review, and gave feedback to the project team by participating in a series of semi-structured interviews. Some interested academics in this group also attended dissemination seminars and gave feedback on the project to the project team. The project team did not interact extensively with promotion committees at each of the partner institutions during the project, in recognition of this group of stakeholders' preference to work with completed documents rather than early drafts and developing processes. However, Professor Sandra Wills and Dr Christine Brown contributed substantial insights from the University of Wollongong's development of internal peer review processes for promotion purposes, and Ms Margaret Buckridge interviewed promotion committee members at Griffith University in late 2008 and noted their concerns as to the amount of value that the resources developed by the project team would add to the promotion process.

Communications between the project team members were predominantly conducted through email or conference calls; however, the project team also met face-to-face in Sydney during 2006 and 2007, and at the University of Wollongong in August 2008. Members of the project team shared the role of presenter for the dissemination workshops.

1.5 Related ALTC projects

The project is related to three ALTC-funded projects on peer review of teaching.

Dr Kerri-Lee Harris (The University of Melbourne):

*Peer Review of Teaching in Australian Higher Education: Resources to support institutions in developing and embedding effective practices and policies* (The University of Melbourne, the University of Wollongong, Deakin University).
Dr Jo McKenzie (University of Technology Sydney):

*Embedding peer review of learning and teaching in e-learning and blended learning environments* (University of Technology Sydney, Curtin University of Technology, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, University of South Australia).

Dr Denise Wood (University of South Australia):

*Peer Review of Online Learning and Teaching* (University of South Australia, Queensland University of Technology, Monash University, RMIT University, Griffith University, Edith Cowan University, University of Tasmania, University of Southern Queensland, Lancaster University UK).

Dr Maureen Bell, a member of Dr Kerri-Lee Harris’ project team, was a peer reviewer for this project at the University of Wollongong.

Professor Geoffrey Crisp presented a poster about the project and publicised the regional dissemination workshops at the *National Colloquium Peer Review of University Teaching: Capitalising on Collegial Expertise and Feedback* held at the University of Melbourne on 21 November 2008.

The project made contact with both Dr Jo McKenzie and Dr Denise Wood in 2009, and invited them to attend the dissemination workshops held at the University of Adelaide and the University of New South Wales. Dr McKenzie sent representatives to the University of New South Wales workshop.

References to these projects and links to current project websites have been included in the Peer Review of Teaching website.
2. DEVELOPMENT OF PROTOCOLS AND DOCUMENTATION

The primary deliverables of the Peer Review of Teaching for Promotion Purposes project were: a series of protocol documents setting out procedures for Internal Peer Review of Teaching (that is, the peer observation of classroom teaching) and External Peer Review of Teaching (peer evaluation of written materials and documentation); reporting forms for Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching; training resources for peer reviewers; and a project website for the dissemination of these resources.

2.1 Approach and methodology

Approach

The project focussed on developing protocols, processes and tools specifically for the summative peer review of teaching. This was for two reasons. Firstly, it was to ensure that these protocols, processes and tools retained a clear focus and were appropriate for the job of summative peer review, as processes and tools designed for formative use and adapted to serve summative purposes might be inappropriate for the task and misdirect the project. Secondly, it was to avoid redundancy: many effective protocols, processes and tools for formative peer review of teaching already exist.

The project outcomes were, however, designed with the understanding that they could be adapted to formative use if necessary by a given institution or pair of partner institutions.

Methodology

The research methodology used in this project was designed to add value to the promotion process for teaching-priority applications, by introducing first-order evidence and expert opinions into the deliberations of promotion committees.

The peer review methodology was designed so that it would test processes and tools without adversely affecting the promotion prospects of volunteers who participated as candidates for peer review. Volunteer candidates for peer review were therefore not required to submit their peer review reports as part of their application packages. However, they were given the option of doing so if they wished, and some did.

The methodology comprised the following steps:

1. Applicants for promotion for whom excellence in teaching was a significant component of their case for promotion at each of the partner universities were approached to participate in the project.
2. Relevant partner universities were informed of the number, level and discipline/Faculty of applications for promotion. They appointed one External Peer Review Team for each external application forwarded for review. These peer review teams comprised one staff member with credentials and experience in learning and teaching, and one discipline expert.
3. Applicants were shown a master list of available internal peer reviewers; while they were not permitted to choose their reviewers, they were permitted to exclude potential reviewers for their particular application.
4. Each partner university appointed one Internal Peer Review Team for each local application for promotion. These peer review teams comprised one staff member with credentials and experience in learning and teaching, and one discipline expert.
5. All peer reviewers underwent some professional preparation.
6. The Internal Peer Review Teams met with applicants before observing their teaching to discuss the focus of the exercise.

7. The Internal Peer Review Teams observed applicants' teaching abilities at least once.

8. The Internal Peer Review Teams met with applicants again after an observation session to determine whether the session was representative of normal teaching practice and situation.

9. The Internal Peer Review teams prepared written summative evaluation reports reflecting upon the evidence they have observed against the stated criteria.

10. The Internal Peer Review Teams' reports were forwarded to applicants, who had the opportunity to write a commentary on their content. If there was a marked discrepancy between the two reports, or between a report and the applicant's self-assessment, an applicant had the option of requesting one second review by a new Internal Peer Review Team.

11. The applicants' de-identified application packages, including the Internal Peer Review teams' reports, were forwarded to one or more of the partner universities for external review.

12. The External Peer Review Teams evaluated the evidence of excellence in teaching presented in the applicants' teaching portfolios, and prepared written summative evaluation reports upon it.

13. The application packages, including both Internal and External Peer Review reports, were returned to the originating university, and to the applicants.

14. Applicants had the opportunity to write a commentary on the contents of the External Peer Review Teams' reports. In the event of a marked discrepancy between the two reports, or between a report and the applicant's self-assessment, applicant had the opportunity to request a second review by a new External Peer Review Team.

15. Some application packages for External Peer Review were re-submitted for External Peer Review at partner institutions other than the original reviewing university as part of a consistency trial.

16. The applicants clearly knew their Internal Peer Review Team members, as this form of peer review involves a face to face classroom presence. The identity of the External Peer Review Team members was not made known to the applicant, but was made known to the Project Manager.

17. After completion of the project, feedback on procedures, forms and results was collected from participants using focus groups, and from reviewers using structured interviews.

Promotion cycles at some of the partner institutions did not coincide with the timing of the peer review trials in 2007 and/or 2008. In these instances, volunteers for the role of candidate for peer review were sourced from other locations, including lists of ALTC citation holders and University teaching award holders.

The survey methodology for the evaluation stage of the project was based in grounded theory and used a semi-structured interview methodology to gather data. The methodology, which derived from ethnography, consisted of the following steps:

1. Internal Peer Review Team members and External Peer Review Team members were selected as per the project protocols.

2. The Project Manager and Project Leader developed a schedule of questions for structured interviews.

3. The structured interview questions were reviewed by a member of the sample group.

4. The interview questions were adjusted in response to the feedback provided by the reviewer.

5. The Project Manager contacted each individual involved in an Internal Peer Review Team or External Peer Review Team to provide written information about this phase of the project, and seek their consent to an interview. The Project Manager sent a written information sheet
and a consent form to the reviewers, and upon return of signed and witnessed consent forms arranged interview times (interviews of External Peer Review Team members at partner universities were conducted by telephone by the Project Manager, or in person by project team members at the relevant partner institution).

6. The interviewer/s had transcriptions of the interviews typed by a professional transcription service and returned them to interviewees for confirmation/change.

7. The Project Manager analysed the interview notes for issues, claims and concerns reported to identify key themes.

8. Identified central themes were used to inform any recommendations made, including recommendations for further investigation.

The peer review methodology and survey methodology were cleared by the University of Adelaide’s Human Research Ethics Committee in August 2008 (approval number H-088-2008).

2.2 Literature review

The first stage in the development of protocols for summative peer review of teaching, documentation and assessment tools, and resources, was to conduct a literature review focussed on summative peer review of teaching. The literature review investigated:

- the need for summative peer review of teaching programs in Australian universities;
- the prerequisites for establishing successful summative peer review programs;
- appropriate criteria for evaluation and appropriate material for inclusion in peer evaluation;
- which staff members to peer review;
- when and how often to carry out peer review; and
- issues informing academics’ responses to summative peer review of teaching.

The literature review is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

2.3 Development of protocols and criteria

Development of the project’s original protocols, proformas and processes took place primarily at the University of New South Wales, and involved consultation with the partner institutions, internal and external reference groups, the National Tertiary Education Union, Human Resources representatives, Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching), Academic Teaching Fellows, and relevant academics at each of the partner institutions.

Protocols

As it was not feasible to develop protocols or tools for summative peer review that matched exactly the existing criteria for promotion and for the presentation of evidence to a promotion committee at each university, the project team chose to produce a set of generic documents that universities could adapt to suit their circumstances.

The project team initially drew on the literature review to develop protocols, processes and tools solely for the summative peer observation of classroom teaching and written materials and documentation, for promotion purposes, as opposed to formative peer review for developmental purposes. The primary decision made regarding the development of the protocols and processes was the need to find a balance between the ideal cases and situations set out in the literature, and the pragmatic reality of running a peer review system in universities where staff workload and the allocation of dedicated resources to peer review are contestable issues.
It was decided to separate peer observation of classroom teaching and peer evaluation of written materials and documentation into two branches of peer review reviewed by two separate Peer Review Teams, as this would diminish logistical difficulties, maximise the objectivity of the process, and allow for benchmarking between institutions where appropriate. The branch of the process dealing with peer observation of classroom teaching was named *Internal Peer Review of Teaching* to highlight the fact that it sources peer reviewers from within the same university as the candidate being reviewed; the branch dealing with peer evaluation of written materials and documentation was called *External Peer Review of Teaching*, to emphasise the fact that it sources peer reviewers from a partner institution.

Following recommendations from the literature review, it was decided to tie both branches of the peer review process to the promotion process, both putting the timing and frequency of the peer review under the control of the candidate for promotion and avoiding the need to create a large and complex universal system. The project team also specified the need for a diverse team of peer reviewers for Internal Peer Review of Teaching, with Peer Review Teams to comprise two peer reviewers with different areas of expertise, one of whom would be a broad match for the candidate’s discipline area and one of whom would be an expert in Learning and Teaching, and both of whom would be experienced teachers, from a higher level within the university than the candidate for promotion, and with specific experience in the learning and teaching field (markers for eligibility were specified as ALTC or other citations for teaching work, and/or a scholarly reputation in the area of learning and teaching). A requirement that Internal Peer Review Team members undergo an induction process including professional development in peer evaluation as a team was built into the protocol documents at this stage.

To increase both the objectivity and the transparency of the process, it was decided that candidates for peer review would not be given the option of choosing the members of their Internal Peer Review Team. Nor would Internal Peer Review Team members be sourced from among a candidate’s immediate colleagues. Instead, they would be drawn from a relevant broad discipline area and from Learning and Teaching areas, and assigned to the candidate by the program administrators. However, for ethical reasons, candidates would be given the right to veto potential members before the final Peer Review Team was convened. This veto power was modelled on the right of PhD students to veto a name or names from a list of potential examiners.

In designing the process of internal peer review, it was decided to implement a system, discussed in the literature review, in which the observed session or sessions were preceded by a pre-observation meeting and followed by a post-observation meeting. The pre-observation meeting was designed to give the candidate for peer review an opportunity to give her or his reviewers contextualising information about the course, practice and observed session, and to discuss the criteria and how they might apply to the observed session; the post-observation meeting was intended to give the Peer Review Team the opportunity to ensure that the observed session was representative, and to organise a second observed session if necessary.

As there are fewer guidelines or examples available in the literature for structuring external peer review of teaching processes in the literature, the project team then adapted the Internal Peer Review protocols were then adapted as far as was relevant for the external peer review process. The project team added to the model the need for an External Peer Review Team drawn from a different university, and for a consistent partner university with which to undertake External Peer Review of Teaching.

The protocol documents were developed with the intent that they could and should be adapted to suit individual institutions or pairs of partner institutions that choose to adopt the program.
Criteria
The criteria for evaluation for both Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching were developed from publicly available documents including the UNSW Guidelines on Learning that Inform Teaching, and the Australian College of Education Quality Teaching Awards. The criteria for Internal Peer Review of Teaching were designed to address not only the candidate's knowledge of their subject matter, but also their specific classroom skills, while avoiding issues of teaching style. The criteria for External Peer Review of Teaching were chosen to focus on knowledge of subject matter, scholarly skills related to teaching and the scholarship of teaching, and alignment between philosophy and practice.

Like the protocol documents, the criteria were chosen in recognition of the fact that they could be adapted to suit individual institutions or pairs of partner institutions in practice.

Feedback
During the development process, the external reference group provided feedback on the protocol documents and project plan, including the following points:
- the need to make provision for training and support for Peer Review Team members;
- the need for the project team to engage with and review the peer reviewers to identify and respond to any issues in the review process, and observe how to develop a support system for peer reviewers;
- the need to consider establishing benchmarks within and between universities; and
- the need to employ a broad definition of ‘teaching’, which includes elements such as leadership roles and scholarship of teaching.

Original Internal Peer Review of Teaching protocols
The original Internal Peer Review of Teaching protocol document was designed to form a detailed guide to the Internal Peer Review process for administrators, peer reviewers and applicants for promotion. The document worked through the steps in a model Internal Peer Review process, provides relevant information for all of those involved in the process, and identifies the staff members overseeing the administrative elements.

Original Internal Peer Review of Teaching supporting documents
The original Protocol document was supported by an ‘Observation of a Teaching Session’ booklet, which served as a guide for Peer Review Team members for the pre-observation meeting, observed session/s and post-observation meeting. It included a list of open-ended and reflective questions for Peer Reviewers to ask in each meeting, based on the University of New South Wales’ ‘Guidelines that Inform Teaching at UNSW’ (http://www.guidelinesonlearning.unsw.edu.au), the literature review, and A.W. Chickering and Z.F Garson’s 1987 paper ‘Seven Principles of good practice in undergraduate education’ (AAHE Bulletin, vol. 39, no. 7, pp. 3-7).

The original Internal Peer Review of Teaching reporting proformas were in two formats. In version A, Peer Review Team members were given a list of statements under key headings (‘The Students’, ‘The Course’ and ‘Pedagogy’) to structure their observations and reports. On these forms, Peer Review Team members were given little space to include comments or narrative observations. In version B, the statements were presented as individual criteria, with a rating scale and space to write comments provided next to each criterion, and an opportunity for summary comment at the end.
Original External Peer Review of Teaching protocols

The External Peer Review of Teaching protocol document was designed to form a detailed guide to the External Peer Review process for administrators, peer reviewers and applicants for promotion. The document works through the steps in a model External Peer Review process, provides relevant information for all of those involved in the process, and identifies the staff members overseeing the administrative elements.

Original External Peer Review of Teaching supporting documents

The original External Peer Review of Teaching protocols were supported by a reporting proforma in two sections, the first providing space for a narrative report on the individual criteria, and the second providing space for a general commentary. This proforma was attached to the end of the External Peer Review of Teaching protocol document.

2.4 2007 pilot program

In 2007 a pilot program of Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching was conducted at the four partner universities. In these trials, volunteers had their classroom teaching peer reviewed by Internal Peer Review Teams, and their written applications for promotion reviewed by External Peer Review Teams at specific partner universities (Griffith University was partnered with The University of Adelaide, and The University of New South Wales with the University of Wollongong). However, the trial was conducted separately from the promotion process at each university, and reports were not presented to the promotion committees unless the candidates chose to present them.

The protocol documents and criteria for evaluation used in this pilot program were modified and streamlined in response to issues observed during the trial and/or raised by peer reviewers and volunteers. Changes included:

- the development of a set of ‘indicators’, or example statements listing teaching behaviours indicating achievement of the criterion, for each criterion;
- the streamlining of the Internal Peer Review Protocol documents and Observation of a Teaching Session booklet, and the External Peer Review Protocol document and reporting form, into single documents for Internal and External Peer review which each included protocols and processes, criteria and indicators, and reporting proformas; and
- the revision of the text of the protocol documents into a more accessible, less discipline-specific form.

The different Internal Peer Review reporting proformas initially used by the Griffith University/The University of Adelaide and The University of New South Wales/University of Wollongong pairs were dropped, and the Griffith/Adelaide model became the basis for a standard Internal Peer Review of Teaching reporting proforma. The reporting proforma for the External Peer Review of Teaching was redeveloped to follow the same format, with each criterion listed on the form and accompanied by a ratings scale, with space for individual and summary comments.

Finally, it was decided to emphasise the fact that Peer Review Team members should not under any circumstances make a recommendation regarding whether a candidate should or should not be promoted.


2.5 2008 pilot program

In 2008, a second pilot program of both External and Internal Peer Review of Teaching was conducted across the partner universities using the revised protocols and associated documentation.

External Peer Review of Teaching

The 2008 pilot program of External Peer Review of Teaching was conducted in two rounds, the first between Griffith University and The University of Adelaide, and the second between The University of Adelaide, the University of Wollongong and The University of New South Wales. The program tested the processes and criteria set up for External Peer Review after the 2007 pilot program. The results of both rounds were then analysed to check for consistency between reviewers at the different institutions.

Between the first and second rounds of the pilot program, the project team consulted with a group of peer reviewers in training at the University of Wollongong. This resulted in significant changes to the reporting forms for both External and Internal Peer Review. The criteria were revised, and the scaled response against each criterion was split into two, with one scale focussing on recording the amount of evidence presented, and whether that amount was appropriate, and the other on assessing its quality. These changes were then also applied to the Internal Peer Review Team reporting forms.

The pilot program found that the processes for External Peer Review of Teaching were functional, and that the criteria were generally applicable and acceptable to peer reviewers and candidates for peer review. However, the project team acknowledges that some preparation is required to effectively run the External Peer Review program. This involves putting together an established and trained group of Peer Review Teams, fixing a clear timeframe for the completion and return of reports, and establishing a degree of alignment between an institution’s criteria for written applications for promotion and the project’s criteria for peer review.

Internal Peer Review of Teaching

The 2008 trial of Internal Peer Review of Teaching was conducted at The University of Adelaide. This trial tested both the processes and the criteria established for Internal Peer Review of Teaching at the end of the 2007 pilot program, and incorporated changes to criteria and reporting forms developed during the External Peer Review trials discussed above.

The pilot program found that the processes and protocols for Internal Peer Review of Teaching were functional, but needed to be framed by adequate support for peer reviewers. The most complex and time-consuming element of the trials from an administrative point of view was the difficulty of convening a Peer Review Team for each candidate and scheduling the pre-observation meeting and observed session; candidates and Peer Review Team members were allowed to schedule their own post-observation meetings, which was often most effective.

Peer Review Team members reported that the whole process took between four and seven hours to complete, a significant addition to their workload if they undertook more than one review. It was noted that some Peer Review Team members found the report-writing process easier if the candidate supplied them with detailed information about the session being observed and its context; the protocol documents were amended to suggest that candidates could supply as much information to their Peer Review Team as they saw fit.
2.6 Consistency check

As part of the 2008 trial, a consistency check was carried out, with written applications being reviewed by External Peer Review Teams at several of the partner universities.

Within universities

The consistency check within universities was complicated by the fact that some Peer Review Teams chose to submit joint reports. However, analysis of reports submitted separately by Discipline experts and Learning and Teaching experts showed that Discipline and Learning and Teaching reviewers agreed in 50% to 80% of cases, and that the majority of differing responses varied by only one scale category, whether positively or negatively.

When Peer Review Teams used proformas featuring the original, combined quality/quantity scale, Learning and Teaching reviewers were likely to be more positive than Discipline reviewers. However, when the Teams used the revised proformas with separate scales for quality and quantity of evidence supplied, Discipline reviewers were likely to be slightly more positive than Learning and Teaching reviewers.

Across universities

The consistency check showed that there was relatively little variation in the reports on the same applications from reviewers at different universities. Overall, the majority of responses to the criteria were either the same across different universities, or varied by one point on the scale, for both Discipline and Learning and Teaching experts. However, Learning and Teaching experts and Discipline experts at different universities did not necessarily disagree on the same criteria.

2.7 Feedback

In 2008, feedback was sought from volunteers who participated in the project both as peer reviewers and as candidates for peer review.

Peer reviewers

A series of structured interviews was conducted with 23 peer reviewers who had participated in the Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching trial rounds across the four partner institutions. The following questions were asked, with questions specific to Internal and External Peer Review Processes omitted as appropriate to the peer reviewer’s participation in the project:

Preliminary questions: Name/Qualifications/Discipline background/Internal or External reviewer (or both)/L&T expert or Discipline expert

1. What role do you think peer review can play in academic promotion applications?

2. What factors influenced your decision to participate in the project as a reviewer?

3. How did you feel about participating in a summative review of a colleague/fellow academic? Did it raise any ethical questions for you? How did you resolve these?
4. **Regarding the Internal Review** [if applicable]:
   a) What was your opinion of the procedures for Internal Peer Review? Were they appropriate? Were they clearly expressed? [Probe questions: Problems/issues with procedures or documents].
   b) What was your opinion of the criteria used for assessing Internal Peer Review candidates? Were they appropriate? Were they clearly expressed? [Probe questions: problems/issues with criteria].
   c) What was your opinion of the forms used for writing Internal Peer Review Reports? Was the format appropriate? Was the design easy to use? [Probe questions: problems/issues].

5. **Regarding the External Review** [if appropriate]:
   a) What was your opinion of the procedures for External Peer Review? Were they appropriate? Were they clearly expressed? [Probe questions: problems/issues with procedures or documents].
   b) What was your opinion of the criteria used to assess External Peer Review candidates? Were they appropriate? Were they clearly expressed? [Probe questions: problems/issues with criteria].
   c) What was your opinion of the forms used for writing External Peer Review Reports? Was the format appropriate? Was the design easy to use? [Probe questions: problems/issues].

6. Are there any suggestions you'd like to offer as to how the process as a whole could be improved?

7. What do you see as the future for summative peer review of teaching, particularly in connection with academic promotions?

8. Are there any other issues you'd like to raise, or comments you'd like to add?

Of these, four key questions—questions 2, 3, 4 and 5—were selected for a keyword analysis and frequency analysis. Responses given by fewer than four respondents are not included in the analysis below.

**Question 2** was chosen to give information about who to approach to participate in the program as peer reviewers (Figure 1). Of 23 respondents:
- 7 reported that they participated because they perceived it to be part of their jobs;
- 11 cited a pre-existing professional interested in peer review of teaching;
- 4 related participation to their personal professional development;
- 12 cited the perceived wider importance of the project to the higher education sector as a whole;
- 7 reported that their own universities were either considering introducing peer review of teaching, or already had a peer review program in place;
- 4 indicated a desire to contribute to or influence the direction of this project; and
- 7 cited the need for a form of feedback on teaching other than student evaluations.
Question 2: What factors influenced your decision to participate in the project as a peer reviewer?

Question 3 was selected to address ethical concerns around summative peer review (Figure 2). In response to the first part of this question, of 23 respondents:

- 13 reported that the form of summative peer review designed by the project team raised no ethical questions;
- 4 reported that the lack of a formative element raised ethical concerns; and
- 6 cited concerns about the potential of a negative report to affect the career of an applicant for promotion.

Figure 2: Question 3(a): How did you feel about participating in a summative peer review of another academic? Did it raise any ethical questions for you?
In response to the second part of the question (Figure 3):

- 6 respondents resolved ethical questions by transferring peer review skills from another context (usually peer review of academic journals) and applying them to the peer review of teaching; and
- 4 reported that the lack of a requirement to recommend for or against promotion of a candidate resolved their ethical concerns.

![Figure 3: Question 3(b): If so, how did you resolve these?](image)

**Question 4** was chosen to identify any problems or issues arising out of the procedures and forms as used in the 2008 trial run (Figure 4). Of 23 respondents:

- 7 reported no problems and said that the procedures established were clear and useable; and
- 5 reported that the time needed to complete a review properly (between 4 and 7 hours) was problematic.

![Figure 4: Question 4: What was your opinion of the procedures for Internal Peer Review?](image)
**Question 5** was chosen to identify any problems or issues arising out of the procedures and forms used in the 2008 trial run (Figure 5). Of 23 respondents:

- 9 reported no problems and said that the procedures established were clear and useable;
- 4 cited lack of communication between reviewers as a significant problem;
- 5 cited the need for reviewer training;
- 4 mentioned the need for reviewers to know the promotion criteria of the target university;
- 4 mentioned the need for reviewers to know the promotion criteria for the target level;
- 8 cited a mismatch between the project’s criteria for evaluation and the structure and contents of the applications they reviewed as problematic;
- 8 reported that the time needed to complete a review properly (between 4 and 7 hours) was problematic; and
- 4 considered the criteria difficult to apply.

![Bar chart showing responses to Question 5](image)

**Figure 5:** Question 5: What was your opinion of the procedures for External Peer Review?

The Peer Review Team members interviewed also raised some key issues in response to questions 6 and 8. The most prominent of these was the perceived need for a formative element to the Peer Review system.

**Candidates for peer review**

Volunteer candidates for Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching gave feedback to the project team in a round-table discussion at The University of Adelaide’s Centre for Learning and Professional Development in October 2008. This was a less structured format, and not amenable to keyword or frequency analysis. However, the participants raised several issues that concerned them, including:

- the current low status of teaching, particularly undergraduate teaching, within the university and within different Faculties and Disciplines, and the capacity of summative peer review to affect or challenge that;
- the degree of mismatch between the project’s criteria for External evaluation and the current local criteria for promotion and application writing, and the need for the university’s promotion requirements to change to accommodate the new system;
• the need for peer observers of classroom teaching to accept applicants' statements about which criteria do or do not apply to a given observed session;
• the need for criteria to assess observable evidence rather than guiding peer reviewers to make assumptions about what students were aware of;
• the need for peer reviewers to be experienced both in their fields and as reviewers;
• the current capacity of promotion committees to accept teaching-oriented applications for promotion, and to understand the evidence presented in such applications;
• the potential for a significant difference of opinion between the Discipline expert and the Learning and Teaching expert to negatively affect the promotion committee's decision; and
• the need for a formative element to the Peer Review system to support and contextualise the summative peer review.

The project team responded to some of these concerns in the development of peer reviewer training resources, and others through the decision to recommend that Learning and Teaching experts be appointed to all promotion committees and that promotion committee members have access to professional development in interpreting teaching-based applications and peer review reports.

2.8 Response to feedback

In response to feedback from both Peer Review Team members and candidates for peer review, the project team made several changes to the Peer Review program, including:
• changes to the wording of some evaluation criteria;
• development of resources to aid institutions in adapting the Peer Review of Teaching program to their own context; and
• the addition of a formative element to the Peer Review of Teaching program.

Details of these changes are discussed below.

Wording of criteria

On the Internal Peer Review of Teaching reporting proforma, the wording of criterion 5 was changed from ‘Students are aware of key learning outcomes’ to ‘Students are made aware of key learning outcomes’. This change was made so that the criterion would focus on the teacher's practise, rather than on the students’ awareness.

Resources for adaptation of materials

The project team developed a list of questions to be considered when adapting the Peer Review of Teaching program to individual contexts, including the need to align promotion and evaluation criteria, the need for reviewer training, and the need for a clear and defined appeals process. These were published on the project website.

Formative element

A formative element was introduced to the process for the first time at this point. The project team modified the existing protocols for Internal Peer Review of Teaching to make them suitable for use in the formative peer observation of classroom teaching for purposes of professional development. The Formative Peer Review Protocol therefore uses the same format and criteria for assessment, as well as two-person peer review teams and the structure of pre- and post-observation meetings framing the observed session/s. However, the project team recommends
that the formative program, if it is adopted, be run at Faculty or School level, and kept entirely separate from the summative process, with reviewers barred from performing formative and summative peer reviews for the same candidate.

It was decided not to establish a comparable formative protocol for External Peer Review of Teaching, as many universities already make considerable resources and assistance for writing promotion applications available via their Academic Development Units.
A key point raised by the literature review was the need for peer reviewers to undertake significant professional development, mainly to increase the validity and accuracy of reports. The need for peer reviewer team members to have a formal venue to meet and discuss issues and concerns surrounding summative peer review of teaching before undertaking peer reviews was also seen as an important component in the peer reviewer induction process.

The project team therefore developed sets of peer reviewer training and development resources and guides, for both Internal Peer Review Team members and External Peer Review Team members.

### 3.1 Internal Peer Review Team training resources

The project team produced four sample video clips of teaching for use in training Internal Peer Review Team members, using teachers from the University of Adelaide. These clips were to cover four different discipline areas and four different types of teaching.

The formats decided on were: a traditional lecture; a seminar; a laboratory session; and an IT-focussed presentation. The faculties chosen were Humanities and Social Sciences, Sciences, Health Sciences, and Engineering. Teachers working in these areas and formats who had received ALTC citations, University or other teaching awards, and/or who had participated in the University of Adelaide’s Graduate Certificate of Higher Education, were contacted and agreed to participate in filming.

Filming took place between September and November 2008, and the resulting footage was edited into four clips of between six and eight minutes each, and the clips were published on the project website along with a recommendation that universities adopting the Peer Review program expand the resource by producing their own clip library.

### 3.2 External Peer Review Team Member training resources

The project team approached several staff members at the University of Adelaide who had ALTC teaching citations or University teaching awards, and strong reputations as Learning and Teaching experts in their disciplines, and requested de-identified copies of past promotion applications for use as training resources for External Peer Review Team Members.

Four staff members agreed to allow their applications to be used. These included two Level D to Level E applications and two Level B to Level C applications in the disciplines of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Chemistry and Higher Education. All of the applications were successful ones: that is, the academics in question had already achieved the promotions applied for.

The application packages were de-identified by the Project Manager and published on the project website, along with a recommendation that universities developing peer review programs should establish a resource library of their own sample applications, either individually or in collaboration with their partner university.
3.3 Information and training session agendas

The project team also developed a set of sample agendas for information and training sessions about Internal Peer Review and External Peer Review, both for candidates for promotion and for Peer Review Team members.

The agendas for candidate information sessions focussed on the processes of Internal and External Peer Review, the intent of gathering evidence for the claims made by the applicant, and the flexible nature of the criteria (including the applicant’s ability to veto or modify one or more criteria as irrelevant to the session being observed).

The agendas for Internal and External Peer Review Team Member training sessions focussed on allowing the Peer Review Team Members to engage with the criteria and reporting processes, as well as working with a partner to establish a shared understanding of the criteria and the roles of the Discipline expert and Learning and Teaching expert within the team. Guidelines were also produced for the conveners of Peer Review Team Member training sessions; these focussed on the need to allow Peer Review Team members to develop their own shared understanding of the criteria, their roles and other elements of the process, rather than imposing an interpretation of these things on the peer reviewers.

These resources were published on the project website along with the video clips and sample applications discussed above.

3.4 Feedback from dissemination workshops

Participants in the dissemination workshops gave some feedback on the training resources. This feedback focussed on two issues: the lack of sample applications from women applicants for promotion and the lack of failed applications in the sample promotion applications.

The project team responded to this feedback as far as possible. A cohort of women academics have been approached with regard to including their de-identified applications in the available sample, and any positive responses will be added to the website.

No failed applications have been made available as yet, as obtaining such applications raises ethical issues, particularly with regard to the potential effects on staff members who may agree to having even de-identified unsuccessful applications made publicly available.

3.5 Notes to promotion committees

A final issue raised by the literature review, the experience of members of the project team, and teachers who participated in the 2008 trials of Internal and External Peer Review of Teaching was that promotion committee members may not have had the opportunity to assess many examples of teaching-oriented promotion applications, or to judge evidence relating to teaching practice and scholarship.

A brief set of notes for promotion committee members was therefore developed. These notes set out the nature of the evidence provided by the Internal and External Peer Review Team reports, highlighting the potential presence of educational scholarship in an applicant’s research profile, and emphasising the focus on establishing the degree of alignment between pre-existing standards of teaching and learning and the evidence presented in a given application package.
4. PROJECT WEBSITE

Following consultation with the project team at the University of Wollongong in August 2008, a project website was established at http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview. It was linked with the University of Adelaide’s Centre for Learning and Professional Development site.

4.1 Website content

The website was designed to disseminate information about the project’s outcomes, including:
- the project report;
- protocol documents for the summative peer review of teaching, both internal and external;
- peer reviewer training resources;
- information for promotion committees;
- information about and from the project’s dissemination seminars; and
- relevant links.

The site includes a link to a discussion forum for summative Peer Review of Teaching on the ALTC Exchange.

Further information has been added to the site, including resources for adapting the peer review process to individual contexts, and information on equity issues and peer review teams. The site will continue to be updated in the months following the end of the project.
5. DISSEMINATION WORKSHOPS

The original project plan included a National Symposium on Summative Peer Review of Teaching, to be held toward the end of the project. In August 2008, the project team decided to replace this National Symposium with five regional dissemination workshops, to be held in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Sydney and Perth.

These workshops ran on 2 March 2009 (Deakin University), 13 March 2009 (The University of Adelaide), 27 March 2009 (Griffith University), 2 April 2009 (The University of New South Wales) and 9 April 2009 (Edith Cowan University). No fee was charged for attendance, but registration was required. The project covered the costs of venue booking and catering at each of the host universities.

5.1 Aim of workshops

The objectives of the dissemination workshops were to communicate the aims, results and products of the project to academics at several levels, open discussion about summative peer review of teaching and what it is able to achieve, expose a wide range of academics to the process of peer review and encourage understanding through experience, and encourage conversation about adapting the protocols and reporting tools to suit different environments.

5.2 Program

Four of the five dissemination workshops were whole-day events, with the remaining workshop at Griffith University being a half-day event for logistical reasons. All of the events were presented by Professor Geoffrey Crisp, with assistance from other members of the project team (Professor Sandra Wills, Dr Christine Brown, Ms Margaret Buckridge and Dr Kerrie Le Lievre).

At the four whole-day events, the workshop was divided into a morning session focussing on Internal Peer Review of Teaching (summative peer observation of classroom teaching) and an afternoon session focussing on External Peer Review of Teaching (peer evaluation of written evidence and documentation). Each session began with a brief overview of the project’s origins, objectives, history, process and results; after this, participants were invited to participate in a condensed version of the peer reviewer training process developed by the project team. This involved participants either viewing a video clip of classroom teaching or reading a sample promotion application, then filling out a peer review report on that video clip or sample application. This was followed by small-group and overall discussion of the protocols, reporting forms, criteria and processes.

In the half-day event held at Griffith University, because of the reduced time available, the presentation focussed on the overview of the project and deliverables. While there was time available for participants to discuss ideas and raise questions with the project team members, they did not have the opportunity to engage deeply with the protocols, criteria for peer review, reporting methods and training materials.
5.3 Promotion of the workshops

Initial promotion of the dissemination workshops took place at the National Colloquium *Peer Review of University Teaching: Capitalising on Collegial Expertise and Feedback*, held at The University of Melbourne on 21 November 2008. Professor Geoffrey Crisp discussed the project and made advertising flyers available for reference.

In early 2009, with the help of Academic Development Units at Deakin University, Flinders University, University of South Australia, Griffith University, The University of New South Wales, and Edith Cowan University, the project team distributed invitation emails and flyers to universities around Australia.

5.4 Participants

The dissemination workshops, because they dealt with the final versions of the Peer Review processes and proformas, were aimed at senior managers as well as other stakeholders. Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Learning and Teaching), Deans and Associate Deans (Learning and Teaching) from all Australian universities were invited, as well as Heads of Academic Development Units, interested Heads of Schools and Disciplines, relevant Human Resources personnel and interested academics, particularly those qualified to serve as peer reviewers under the criteria established by the project. Participants were predominantly members and Heads of Academic Development Units, and interested academics.

108 participants registered for the dissemination workshops, from 26 universities:

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5.5 Feedback
Participants in the dissemination workshops both gave feedback on positive elements of the project, and offered suggestions for improvement.

*Positive elements* of the project included:
- the underlying rigour of the project;
- the online availability of information;
- the open discussion of the need to align the structure of written applications (External Peer Review) and criteria for review;
- the quality of the documentation and the systematic approach taken to developing and presenting them;
- the usefulness and general applicability of criteria;
- the provision of training resources (both video clips and sample applications);
- the ability to modify and adapt documentation to suit contexts; and
- the specificity of the project’s focus on Summative Peer Review.

*Suggestions for improvement* that focussed on the project content and deliverables included:
- a need for more contextualising detail;
- a need for a broader discussion of disciplinary differences and how they affect the peer review processes;
- a need for discussion of what value Summative Peer Review adds to the promotion process from the perspective of a promotion committee;
- a need for discussion on how the reports are evaluated as part of an overall promotion application (weightings, distribution and usefulness of labs, lectures, tutorials etc, unit co-ordination, delivery and effectiveness);
- the inclusion in the training materials of a sample application that failed the promotion process; and
- some uncertainty as to whether the process as a whole was applicable or adaptable to specific institutions.

5.6 Responses to feedback
In response to formal and informal feedback from participants in the dissemination seminars, the project team made several changes to the documents, resources and website.

The text of the website was altered to provide more detail and direction for readers; typographical errors in the protocol documents and reporting forms were corrected; choice of words in the scaled-response section of the reporting forms was amended; and sample application packages from women applicants for promotion were sought for inclusion on the project website. As previously mentioned, no unsuccessful application packages have been obtained as yet due to ethical concerns and the potential for adverse effects on academics whose unsuccessful applications are made publicly available.
6. ANALYSIS

Feedback from both pilot programs and the regional dissemination workshops suggests that the project team has successfully developed functional and adaptable protocols, processes and tools for the summative peer review of teaching, particularly in connection with the promotion process.

6.1 Factors critical to the success of the project

Factors critical to the success of this project have been: its timeliness; its rigour; and its flexibility, including the project team’s willingness to adapt in response to feedback.

Timeliness

As universities across Australia begin to develop teaching-only positions and teaching-intensive career pathways, they must also develop promotion processes and categories of evidence that will allow academics in these positions to be promoted beyond Lecturer B. This project offers protocols and definitions of evidence that universities can adapt and apply quickly and accurately to provide appropriate career options for academics who choose to focus on teaching.

Rigour of initial approach

The project team’s early decision to ground the protocols and criteria in a literature review, to keep the focus of the project firmly on summative peer review, and to specify detailed criteria with clear indicators for the achievement of each criterion, allowed it to maintain a high degree of rigour throughout.

Ability to adapt in response to feedback

The project team’s willingness to adapt both processes and documentation in response to feedback offered by participants in the 2007 and 2008 trial runs, and by participants in the dissemination workshops, have helped to make the project more flexible and adaptable, and offered methods for institutions to take up and adapt the project outcomes. Specifically, the addition of a formative protocol for peer observation of classroom teaching that closely matches the summative process, and can be initiated before the introduction of the summative process—therefore functioning as a site for the professional development of candidates for promotion, peer reviewers and administrators—makes the process of peer review more user-friendly.

6.2 Factors impeding the success of the project

There are three key factors that may impede the successful use of the project outcomes by universities. These are: difficulties in implementation; lack of alignment between the processes and criteria for evaluation established by the project documents and the existing promotion processes and criteria; and lack of engagement with promotion committees.

Implementation

The main issue surrounding the implementation of the project’s protocols and reporting forms is that they need to be adapted to suit each university or pair of partner institutions. This is addressed in two ways. Firstly, the project documents have been designed to be adapted rather than adopted in their current form for immediate implementation. Secondly, resources to assist with the process of adapting the protocols for use at specific institutions have been developed and made available on the project website.
Lack of alignment between project outcomes and existing processes and criteria

Because each Australian university has its own unique processes for promotion, and its own criteria, the project team was not able to create a protocol that would be aligned effectively with established processes, or criteria for evaluation that matched those already in use at any university. Universities that choose to adapt and/or adopt the peer review protocols developed by this project will need to modify both the Peer Review project’s processes and criteria and their own for the summative peer review system to be effective.

Lack of engagement with promotion committees

In the process of developing the promotion protocols and reporting forms, the project team has worked primarily with Academic Development Units and with academics drawn from Discipline staff, particularly those with an existing interest in Learning and Teaching. The project team has not engaged in depth with members of promotion committees at all of the partner institutions, although promotion committees and senior managers gave information and feedback to project team members at Griffith University and the University of Wollongong at different points. The decision not to engage too early with promotion committees stems from an early awareness that this group of stakeholders would prefer to make decisions about summative peer review of teaching based on advanced or completed versions of protocols and documents, rather than engaging with drafts documents and tools.

With the project outcomes completed, protocols, criteria and forms in their final state, and the sense of what value the peer review process can add to a promotion committee’s deliberations, it is now possible for individual institutions to engage their promotion committees in the process of establishing a summative peer review of teaching program.

6.3 Extent to which the project outcomes are amenable to implementation in a variety of institutions and/or locations

The outcomes of this project are highly amenable to implementation in tertiary education institutions of different types and in different locations, both within Australia and in the international academic community.

The protocols for peer review, criteria for assessment, and overall processes were all designed with the intention that they would be adapted by institutions rather than adopted unchanged, and are supported on the project website by materials to assist the adaptation process. Additionally, the inclusion of a formative protocol for classroom teaching provides a method by which institutions can train peer reviewers and trial the peer review process, making the final introduction of the complete process smoother and more acceptable to the wider academic community.

Feedback from participants in the dissemination workshops run by the project team indicates than many of them perceive the peer review program as amenable to adaptation for and implementation in their own context.
7. CONCLUSION

The project team has achieved its stated aim of producing, after significant consultation and feedback with stakeholders, workable protocol documents, reporting tools, professional development materials, and a dissemination website for the summative peer review of both classroom teaching and written materials and documentation relating to teaching.

These documents and tools were designed to be adapted to the context of individual universities, and should be applied in a contextual manner that agrees with the mission and vision of each university. Because they were designed specifically for summative peer review, the documents fill a current gap in the literature and resources on peer review of teaching, and complement other ALTC-funded projects in this area. Their value lies in their timeliness—they answer a need currently arising from the introduction of teaching-only positions and teaching-oriented career pathways in Australian universities. They offer flexibility and reliability, and add first-order evidence and expert opinion on both classroom practice and the scholarship of teaching and learning to the deliberations of promotion committees.
8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The project team offers the following recommendations to the ALTC and to institutions intending to take up the Peer Review of Teaching program:

1. That a further project be established with a particular focus on the implementation of summative peer review systems and engagement with senior management and promotion committee members.

2. That institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program support it by appointing a designated Learning and Teaching expert on each Promotion Committee, and by giving promotion committee members professional development in the area of interpreting teaching-centred applications and peer review reports.

3. That institutions which choose to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program adapt it to suit their circumstances, rather than adopting it in its current form. Resources to assist in this process are available on the project website: http://www.adelaide.edu.au/clpd/peerreview.

4. That institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program first implement the Formative protocol for Internal Peer Review of Teaching, and run it for a year before implementing the summative protocols. This will give peer reviewers time to train, and candidates for promotion time to become accustomed to the processes and criteria involved.

5. That institutions which decide to implement the Summative Peer Review of Teaching program modify their promotion processes and criteria that relate to teaching as they adapt the peer review protocols and criteria, to ensure alignment and lead-in time for those wishing to engage in summative peer review of their teaching.