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Mapping Plan for Continuous Improvement of Subject Assessment in Higher Education

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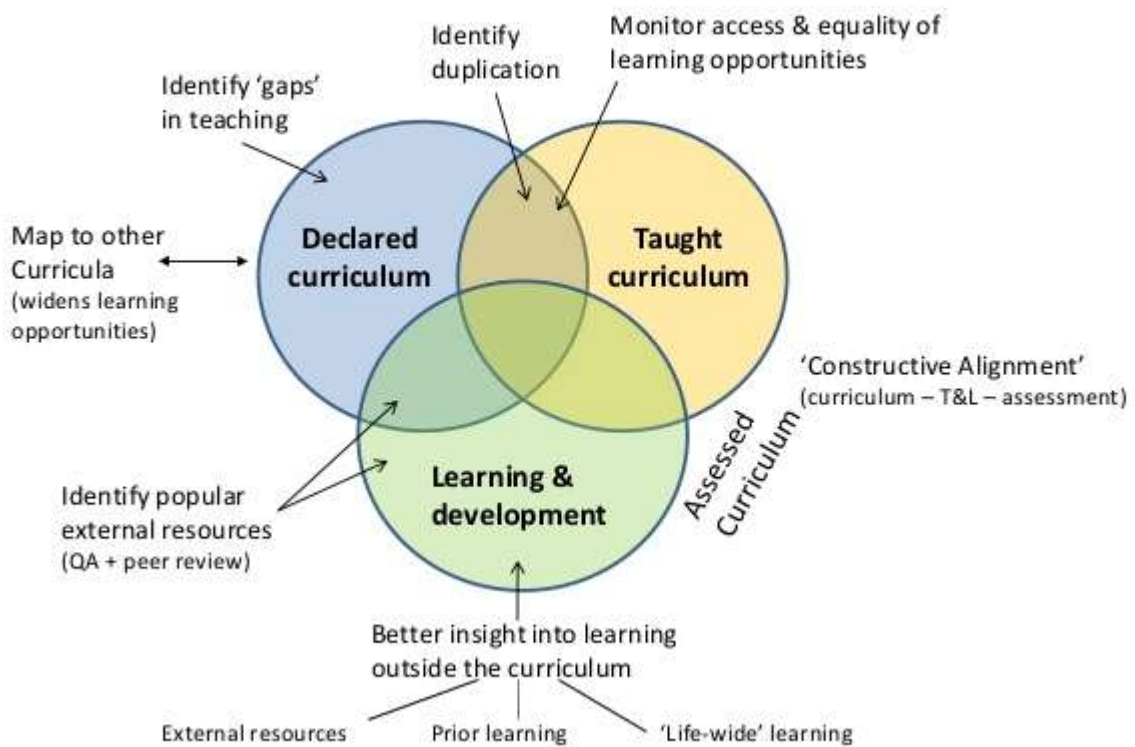
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Mapping Plan for Continuous Improvement of Subject Assessment in Higher Education

Charles Darwin University, Australia, July 2015

Curriculum Maps: Potential role in Monitoring & QA



Project Leading to

The Graduate Certificate in University Teaching and Learning

Charles Darwin University, Australia, July 2015

Project Requirements:

Develop a mapping plan for continuous improvement (KAIZEN) in assessment. The plan will assess the proposed improved assessment strategy of the Human Resource Management (HRM) Subject

This project includes an evaluation plan of the HRM (code No: PRBM021) assessment strategy and the feedback mechanisms employed for the assessment strategy. It also discusses the effectiveness of online learning platform (Blackboard Collaborate) and related educational technology used for the assessments and identifies creative approaches for future assessments. Finally, it presents a self-assessment of the author's performance.

Contextualisation of the Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan will focus on the proposed assessment strategy derived for the PRBM021 during the first semester of 2015. The constructive alignment between the proposed assessment strategy and the PRBM021 learning outcomes (LO's) is shown in Appendix I.

The audience of the assessment strategy are the MBAP14 students and the School of Business Faculty, who have embarked on a series of Assessment Design Workshops. The School, and by extension Neapolis University Pafos (NUP) could use the PRBM021 3-level mapping presented in this project to guide future mappings of the MBA program enabling the NUP's Business School to obtain the desired AACSB (<http://www.aacsb.edu/>) accreditation.

Evaluation Plan of the PRBM021 Improved Assessment Strategy

Purpose of the Assessment Strategy – Case Study and Modified Online Test

According to the literature the most appropriate assessment methods emerge from the particular situation under investigation (Patton 2011). In the case of PRBM021 it was demonstrated that the proposed "case study" and the improved "online test" would (i) provide a better constructive alignment between the unit-level and course-level LO's, and (ii) would enhance students' deeper learning by developing decision-making skills, problem solving and reasoning (Tunny, Papinczak & Young 2010). Of specific interest are the Six Thinking Hats questions (see Appendix II), which enable students to construct knowledge and build their confidence in applying management skills within a real life work environment. The details of the case study are shown in Appendix II.

In relation to the performance beyond expectation on the online test, I fully support McConnell's (2015) comment that "the first PRBM021 assignment is conceptually more complex and requires an essay format response, and therefore is more difficult than the online test". As discussed during the first semester of 2015 the purpose of the modified online test is to achieve the following learning objectives:

- (i) Engage students in thoughtful understanding of the HRM subject matter.
- (ii) Enhance students' versatility, e.g. demonstrate knowledge of facts through information analysis and interpretation, reasoning, judgement and problem solving.
- (iii) Inspire reliability in grading the Darwin, Melbourne, Sydney and External students.
- (iv) Deliver a grade profile comparable to the HRM 'case study', and the HRM 'essay'.
- (v) Diagnose the learning abilities among the Darwin, Melbourne, Sydney and External students through patterns of wrong responses, and
- (vi) Avoid wrong guessing answers, which is often the case with true/false questions.

These objectives will be achieved through the employment of 'multiple-choice' questions in next year's online test.

Alignment with Learning Outcomes

It was clearly demonstrated through the mapping process during the first semester of 2015 that the proposed assessments shown in Appendix I provide better alignment between the PRBM021 (unit-level) and MBAP14 (course-level) LO's, and by extension to the CDU's Graduate Attributes. The unit-level (PRBM021) and course-level (MBAP14) mapping is shown in Appendix III, and the course-level (MBAP14) and institutional-level (CDU) mapping is shown in Appendix IV. The alignment with learning outcomes has received the collegial consent from Mr Phil Dennett and Dr Paul Chad, and has been acknowledged by the School of Business Faculty, who have embarked in a series of Assessment Design Workshops.

Feedback on Assessments – Feedback Mechanisms/Feedback Pro-Formas – The 360 Degrees

Regarding the written assessments (e.g. the HRM 'case study', and the HRM 'essay') students will be given during the first day of the semester:

- (i) A description of the topic, directions of the assessment and the full version of the HRM 'case study' will be available online.
- (ii) The assessment information will be accompanied by a brief YouTube video (8-12 minutes), specifically designed to give students a quick overview of how to break down the assessment requirements and start researching.
- (iii) A rubric will guide students to understand the assessment criteria and standards against which students will be graded.
- (iv) The timeline for submitting the assessments will be communicated frequently throughout the semester.
- (v) A 'Preparing Assessment' online forum will be made available through which lecturers and students exchange information on the rubric criteria and matters related to assessment requirements, and
- (vi) The assignments will be submitted electronically through the CDU's Learnline platform. Students have the option to check for plagiarism by submitting a draft version of their work.

Currently Used Feedback Practices for the PRBM021 Assessments

During the past two years I have employed the following mechanisms to provide feedback on the assessments and receive feedback from the students.

- (i) The lecturers of the unit provide timely and constructive individual feedback on students' written assessments in order to improve their learning and future performance (Cordiner 2011), instead of providing only grades. Written feedback is provided electronically through the Learnline platform by (a) uploading onto student's Learnline account the annotated feedback, and (b) uploading onto Learnline the typical pro-forma, shown in Appendix V.

- (ii) Analyse the assessment grades and provide an oral presentation to the class on (a) the understanding of the topic, (b) appropriateness of referencing, (c) report-structure and presentation, (d) the quality of writing, (e) statistics on plagiarism, and (f) statistics on late submissions. The typical pro-forma used for the oral presentation is shown in Appendix VI.
- (iii) Allocate time for individual consultation to allow students to discuss the feedback with their lecturers outside the class.
- (iv) Exchange information related to students' performance amongst faculty through a consultative and transparent approach at the School of Business meetings.
- (v) Collect students' feedback on the assessments and course design to improve future assessments. The official students' comments and feedback are collected through CDU's MyView, and
- (vi) Communicate the significance of students' feedback and improve students' faith in evaluations (Wachtel 1998).

Proposed Innovative Feedback Mechanisms – The 360 Degrees Feedback

The aim is to inspire a 360^o feedback mechanism in order to increase students' drive and efforts (Kendle & Northcote 2000), which in turn would improve the standard of students' written assessments (Huber & Mowbray 2011) and the quality of their learning (MacLellan 2004). To achieve the 360^o feedback I am envisaging employing a number of additional feedback mechanisms. These include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Raise awareness on the importance of feedback on assessments by advertising through posters in key areas of the School of Business alerting students and faculty that "Improving Student Feedback is a Major Learning and Teaching Priority in the School for the 2016-2017 academic session). A typical poster is shown in Appendix VII.
- (ii) Obtain students' comments on the feedback they receive on assignments. I am planning to adopt the Sheffield Hallam University's pro-forma (see Appendix VIII) in order to capture students' experience.
- (iii) Perform written self-evaluation on the effectiveness of my feedback to students. I am planning to employ the pro-forma shown in Appendix IX to evaluate the effectiveness of my feedback on the PRBM021 written assessments.
- (iv) Conduct focus group discussions amongst colleagues to identify and exchange feedback best practices.
- (v) Complement the CDU's MyView student survey by employing the Qualtrics online survey (www.qualtrics.com). I am planning to collect specific feedback/comments on assessments, which are not captured by the main stream CDU's MyView survey.
- (vi) Suggest to the **School of Business Teaching and Learning Committee** to introduce a "Teaching Stars" Feedback Award, which will be voted by the students.

Appropriateness and Effectiveness of Learnline and Other Technologies

The Learnline platform, commonly known as Blackboard Learn, offers good options to facilitate communication between all stakeholders. Students and teachers communicate through the asynchronous and synchronous options offered by Learnline (for details see Appendix X). Although Learnline facilitates the students' learning experience, there are challenges and frustrations related to the online rubric marking. These are discussed in the **Tensions and Systematic Constraints between Stakeholders** Section.

Other synchronous online technologies which enable lecturers to deliver high quality and effective learning experience to remote students are:

- Telephone conferences

- Skype presentations
- Webcasts
- Videoconferencing
- Interactive learning models
- Simulations games, and
- The BigBlueButton (<http://bigbluebutton.org/>), which found to successfully engage online learning experience for students.

Innovative Feedback Mechanisms – Fast, Effective and Efficient

A literature review revealed a mechanism on assessment feedback (the ReMarks PDF), which I would like to experiment in the PRBM021 unit next year because it:

- Provides unique marking features to speed-up the marking and feedback process.
- Provides new types of commentary, and
- Improves the quantity and quality of feedback on student assignment or other types of assessment.

The key features of the ReMarks PDF are shown in Appendix XI. The literature and past experience suggest that the employment of ReMarks PDF is not just a valuable tool for students, but it has been successfully evaluated for marking university assessments (Colbran 2011). I have trialled the system and my first impression is that:

- (i) It can be used easily without requiring any special skills.
- (ii) Can be integrated with Learnline and Moodle learning management systems.
- (iii) Have statistical data and comparisons of markers.
- (iv) The lecturers can mark off-line and on-line.
- (v) Has interactive rubrics and criteria-based grading.
- (vi) Can associate criteria, comments and marks with student assessments, and
- (vii) Many other features, which could reduce marking/feedback time and enhance the quality of feedback on assessments.

As a result I will propose the inclusion of the ReMarks PDF into my next year's Performance Development Review System (PDRS) planning.

Tensions and Systematic Constraints between Stakeholders – How Can They Be Reconciled?

In the context of evaluating feedback assessments the stakeholders are the students, the faculty and the Institution (CDU). It has been reported in the literature that "resource constraints in conventional universities have led to a reduction in the frequency of assignments, in the quantity and quality of feedback and in the timeliness of this feedback" (Gibbs & Simpson 2004: 9). Therefore, one can argue that the constraints could be categorised into institutional and resource-based.

In relation to the resource-based constraints it was identified through formal and informal staff meetings and student focus groups that the feedback on formative assessments is problematic for both students and faculty. Students complain, and at times are disengaged and frustrated due to (i) the lack of guidance given in the feedback (in some cases there is no written feedback), (ii) the late response on feedback, and (iii) the lack of dialogue on the feedback between students and faculty. Comments like the 'lecturer does not reply to emails and refuses to talk to me' indicate the frustration due to the lack of dialogue between the two parties. On the other hand faculty claim that they have only 15 minutes to read, assess and provide feedback on a manuscript. As a result, faculty provide reduced, ambiguous and vague feedback in order to justify the grade, an argument

supported by Price et al. (2010). Moreover, some concerns were raised in relation to the workload equity by a number of staff, especially in units that have more than 150 enrolments. It is thus plausible to assume that the Teaching Workload Model, which was developed last year by the School of Business, has not accurately incorporated the resources required to support the Melbourne and Sydney operations.

The constraints in relation to the institution might be attributed to (i) the number of students that are allowed to enrol in classes, (ii) the number of assessments required by the accreditation committees, (iii) the lack of policy that enforces the practice in that 'Student Feedback is a Major Learning and Teaching Priority in the University', (iv) the insufficient capability of the Learning Management Systems that is employed to provide timely and quality feedback to students, and (v) the insufficient resources available to support the operation due to the Teaching Workload Model could be also classified as an institutional constraint.

As far as the Learning Management Systems, the Learnline platform which is employed by CDU has a number of unique capabilities that facilitate the instruction and marking process (see the discussion under "**Appropriateness and Effectiveness of Learnline and Other Technologies** Section). However, the grades from Learnline need to be entered manually into Callista because the two systems are not integrated. Lecturers found the online rubric marking very time consuming and complex to use. Their dissatisfaction with the online rubric marking coupled with the resource constraints results into poor quality and quantity feedback on students' assessments.

In summary, there are tensions between students and faculty because:

- (i) Students require frequent and high quality feedback, which will assist them to improve their future assessments, e.g. 'forward-looking' instead of 'backward-looking' feedback (Gibbs & Simpson 2004: 25).
- (ii) Faculty are unable to provide timely and constructive individual feedback due to resource constraints dictated by the School of Business Teaching Workload Model.
- (iii) These tensions coupled with the institutional constraints do not create a learning environment which enriches students learning, nor does it provide personalised learning opportunities, an argument supported by Lorenzo and Ittelson (2005).

In order to ease these tensions between the stakeholders and create a learning environment that creates causal relationships between 'forward-looking' feedback and personalised learning opportunities for students, I suggest the following propositions.

- Revisit the School of Business Teaching Workload Model in order to allow more than 15 minutes to read, assess and provide feedback on a manuscript. Hence, frequent and of high quality feedback could be provided to students.
- Devise a policy, which will 'cap' the number of students enrolled in a unit. Such policy will address the workload equity among staff members.
- Agreed at the School level on the number of assessments required by the accreditation committees. Such an agreement will address the workload equity among staff members and create the necessary commitment and responsibility for planning and managing the feedback of each assessment.
- Create a CDU/School policy which fosters the idea of "Improving Student Feedback is a Major Learning and Teaching Priority in the University". A typical poster was presented earlier, and it is shown in Appendix VII.
- Evaluate the current Learnline online rubric marking process and introduce a more flexible assessment/feedback system, such as the ReMarks PDF mentioned earlier.

In summary, the employment of the ReMarks PDF could be used to reconcile some of the systematic constraints between the different stakeholders involved in the assessment feedback process. From the personal perspective, I am committed to become a proficient user of the ReMarks PD by the end of the 2016 academic session.

Self-Assessment, Collaborative Peer Review and Flexible Processes for Future Improvement

In order to provide a self-assessment of my performance I have developed a set of questions and attempted to answer them through a critical reflective analysis.

- **Have I achieved a constructive alignment between the PRBM021 (unit-level) and MBAP14 (course-level) LO's, and by extension to the CDU's Graduate Attributes?**

My performance on the mapping process has been endorsed by a number of colleagues from the School of Business. The feedback shown in Appendix XII clearly supports that the emended mapping provides a better alignment between the PRBM021 (unit-level) and MBAP14 (course-level) LO's, and by extension to the CDU's Graduate Attributes.

- **Have I engaged colleagues in discussions and debates in the constructive alignment process?**
I have engaged the School of Business Assessment Design Workshops Team through my presentation on the PRBM021 mapping. My presentation will be used on the School's forthcoming Assessment Design Workshops aiming at improving the MPBAP14 assessments. In addition, Professor McConnell's commentary supported the initiative to integrate the mapping into the Assessment Design Workshops (see Appendix XII). As a result I am pleased with the outcome of the constructive alignment process, which will give us the impetus to improve the MBAP14 assessments, hence enabling the School to obtain the desired AACSB accreditation.
- **To what extent does the assessment strategy support the PRBM021 (Unit-Level) LO's?**
It was demonstrated in this report that the HRM 'case study', the HRM 'essay', and the 'online test' collectively support the three LO's of the PRBM021 unit. Specifically, the suggested HRM 'case study' will enhance students' deeper learning, by developing the required for the MBAP14 skills of problem-solving, reasoning and decision making. Therefore, I am content with my proposal to include a case study into next year's PRBM021 assessments.
- **Have I employed effective feedback mechanisms for the PRBM021's assessment strategy?**
Although the current feedback mechanisms support the objectives of the PRBM021 unit, there is room for significant improvement. For example, in addition to the current feedback mechanisms I am proposing a 360^o feedback, which should include (i) a policy that enforces the practice of student feedback, (ii) obtain feedback from students on the experience they receive on the assignments' feedback, (iii) engage on periodic written self-evaluations on the effectiveness of my feedback to students, (iv) conduct focus group discussions with colleagues to exchange feedback best practise, and (v) collect additional feedback/comments on assessments, which are not captured by the main stream CDU's MyView survey.
- **Have I engaged students in discussions and debates on the feedback process?**
Although I do analyse the assessment grades and provide an oral presentation to the class regarding performance on the assessment, I feel that I need to provide more personalised feedback to students through a different approach using the ReMarks PDF tool.
- **Have I compared existing Learning Management Systems with other technologies used?**

The commentary on the **Effectiveness of Learnline and Other Technologies** Section clearly indicates that the asynchronous and synchronous Learnline options support the feedback process and by extension facilitate the students' learning experience. However, I found the Learnline online rubric marking laborious and complex to use, compared to other Learning Management Systems, such as the ReMarks PDF.

- **Have I identified innovative feedback mechanisms of improvement over time?**

I have identified the ReMarks PDF, which has been acknowledged for its excellent online feedback features. My objective is to employ it next year and become a proficient user by the end of the 2016 academic session.

- **What innovative technologies would I incorporate for effective feedback?**

As discussed earlier I would like to employ the ReMarks PDF because of its excellent online feedback features.

- **Am I satisfied with the overall feedback approach that I used in the PRBM021 unit?**

I am pleased with the overall feedback used until now. However, my view is to provide harmonious and effective feedback on assessments from the 'forward-looking' instead of 'backward-looking' perspective. Therefore, the 360⁰ feedback mechanisms is my mandate in order to increase further students' drive and efforts (Kendle & Northcote 2000), which in turn would improve the standard of students' written assessments (Huber & Mowbray 2011) and the quality of their learning (Maclellan 2004).

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Appendix I

Constructive Alignment between PRBM021 Unit-Level LO's Outcomes and Assessments

The proposed assessments for next years' PRBM021 (HRM) unit include a "modified online test" and a "case study". Specifically, the improved PRBM021 assessment strategy is designed to achieve the following three LO's.

LO1 – Examine and analyse the role of HRM in organisations

LO2 – Analyse the management of the various HR functions, and

LO3 – Identify future workforce trends and assess the implications for HRM.

The three LO's will be achieved through a HRM 'case study', a HRM 'essay' and an 'online test'. The constructive alignment between the three assessments and the PRBM021 LO's are shown in Table I.

Table I Improved PRBM021 Assessment Components

Improved Assessment Component	Assessment Component Description/Focus	Value	Relates to PRBM021 LO's
1 Case Study	HRM Industry Case study: The human resource management (HRM) role in an acquisition and merger Due end of week 7	40%	1, 3
2 Essay Not Changed	Analyse HRM in the context of engaging and motivating employees. Due end of Week 12	40%	1, 2
3	Modified online test on the concepts of human resource planning, job design, recruitment, training, promotion, compensation and appraisal Due end of Week 12	20%	1, 2, 3

Adopted from: Politis (2015a; 2015b); Incorporates feedback from two colleagues from the School of Business

Appendix II

Human Resource Management Case Study

The case study topic on ‘the role of human resource management in an acquisition and merger’ will provide students authentic and deeper learning (Meyers 2009) by making the HRM theory relevant to a real organisational situation. It will also promote interdisciplinary learning by enriching students learning with a real life situation scenario (Walker 2015), and enable them to share their experiences through teamwork, both online and face-to-face (Abraham & Jones 2008; Garratt 1997). Moreover, the MBAP14 students will be able to reconstruct knowledge using credible references outside the HRM textbook.

The case study entitled “*the acquisition and the role of human resources*” has been taken from Fazzari and Mosca (2009: 83-108). The objectives of the case study are:

- Learn that Human Resources play a critical role in the process of due diligence while considering an acquisition.
- Understand the sequence of actions and reactions that typically take place from employees before, during and after an acquisition.
- Describe the do’s and don’ts for Human Resources if they are not involved in the merger or acquisition of another organization.
- Learn how Human Resources can also assist in evaluating then assisting with the strategic fit between the combining organizations.
- Understand that there will be times when Human Resources must assert itself as a business partner when adding value to the process of acquiring or merging with another organization” (Fazzari & Mosca, 2009: 83).

These objectives will be achieved by designing specific questions that will develop students’ decision-making skills, problem solving and reasoning (Tunny, et al., 2010). For example, the inclusion of questions related to the Six Thinking Hats (de Bono 1985) will necessitate communication and form relationships among students and enabling them to construct knowledge and build their confidence in applying management skills within a real life work environment. Questions might include, but are not limited, to:

- (i) What new opportunities can be expected for human resources by combining the organisations (**being creative hat**).
- (ii) What is being learned during the due diligence process while considering the acquisition (**thinking about thinking hat**).
- (iii) What are the strengths and opportunities for human resources after an acquisition (**being optimistic hat**).
- (iv) What are the difficulties to align the cultural differences between the acquired organisations (**judging hat**).
- (v) What do we need to know about the human resources strategic fit between the combining organisations (**asking questions hat**), and
- (vi) What are your gut feelings about the sequence of actions and reactions that typically take place from employees before, during and after the acquisition (**expressing emotion hat**).

Appendix III

The unit-level (PRBM021) and course-level (MBAP14) learning outcomes are constructively aligned. The mapping shown below has received the collegial consent from Mr Phil Dennett and Dr Paul Chad.

Improved Mapping between PRBM021 and MBAP14 Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes (LOs) for the Master of Business Administration (MBAP14)		PRBM021 Unit Obtained Learning Outcomes (LOs) by Assessment		
MBAP14 LOs		Case Study Contribution	Assessment 2 Contribution	Online Test Contribution
		Unit LO1, LO3	LO1, LO2	LO1, LO1, LO3
LO1	Demonstrate an ability to integrate both functional knowledge and managerial competencies to resolve complex problems	✓	✓	
LO2	Able to apply high order knowledge and skills to areas such as Human Resource Management, Marketing, Organisational Strategy and Leadership, Marketing, and Economics	✓	✓	
LO3	Develop skills and knowledge to support the management of individuals, groups, and organizational processes to realize optimal outcomes for customers, the organization and staff	✓	✓	✓
LO4	Demonstrate an ability to apply critical thinking skill to strategic, operational and tactical business practices, and in business research activities	✓	✓	
LO5	Develop leadership skills that can be applied to the management of competing forces inherent in management or organisations as a whole	✓	✓	REMOVED from the Original Version
LO6	Acquire and apply business research skills and techniques	✓	✓	
LO7	Demonstrate and understand the economic, political and cultural aspects of conducting business globally	✓		
LO8	Professional level communication skills in writing, in presentations, and in modes of common business analysis	✓	✓	
LO9	Apply management skill and knowledge within work integrated and work placement environment	✓		
LO10	Develop and apply general and business specific research skills.	✓	✓	

Legend: Learning Outcomes = LO

Source: Thompson (2015) and School of Business Collegial Feedback

Appendix IV

The course-level (MBAP14) and institutional-level (CDU) learning outcomes are constructively aligned. The mapping shown below has received the collegial consent from Mr Phil Dennett and Dr Paul Chad.

Improved MBAP14 (Course-Level) CDU-Level Graduate Attributes Mapping

Charles Darwin University Graduate Attributes ¹									
MBA P14 LO's	Also Linked to AQF ²	Also Linked to AQF ²	Also Linked to AQF ²	Also Linked to AQF ²	Also Linked to AQF ²				
Course - Level	Acquisition ¹	Application ¹	Creativity ¹	Knowledge Based ¹	Communication ¹	Team Work ¹	Social Responsibility ¹	Flexibility ¹	Leadership ¹
	Can identify, retrieve, evaluate and use relevant information and current technologies to advance learning and execute work tasks	Is an efficient and innovative project planner & problem solver, capable of applying logical & critical thinking to problems across a range of disciplinary settings and has self-management skills that contribute to personal satisfaction and growth	Can conceive imaginative and innovative responses for future orientated challenges and research	Has an understanding of the broad theoretical and technical concepts related to their discipline area, with relevant connections to industry, professional, and regional knowledge	Demonstrates oral, written, and effective listening skills as well as numerical, technical and graphic communication skills in a cross generational environment	Has a capacity for & understanding of collaboration and co-operation within agreed frameworks, including the demands of inter-generational tolerance, mutual respect for others, conflict resolution and the negotiation of productive outcomes	Is able to apply equity values, and has a sense of social responsibility, sustainability, & sensitivity to other peoples, cultures and the environment	Can function effectively and constructively in an inter-cultural or global environment and in a variety of complex situations	Can exercise initiative and responsibility, taking action and engaging others to make a positive difference for the common good
LO1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		
LO2	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
LO3		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
LO4		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
LO5	³ ✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LO6	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
LO7		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓
LO8	✓				³ ✓	✓		✓	
LO9		³ ✓			³ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LO10	³ ✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

¹Charles Darwin University: <http://www.cdu.edu.au/graduateattributes/index.html>

²AQF = Australian Qualification Framework (<http://www.aqf.edu.au/>) Learning Outcome Descriptors

³The collegial feedback from Mr Phil Dennett and Dr Paul Chad have been incorporated

Appendix V

PRBM021 (HRM) Unit Individual Written Assessment Feedback

Name:

Case Study Title:

CRITERION: **RATING**
{5 = Excellent; 4 = Very Good; 3 = Good; 2 = Fair; 1 = Disappointing}

Issue/problem comprehension	1	2	3	4	5
Facts presentation/Research	1	2	3	4	5
Criticality	1	2	3	4	5
Integrating theory with discussion	1	2	3	4	5
Method of drawing conclusions	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of referencing – Range of reading	1	2	3	4	5

Overall Grade:/30

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
.....
.....

Note: The written comments are given throughout the assessed manuscript using the Word option of “Track Changes”. The specific comments written at the bottom of the pro-forma are based on the rubric criteria. In addition, the written feedback is provided within two weeks of the submission date.

Appendix VI

Class Oral Presentation on PRBM021 Assessments – Feedback Sheet

Assessment Number:

Assessment Title:

CRITERION: **RATING**
{5 = Excellent; 4 = Very Good; 3 = Good; 2 = Fair; 1 = Disappointing}

Understanding of the topic	1	2	3	4	5
Report structure and presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of writing	1	2	3	4	5
Frequency of plagiarism	1	2	3	4	5
Submission on time	1	2	3	4	5
Appropriateness of referencing	1	2	3	4	5

Overall Grade:/30

Appendix VII

Feedback Poster

<p style="text-align: center;">Feedback - For Staff -</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Feedback - For Students –</p>
<p>Improving student feedback is a major Learning and Teaching priority in the School for the 2016-2017 academic session. Recent consultation with staff and students alike has produced a comprehensive new Code of Feedback which can be found in the Handbook. By adopting the following key recommendations, we can all help to improve the learning and teaching experience for our students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide a clear set of aims/objectives for each assessment ❖ Provide concise marking criteria for each assessment ❖ Create feedback sheets that are tailored to the assessment <p style="text-align: center;">....and remember, feedback needs to be timely and useful</p>	<p>Improving student feedback is a major Learning and Teaching priority in the School for the 2016-2017 academic session. Recent consultation with staff and students alike has produced a comprehensive new Code of Feedback which is detailed in your Student Feedback Handbook. Make the most of your learning experience by engaging with feedback and bearing in mind the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Anticipate and actively look for all forms of feedback ❖ Engage fully with all feedback that you receive ❖ If you don't understand the feedback you get, ask for help <p style="text-align: center;">Feedback is your primary route to improvement – don't miss out</p>

Adopted from: McLeod and Mortimer (2011: 39)

Appendix VIII

The following survey will be modified to assess students' experience on the feedback received on the PRBMO21 (HRM) written assessments, e.g. the HRM 'case study', and the HRM 'essay'.

Sheffield Hallam University - Science and Maths Survey on students' experience of feedback they receive on their assignments							For office use only
Please mark the appropriate circle below where:- 1 = None/Not at all, 2 = Some, 3 = A lot N/A = Not applicable	Marks or grades on assignments	Written feedback on assignments	Written feedback to all students, e.g. posted on noticeboards, websites, in lectures	Model or specimen answers	Results of classroom tests	Feedback on the exam	
Type of written feedback	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	
How much of this feedback did you receive?	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	1 2 3 N/A	
Helped me to understand why I got my grade or mark	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to appreciate how well I am getting on	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to understand where I went wrong	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to understand specific course content	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to develop my intellectual skills (e.g. problem solving and analysis)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to develop my learning skills (e.g. reading and note taking)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to develop my academic writing skills (e.g. referencing)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me with the subsequent assignment(s)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Engaged me in further study (e.g. going back to the course material)	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Made it clear what I need to do to improve	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to keep going and try harder	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped towards exams	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	
Helped me to develop my subject knowledge	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3	

Plus four more pages are available upon your request.

Adopted from: Sheffield Hallam University, viewed online 06 September 2015,
https://www.open.ac.uk/fast/pdfs/shuq_sept_04.pdf

Appendix IX

This pro-forma will be employed to evaluate the effectiveness of my feedback on the HRM 'case study' and the HRM 'essay'.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK SELF-EVALUATION (Scores to award yourself are given at the top of each column)					
HOW EFFECTIVE IS YOUR FEEDBACK? To what extent do you think your feedback fulfils the following criteria					
My feedback...	Always (4)	Usually (3)	Occasionally (2)	Hardly ever (1)	Never (0)
Acknowledges students' strengths (praise)					
Explains the basis of students' strengths (always – score double)					
Acknowledges students' weaknesses (performance gap)					
Offers corrective advice (information to close gap)					
Explains the reasons for the corrections (enables use of information) (always – score double)					
Offers encouragement					
Encourages further learning through reflective dialogue					
Encourages further learning through references to resource materials					
Avoids personal judgements/use of negative words and/or phrases					
Feeds forward to future work/assessment tasks (always – score double)					
Relates to the assessment criteria					
Focuses on learning rather than marks					
SCORES FOR EFFECTIVENESS (maximum 60)					
WHAT ARE YOUR ASSESSMENT & FEEDBACK STRATEGIES? To what extent would you say the following apply to your assessment/feedback strategies?					
	Always (4)	Usually (3)	Occasionally (2)	Hardly ever (1)	Never (0)
I relate the assessment criteria to the main learning outcomes of the assessment task					
I ensure that students understand the assessment criteria in advance					
Each learning outcome is assessed more than once (to encourage students to learn from their feedback)					
I provide feedback in time to feed into future work/assessment tasks					
I provide most feedback to the students with greatest difficulties					
I prioritise the areas for improvement for the students with greatest difficulties					
I facilitate peer-group discussion of feedback					
I reflect on students' assessment responses to improve my teaching (always – score double)					
I reflect on students' assessment responses to improve future assessment tasks					
SCORES FOR STRATEGIES (maximum 40)					
TOTAL SCORE (maximum 100)					

Adopted from: CDU UTL412 (2015) Module 6 learning material

Prepared by: Associate Professor Dr John Politis, PhD

July 2015

Appendix X

Appropriateness and Effectiveness of Learnline (Blackboard Collaborate)

The **asynchronous Learnline** includes options found to be effective towards students' learning. These are:

- **Learning Area:** Teaching material (Power Point slides, review questions, etc.) and assessment requirements are uploaded onto Learnline. Students have the ability to view the material 24X7.
- **Discussion board:** Allows students and teachers to create and reply to a thread. For example, students generate a discussion of the assessment requirements, and every student enrolled in the unit has the ability to participate in the discussion and debate the breakdown of the assessment requirements. Students found the discussion board an effective process of learning.
- **Discussion blogs:** Classroom blogging offers the PRBM021 students a number of benefits, such as improves their ICT skills, creates a classroom community to learn from one another, enhances students' literacy skills and provides the platform for authentic audience.
- **Announcements:** Posting information through a central location is appropriate because it communicates effectively and instantaneously a message to all stakeholders. Hence, students are not disadvantaged in not receiving important information related to the assessments, etc.
- **Who's on line:** Offers a real time chat with other users who are logged in to the unit.
- **Record and Playback:** Lectures can be recorded and playback by students 24X7.
- **Learnline feedback:** Written feedback is provided electronically to students by (a) uploading onto student's Learnline account the annotated feedback and (b) uploading onto Learnline the comments written in the typical pro-forma, shown in Appendix V.
- **Grade view:** Students can view their grades upon completion of the moderation process.

The **synchronous Learnline** includes options found to be very effective towards students' learning. These are:

- **Chat and discussions:** Students can chat with other students in the unit in real time; hence they can solve subject queries instantly and outside the classroom. They can also post/receive and respond to messages on a specific topic area.
- **Mail:** Creates instant and safe communication amongst users in the course.
- **Synchronous online class via Collaborate:** The synchronous online class participation simulates the traditional face-to-face setting and gives students the ability to engage in the learning process through collaboration and interaction. Feedback, collaboration and ask questions in real-time motivates students to learn (Bonk & Zhang 2006). Last but not least the synchronous online class participation gives students the flexibility to attend classes from any part of the world.

Appendix XI

ReMarks PDF Features and Capabilities

An empirical study by Colbran (2011) suggests that 74.9% of the students found the ReMarks PDF feedback is better compared to what they had received in the past. Moreover, 73.2% of the students suggested a wider application of the ReMarks PDF tool. The ReMarks PDF capabilities can be found @ <http://www.remarkspdf.com/>. In summary, the key features of the ReMarks PDF include:

- Hand writing annotations on students PDF's
- Drawing tools
- Text tools, e.g. text boxes, callout boxes, notes, highlighting, underlining, and redaction tools, which enables the lecturer to black out segments of PDF's which we do not want other people to see.
- Allows colouring code documents, using highlighter colours with designated meanings, e.g. essential, important, irrelevant, incorrect, useful, etc.
- It has specialist stamps used for marking to provide more personalised feedback to students (see Figure 1).

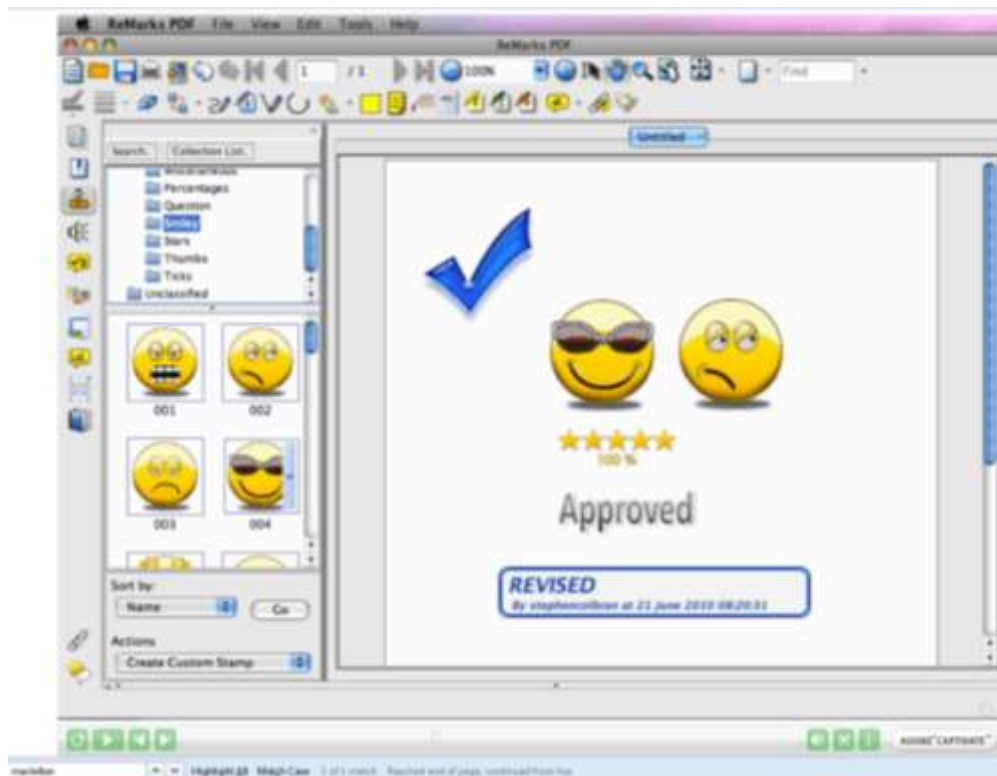


Figure 1 Specialist stamps used for a personalised student feedback

Appendix XII

Collegial Feedback

Performance on the Mapping of the PRBM021 (HRM) Unit from Dr McConnell, the School of Business Colleagues and Assessment Design Workshops Team

From: **David McConnell**
Sent: **02 October 2015 14:36**
To: **John Politis; Deborah Prescott**
Cc: **David McConnell**
Subject: **Re: PPT Presentation for the Assessment Design Workshops - Might Be Useful**

Hi John – that sounds like a really great outcome from your UTL412 assignment. Just the sort of outcome that I think we are hoping will be common place. Well done!

David

Dr. David McConnell
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From: **John Politis** <John.Politis@cdu.edu.au>
Date: **Friday, 2 October 2015 2:30 pm**
To: **Deborah Prescott** <Deborah.Prescott@cdu.edu.au>, **David McConnell**
<david.mcconnell@cdu.edu.au>
Subject: **FW: PPT Presentation for the Assessment Design Workshops - Might Be Useful**

Dear Debbie and David,

Thank for the constructive feedback on Assignment 2. Much appreciated.

In fact the presentation was sent to the School of Business colleagues (see email below), which will form the basis for our Assessment Design Workshops.

Kindest Regards,

Dr John Politis, PhD
Senior Lecturer – Business

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
T. (02) 8047 4113
john.politis@cdu.edu.au
cdusydneycdu.edu.au
www.cdu.edu.au

From: John Politis

Sent: Friday, 25 September 2015 12:12 PM

To: Aggie Wegner; Lisa McManus; Wendy James; Kevin Clark; Darius Pfitzner; Susan Bandias; Bhanu Bhatia; Simon Morris; Ali Rkein; Jyoti Vemuri; Ram Vemuri; Rajeev Sharma; Laura Rook; Mark Wellard; Abhishek Shukla

Subject: PPT Presentation for the Assessment Design Workshops - Might Be Useful

Dear Colleagues,

One of the units leading to the GCUTL requires students to submit assignments related to Assessment and Evaluation in University Teaching and Learning.

I have chosen to evaluate the constructive alignment of the HRM's assessment strategy against the course-level, and at the institutional-level (Goff, et al. 2015; Biggs & Tang 2011). In that regard, a critical review was performed (followed by peer feedbacks) to evaluate the alignment of the unit-level learning outcomes and assessment tasks with the intended course-level learning outcome, in the context of the CDU graduate attributes (Goff, et al., 2015). The outcome of the UTL412 assignment was presented last week via Collaborate to the School of Education Assessment Panel (see attached).

I thought the attached presentation might add some value to the discussions, which will take place during the Assessment Design Workshops.

Kindest Regards,

Dr John Politis, PhD

Senior Lecturer – Business

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Original Feedback from Mr Phil Dennett

From: Philip Dennett [mailto:pdennett@me.com]

Sent: Friday, 21 August 2015 11:26 AM

To: John Politis

Subject: Re: Feedback on the HRM (PRBM021) Unit Mapping

Hi John

My comments below:

1. Based on the description for the online test I would say it relates to all 3 LO's for the Unit.
2. CLO5 - not sure that this would apply to the online test.
3. In map 3 LO9 could also be mapped to Communication.

Subject to the comments above I am of the opinion that the proposed mapping is a fair reflection of PRBM021's mapping to Assessment and Learning Outcomes, and that MBAP14 is linked correctly to Graduate Attributes.

Kind regards
Philip

Follow-up Feedback from Dr Paul Chad on the Original Feedback Mapping

From: **Paul Chad** [mailto:pchad@uow.edu.au]
Sent: **Friday, 18 September 2015 2:47 PM**
To: **John Politis**
Subject: **RE: Feedback on the HRM (PRBM021) Unit Revised Mapping**

Hi John,

Couple of comments –

Table 2 – Online Test Contribution – currently indicates relates to LO1 only – should also relate to LO2 & LO3.

Table 2&3 – there may be a standard format to follow, but to me, 'ticks' are preferred than 'crosses' – 'crosses' do mean 'YES' in the Tables, but some people may construe them to mean 'NO' !

Table 3- might be a formatting issue, but the left hand column seems to be missing – under the Graduate Attribute columns there are various crosses, but no left hand column beside each row of crosses – I assume it should be LO1 to LO10. Matrices such as these can be a bit subjective - a couple of suggestions – LO5 should perhaps include 'Acquisition', LO8 include 'Communication' column. LO10 – include Acquisition. LO9 – include Application.

Regards,
Paul