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Lighting the path(way): articulating curriculum design principles for open access enabling programs

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List of acronyms used

AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
FABENZ	Foundation and Bridging Educators of New Zealand
FACE	Forum for Access and Continuing Education
NAEEA	National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia

Executive summary

Background

Enabling programs provide an effective and important pathway to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and target equity groups. They allow access to higher education for students who lack standard qualifications for entry and equip them with knowledge, skills and attitudes conducive to success in their first year of undergraduate studies. However, little is known about the conceptual frameworks for curriculum design for these programs. This project aimed to increase understanding of enabling curricula by:

1. examining the curriculum design approaches in three university enabling programs across Australia
2. articulating guiding principles that underlie curriculum design in these enabling programs
3. in light of these principles, facilitating the development of a strategic discussion on good practice in enabling curriculum design at a national level.

The project team examined the curriculum design approaches of one open access enabling program from each participating institution: the Open Foundation Program of The University of Newcastle, the University Preparation Program of the University of Tasmania and the UniPrep program of Edith Cowan University. These three programs represent the diversity of open access programs in Australia, with one having a discipline-specific focus (The University of Newcastle), the second having a focus on academic literacies and preparation (University of Tasmania), and the third having a combination of the two (Edith Cowan University). Each participating program was designed in response to its local context; different historical factors shaped the development of each program.

‘Curriculum’ is a complex and often misunderstood concept. This study works with a four-fold understanding of ‘curriculum’ comprising: the *intended* curriculum, the documented program information such as subject outlines; the *enacted* curriculum, what educators teach; the *experienced* curriculum, what students learn; and, weaving through them all, the *hidden* curriculum, the norms, values and beliefs associated with education.

Research methods

To gain an understanding of the principles underlying each of these four aspects of curriculum in the participating programs, a mixed-methods approach employed three methods of data collection: a curriculum-mapping tool to examine the written curriculum documents (recording the intended curriculum), focus-group interviews with staff (providing information on the enactment of the intended curriculum and the hidden curriculum) and online surveys of students who had formerly undertaken study in one of the three enabling programs (revealing the experienced and hidden curriculum). The data arising from each was articulated into a set of principles which were then compared for congruence and differences.

Key Findings

This study demonstrated that common principles underpin the curriculum design approaches of the three enabling programs in this study. Its findings address some concerns recently raised by Kemp and Norton (2014), Baker and Irwin (2015), and Pitman, et al. (2015) about the diversity of enabling program curriculum design approaches. It also validates enabling curricula developed in response to local and historical contexts.

The findings provide an essential platform to inform policy makers, providers, enabling educators and researchers of the critical role enabling curricula play in developing the capacity for students from non-traditional and under-represented backgrounds to access higher education.

Deep congruence in the enacted, experienced and hidden curricula of enabling programs

This project found that the differences in the intended curriculum design at the three institutions did not impact on students' development of knowledge and skills needed for success in undergraduate university study. The student surveys revealed a significant level of similarity in student experiences, especially in regard to the 'ethos of care', across the three institutions. This strongly suggests a deep congruence in the enacted, experienced and hidden curricula of these enabling programs. The findings from this research also indicate that of these four aspects of curriculum making the 'hidden curriculum' explicit is the most important component in an enabling program.

Exposing the significant role of the hidden curriculum and fostering an 'ethos of care'

There was a substantial degree of overlap between the principles extrapolated from each of the data sources. The major difference was that while the principles drawn from the curriculum documents concentrated on 'nuts and bolts', such as skills, knowledge and behaviours appropriate to the university environment, those elicited from staff and students demonstrated a central concern with less tangible issues, such as those pertaining to student development.

In interviews, staff exhibited a concern for fostering empowerment, personal development and confidence in students, as well as an 'ethos of care' that was not present in the intended curricula. Significantly, student surveys confirmed that students felt that not only had the 'nuts and bolts' been successfully imparted by their programs, but also that the above mentioned aspects of personal development and empowerment were an important part of their enabling experience. This overlap indicates the substantial role enabling educators' play in making the hidden curriculum explicit to students.

Enabling programs and their design differ from undergraduate programs

This project reinforces the findings of Hodges, et al. (2013) that enabling programs are markedly different to undergraduate programs. Participation in enabling programs enables students to develop confidence, skills and knowledge that foster personal development, and empowers students to confidently participate in university and community environments.

Enabling curriculum design emphasises fostering a positive student experience in preparation for undergraduate study.

Curriculum design principles

Five principles were developed as underlying guiding principles of the participating programs. In brief, these are:

1. **Preparation for university study:** Enabling curricula prepare students academically and personally for undergraduate study.
2. **Student-learning-centred and holistic approach:** Enabling curricula are student centred and holistic.
3. **Explicitness:** Enabling curricula make the hidden curriculum explicit through documenting and teaching the rules, values, knowledge and academic skills necessary to confidently study at university.
4. **Establishing inclusive and respectful learning communities:** Enabling curricula are enacted by educators who work to establish inclusive, respectful and engaging learning communities.
5. **Fostering transformative experiences:** Enabling curricula provide transformative life and educational experiences for students by challenging their beliefs about education and knowledge.

Recommendations

1. **Specific enabling program outcomes:** It is recommended that enabling educators engage with their relevant university policy makers to develop specific enabling program outcomes that differ from undergraduate graduate outcomes and reflect the appropriate level of achievement required by students to successfully complete an enabling program.
2. **Extension and replication:** It is recommended that the NAEAA Enabling Curriculum Special Interest Group engage with the NAEAA community and as many other open access and restrictive access enabling programs as possible to (a) ascertain, using the approach and tools employed in this project, the completeness and general applicability of the general principles articulated here and (b) enhance the curricula employed by providers according to this shared knowledge and collaboration.
3. **Role of making the hidden curriculum explicit:** It is recommended that the NAEAA Enabling Curriculum Special Interest Group engage with the NAEAA community and as many other open access and restrictive access enabling programs as possible to investigate the usefulness and practicability of making aspects of the hidden curriculum an explicit part of the intended curriculum.

Project outputs

1. Curriculum mapping tool
2. Articulated set of principles guiding enabling curricula
3. Validation and discussion of principles with university and non-university providers of enabling programs via facilitation of different forums, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Presentation of workshop: National Association of Enabling Educators of Australia (NAEEA) Southern Symposium (September, 2016)
 - b. Presentation of workshop: Foundation and Bridging Educators of New Zealand (FABENZ) conference, Auckland New Zealand (December 2016)
4. Dissemination of the findings on participating institutions and national websites (e.g. [NAEEA website](http://www.enablingeducators.org) (www.enablingeducators.org) and Hodges, et al's (2013) [retention website](#))
5. Establishment by members of the project team of a national special interest group, led by the team members, within NAEEA to shape and facilitate debate on enabling curriculum design at a national level.

Project impact

The project has already had a significant impact on enabling educators. It has attracted the interest of the professional association, the NAEEA, which has subsequently established the Enabling Curriculum Special Interest Group on the [NAEEA website](#). Professor Sally Kift, former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at James Cook University, attended the FABENZ conference presentation and tweeted about the project.

Workshops were held at Central Queensland University, Edith Cowan University, Southern Cross University, University of Southern Queensland and University of Tasmania from April to June, 2017.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Enabling programs provide an effective and important pathway to higher education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and target equity groups (Bradley et al., 2008; Pitman, et al., 2015). A key aim of an enabling program is to prepare students for success in their first year of undergraduate studies (Hodges, et al., 2013).

While enabling programs continue to provide opportunities for non-traditional students to access pathways to university, research into enabling curricula is still developing, as historically research has focused on the benefits of enabling programs and how to measure success rather than examining what constitutes an enabling program (Andrewartha & Harvey, 2014; Crawford, 2014; Hodges, et al., 2013; Habel, Whitman, & Stokes, 2016; Pitman, 2014).

While some research into curriculum design approaches has recently been undertaken at separate institutions (Dinmore & Stokes, 2015; Lane & Sharp, 2014; Relf & Burgess, 2014; Sharp et al., 2014), there are no national comparative studies such as this report presents. Firstly, this project builds on the recommendations in Hodges, et al. (2013) that research into the particular challenges of teaching and learning in enabling programs be conducted. Secondly, it addresses the lack of research into curriculum design in enabling programs and tertiary education in general (Andrewartha & Harvey, 2014; Barnett & Coate, 2005; Hicks, 2007; Hicks, 2009; Hodges, et al., 2013). Thirdly, it aims to fill the general knowledge deficit about enabling programs identified in recent reviews (Lomax-Smith, Watson & Webster, 2011; Kemp & Norton, 2014; Pitman et al., 2015).

1.2 Project aims

The project aims were to:

1. examine the curriculum design approaches in three university enabling programs across Australia
2. articulate guiding principles that underlie curriculum design in these enabling programs
3. in light of these principles, facilitate the development of a strategic discussion on good practice in enabling curriculum design at a national level.

This report focuses on the first two of these aims, while the third is in progress via conference presentations, workshops, publications and a Special Interest Group of the NAEAA.

1.3 Program structure

The project team from The University of Newcastle, Edith Cowan University and the University of Tasmania explored each institution's enabling curriculum approach. Enabling programs at the three institutions represent the diversity of enabling programs offered

nationally, that is with one having a discipline-specific focus (The University of Newcastle), a second having a focus on academic literacies and preparation (University of Tasmania), and the third having a combination of the two (Edith Cowan University) (Table 1.1).¹

Universities use different terms to describe program components. A subject studied in one semester is referred to as a ‘unit’ at Edith Cowan University and the University of Tasmania, but as a ‘course’ at The University of Newcastle. Multiple ‘units’ make up a ‘course’ at Edith Cowan University and the University of Tasmania; multiple ‘courses’ make up a ‘program’ at The University of Newcastle. To avoid confusion the following terminology is used in this report: a ‘unit’ refers to a subject studied in one semester; multiple ‘units’ completed over one or two semesters constitute an enabling ‘program’.

Table 1.1: Structure of open access enabling programs at University of Tasmania, Edith Cowan University and The University of Newcastle

	University of Tasmania University Preparation Program	Edith Cowan University UniPrep	University of Newcastle Open Foundation
Structure of units	8 units (skills) selected from 9 generic academic skills units	4 units (skills & disciplines) comprising 3 generic academic skills units and 1 discipline specific unit (from 2 choices)	4 units (disciplines) selected from 20 discipline-specific units
Mode	Full time – 1 year Part time – 2 years Online On-campus Mixed mode	Full time – 1 semester Part time – 2 semesters Online On-campus Mixed mode	Full time – 1 semester Part time – 2 semesters Online On-campus Mixed mode
Campuses	3 regional	2 metropolitan 1 regional	2 regional
	COMPLETION OF 8 UNITS ↓	COMPLETION OF 4 UNITS ↓	COMPLETION OF 4 UNITS ↓
Entry into undergraduate course			

¹ All programs in the study are what are termed ‘open access’ or ‘open entry’ programs, in that they do not require any particular level of prior educational achievement for entry. This is common, although not universal, in Australian enabling programs and introduces a number of important features – such as high levels of student diversity and more opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate, as well as relatively high levels of student attrition – which are important considerations, although they are not the focus of this study.

Chapter 2: Approach

2.1 What is 'curriculum'?

The term 'curriculum' is commonly used in research articles and university documents, often without definition and with a range of meanings uninformed by current debate (Barnett, 2009; Barnett & Coate, 2005; Hicks, 2007). The lack of debate about curriculum in enabling programs reflects the similar lack of debate about curriculum in higher education (Barnett & Coate, 2005). Curriculum is often defined and understood in quite narrow terms, as, for example, the formal material that educators deliver in order for students to gain knowledge or skills and achieve certain learning outcomes (Arafeh, 2015). Barnett and Coate (2005) reject this simplistic usage, proposing that there are three essential dimensions common to every curriculum: 'knowing', 'acting' and 'being'. Barnett (2009) further stresses that the process of 'coming to know' is more important than obtaining knowledge or skills, as this is where change, becoming, and transformation of the being occurs.

The processes of education are necessarily highly complex, involving multiple explicit and implicit needs, aims and interests of a wide range of participants. Stakeholders include the policy-makers forming the framework for the educational experience, the institutional designers of the curriculum (senior and middle management, committees for teaching and learning, and related committees), the academic and support staff implementing the curriculum and the students experiencing it. Nowhere is this complexity more apparent than in the notion of the 'hidden curriculum' (Margolis et al., 2001). Much of the literature characterises the hidden curriculum as everything involved in the teaching and learning process that is not written down in the intended curriculum (Jackson, 1968). Characterisations of the 'hidden curriculum' range from 'a set of influences that function at the level of the institutional structure and culture' (Hafferty, 1998, p. 404) to a process that serves to reproduce social inequalities (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Margolis et al., 2001). In processes as complex as teaching and learning in an institutional setting, 'what is not written down' is necessarily a very large part of what is actually going on.

For this project, 'curriculum' is conceived to be four inter-related parts: the *intended* curriculum, the *enacted* curriculum, the *experienced* curriculum and, weaving through them all, the *hidden* curriculum (Arafeh, 2015; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Margolis et al, 2001; Billett, 2011; Table 2.1). The intended curriculum is articulated in the program and unit documents. It includes the subject content to be taught, assessment details, unit outcomes and requirements for successful completion. The enacted curriculum is the implementation of the intended curriculum in a particular institutional or classroom setting; it is predicated upon the agenda of the staff member, who has a unique set of values, experiences and agendas. These values, experiences and agendas usually overlap significantly with, but are rarely identical to, those of the institution. The enacted curriculum is delivered by staff to a body of students with their own values, agendas and interpretative frameworks, resulting in the experienced curriculum (Billett, 2011; Kurz et al., 2010; Porter, 2004).

The hidden curriculum operates in all these areas; it arises in and from the unseen and often unintended consequences of actions in the other aspects. For the purposes of this project,

hidden curriculum is understood as the implicit norms, values and beliefs associated with education (Margolis et al., 2001). Although the traditional idea of hidden curriculum is generally acknowledged to have originated in Jackson's *Life in classrooms* (1968), Henry Giroux (as cited in Margolis et al., 2001) identified the concept as grounded in the work of Paulo Freire, emphasising personal dignity and social justice, dominant themes in previous enabling program research (Coombes, Danaher & Danaher, 2013; Hall, 2015; Lane & Sharp, 2014; Ross & Gray, 2005; Whannell, Allen & Lynch, 2010; Willans & Seary, 2007). (Note that behaviours and values may also be included in the intended curriculum, as some curriculum documents will include statements designed to be operative but not assessed, for example 'aspiration'.)

Ideally, the experience of the students, including their experiences of educators making explicit elements of what is often left as a hidden curriculum, should be generally in line with the aims of the intended curriculum. Accordingly, this report employs an understanding of 'curriculum' as consisting of these four inter-related parts. As Arafah (2015) points out, the investigation and evaluation of the different aspects of curriculum requires different data collection methods. These aspects and the related data collection approaches are illustrated in Table 2.1.

2.2 Research methods²

In order to gain an understanding of what constitutes an 'enabling curriculum' in its broadest sense from student, staff and institutional perspectives, a mixed-methods research design was employed using a triangulation approach. Three methods of data collection were used at each institution:

1. **a mapping tool**, which identified the intended curriculum as presented in documents such as unit outlines and program outcome statements
2. **focus-group interviews**, which captured the perspectives of academic staff in the enabling programs
3. **online surveys**, which captured the perspectives of students who had formerly undertaken study in one of the three enabling programs.

Each data collection method investigated a different aspect of the enabling curriculum. The relationship of each data collection method to the four aspects of curriculum is presented in Table 2.1.

For each collection method, data analysis generated a set of principles related to the specific aspects of curriculum being investigated. An analysis of the similarities and differences between these principles was then undertaken to derive the final set of principles underlying curriculum design in enabling programs presented in Section 4.2.

² This project received ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee at The University of Newcastle (H-2016-0155), prior ethics approval from the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee (H0015870), and Edith Cowan University (G1002217).

Table 2.1: Aspects of curriculum and related data collection methods

Intended curriculum	Enacted curriculum	Experienced curriculum
What is documented in program information such as unit outlines (including intended learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, assessments) Designed, planned Formal Explicit	What teachers teach Formal Informal Incidental	What students learn Formal Informal Incidental Based upon prior learning and attributes of the cohort
↓	↓	↓
↓	Hidden curriculum	↓
↓	↓ ↓	↓ ↓
Mapping tool	Staff focus groups	Student surveys (and staff focus groups)

2.2.1 Curriculum mapping tool

Currently, no curriculum mapping tools exist for the purpose of comparing enabling curricula. This project developed a curriculum mapping tool based upon the five-step model of Cuevas and Feit (2011) and informed by Sumsion and Goodfellow’s (2004) review of curriculum mapping approaches in higher education. This tool was used to perform a curriculum audit of the participating institutions, mapping similarities and differences in curriculum design based upon unit learning outcomes, assessments and desired attributes and aims for graduates at each institution. Five units from each institution were mapped using a modified version of the templates presented by Cuevas and Feit (2011). As each university presented unique unit offerings to their students (e.g. Edith Cowan University offered three core academic skills units and one discipline elective, the University of Tasmania eight smaller academic skills units and The University of Newcastle two discipline-specific units selected from a choice of 20 subjects), the units selected were those that the potential student survey group would more than likely have encountered. Given the 12-month timeframe of this project, it was not possible to map all units from each university.

2.2.2 Staff focus groups

The target group for the staff focus-group interviews was academic staff employed in the enabling programs at the three institutions. Research assistants sent an email invitation, and three focus groups were conducted at each institution. Research assistants were the interviewers at two of the institutions, while two of the researchers were the interviewers at a third institution. The roles undertaken by the academic staff participants mainly constituted unit coordination, lecturing and tutoring; several participants were involved in course coordination, management and learning skills advising.

The focus-group interviews were semi-structured and guided by open-ended questions developed by the research team. The questions explored the participants’ understandings of

enabling education and enabling curriculum; the focus and purpose of their enabling programs; and their experiences, attitudes, approaches and underlying philosophies. The interviews were audio-recorded with permission from the participants, and the recordings were transcribed verbatim. The nine transcriptions were coded manually and a thematic analysis was undertaken. A codebook and tracking document were created and member checking was undertaken to ensure coder reliability. Qualitative analysis for the nine focus groups was undertaken by two researchers from one of the participating institutions to ensure consistency, reliability and efficiency.

2.2.3 Student surveys

The survey instrument containing Likert-scale items was developed to investigate the hidden and experienced curriculum from the student viewpoint. Survey questions were based upon a previous survey administered to enabling students at Edith Cowan University (Lane & Sharp, 2014).

Eligible students at Edith Cowan University, The University of Newcastle and the University of Tasmania were invited via e-mail to participate in the survey. Students were eligible to participate if they had completed an on-campus enabling program in 2015 or previously and were enrolled in the first year of an undergraduate degree at Edith Cowan University, The University of Newcastle or the University of Tasmania in semester one, 2016.³ This project chose to focus on identifying curriculum design principles for on-campus enabling programs.⁴

Descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis were performed on student survey responses from the three institutions using SPSS software (version 23). Reliability analysis was conducted to confirm exploratory factor analysis loadings. Internal consistency was analysed using Cronbach's alpha. Non-parametric analysis was performed for each factor against the university attended using JMP software (version 13).

³ At the University of Tasmania, eligible students were those who had enrolled in an undergraduate program in semester one, 2016, and who had completed a unit or units in the University Preparation Program in 2015 or earlier. At The University of Newcastle, only students who had enrolled in the four largest courses were chosen to participate in the survey in order to accommodate the different structure of The University of Newcastle's enabling program. Only these students were chosen to ensure that their surveys were viable for analysis using the curriculum mapping undertaken and to ensure that student responses at The University of Newcastle aligned with those courses identified for curriculum mapping. This allowed for comparison of students' results with curriculum mapping results.

⁴ The timeframe of the project did not allow investigation of curriculum design principles for online or distance modes of offer. Curriculum design principles for these projects can be investigated at a later date.

Chapter 3: Project findings

3.1 Curriculum mapping

The curriculum mapping tool for enabling programs developed for the project was applied to a representative sample of units known well to the researchers from the three participating institutions. Unit learning outcomes, content, assessment items and rubrics (to the extent that this information is visible in unit outlines) were mapped. In addition, where available, graduate attributes (or equivalent) were also considered in the mapping exercise.

At The University of Newcastle, a specific set of ‘enabling attributes’ lay behind the program documentation, while the other institutions aligned their programs with the generic graduate outcomes used for their undergraduate and post-graduate students. These outcomes were difficult to measure and remained largely unmapped. The curriculum mapping exercise revealed that The University of Newcastle aligned 89% of unit material with specifically constructed enabling outcomes, whereas Edith Cowan University, using the university’s generic graduate outcomes, could only align 69% of unit content. These data suggest that the uncritical adoption of undergraduate and graduate outcomes by Edith Cowan University and the University of Tasmania neither captures the developmental stage characterising most enabling students on entry, nor does it realistically reflect the level of competence desired on successful completion. It is important, then, that objectives for enabling programs should reflect both a quantitative and qualitative outlook for students; that is, these attributes or outcomes should specify not only competencies but also the levels at which they should be achieved. Without specifically developed enabling graduate outcomes, students cannot achieve generic undergraduate or postgraduate outcomes, because the outcomes become redundant for those entering undergraduate programs via enabling programs, as successful completion of the enabling program implies the outcomes have already been achieved. Thus, the principle that can be inferred from unit documentation is that graduate outcomes should be directed towards fostering skills rather than targeting achievement of them, and unit outcomes should in turn reflect this overarching principle.

Further, according to the unit documentation reviewed, the curriculum mapping exercise showed that many unit and graduate outcomes remained unmeasured. For the three enabling programs in this project, on average, 37% of unit outcomes were not assessed, many of which might be considered a part of the hidden curriculum (for example self-regulatory skills and collaboration). Unit outcomes are a clear and specific statement on what students are expected to learn, and therefore should be able to be demonstrated.

3.1.1 Principles by program

By combining the stated program outcomes, unit learning outcomes and the above considerations, the curriculum mapping process suggests the following principles for the intended curriculum at each institution. (Note that these are not intended as a complete statement of the principles underlying curriculum in general, but only as those specific to enabling curriculum. Such general curriculum principles as the need for assessment to be aligned with unit learning outcomes, for example, are not included; these are understood to apply as with any curriculum).

The Open Foundation Program (The University of Newcastle) will:

- OF1: foster the development of a foundational level competence in key academic skills in academic writing, research and communication.
- OF2: foster the development of a foundational awareness of salient knowledge across two academic content areas.
- OF3: foster the development of a foundational understanding of academic integrity and ethical conduct requirements.
- OF4: foster the development of a foundational ability to successfully engage with the university teaching and learning environment.

It should be noted that the specifically designed enabling attributes in The University of Newcastle's enabling program attempt to characterise an appropriate level of achievement for students successfully completing an enabling program. In enabling programs, such a level of achievement must always be present, whether explicitly noted in program documentation or not. (Any absence of alignment between unit materials and enabling outcomes seems to be atypical, as evidenced through the curriculum mapping. It was found that only about 11% of unit materials were not mapped to program outcomes, as reported in section 3.1 above.) Accordingly, the term 'foster' was adopted to help characterise the developmental nature of all enabling curriculum.

The Uniprep Program (Edith Cowan University) will:

- EC1: foster the development of the ability to communicate clearly in written and spoken expression, through appropriate use of technology.
- EC2: foster the development of the ability to work in teams, specifically to effectively collaborate and contribute within small groups in order to develop academic skills.
- EC3: foster the development of critical appraisal skills, specifically planning, organising, problem solving and decision making.
- EC4: foster the development of the ability to generate ideas, specifically to be confident in creativity and innovation.
- EC5: foster the development of a cross-cultural and international outlook, specifically the ability to engage productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures and consider alternative cultural perspectives.
- EC6: foster the development of competence in key academic skills in academic writing, research and communication.
- EC7: foster the development of a foundational awareness of salient knowledge across two academic content areas.

The University Preparation Program (University of Tasmania) will:

- UT1: foster knowledge of relevant disciplines, including the capacity to apply this knowledge in practice using relevant information technologies.
- UT2: foster the capacity to communicate effectively across a range of contexts.
- UT3: foster problem-solving capacity, including critical thinking and creative capacities.

- UT4: foster a global perspective and the capacity to understand and communicate across different cultural contexts.
- UT5: foster the development of ethical behaviour and a sense of social responsibility.
- UT6: foster familiarisation with the university environment and the development of skills, techniques and knowledge to facilitate success at undergraduate study.

3.1.2 Integrated principles from curriculum mapping

Integrating and re-casting the three sets of program principles, and given the importance of a quantitative dimension as noted above, a set of underlying principles for the intended curriculum were derived as follows:

- C1. Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational level competence in key academic skills in academic writing, research and communication.
- C2. Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational awareness of salient knowledge across relevant academic content areas.
- C3. Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational understanding of academic integrity and ethical conduct requirements in the university context and more widely.
- C4. Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational ability to successfully engage with the university teaching and learning environment.
- C5. Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational ability to work in teams, specifically to effectively collaborate and contribute within small groups in order to develop academic skills.
- C6. Enabling curricula foster the development of a cross-cultural and international outlook, specifically the ability to engage productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures and considering alternative cultural perspectives.

Note that these principles focus on the 'nuts and bolts' of university preparation such as skills, knowledge and behaviours appropriate to the university environment.

3.1.3 Further information arising from curriculum mapping

The curriculum mapping exercise revealed that The University of Newcastle aligned 89% of unit material with their specifically constructed enabling outcomes, whereas Edith Cowan University, using the university's generic graduate outcomes, could only align 69% of unit content. In particular, outcomes that involved a broader outlook (such as global perspectives) or were focused on self-regulatory skills (such as time management, cooperative interactions with fellow students) were more likely to remain undocumented in unit outlines and therefore were potentially unmeasured. Further, many unit and graduate outcomes remained unmeasured according to the unit documentation reviewed. For the three enabling programs in this project, on average 37% of unit outcomes were not assessed, including outcomes such as acquiring research skills, understanding the difference that humanities may make in society, and developing the capacity for critical evaluation.

3.2 Staff focus groups

Twenty-five staff participated in the focus groups from across the three universities; nine participants were from the University of Tasmania, six were from Edith Cowan University and ten were from The University of Newcastle. Staff focus group questions can be found in Appendix C.

Despite the different program structures, the themes that arose from the qualitative analysis were common to each of the nine focus-group interviews across the three institutions. The thematic analysis suggests that the majority of the participants understood enabling programs as serving multiple purposes. Participants expressed that the main objective of enabling programs is to provide access to students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to engage in university studies. Linked to access is the opportunity for students to 'taste' what university study is, and to 'test' themselves. The majority of participants viewed preparing students for undergraduate study as the core purpose of the programs. The aspects of preparation discussed included developing students' academic literacies, skills and proficiencies and familiarity with the academic culture. The last of these includes guiding students in navigating academic systems and environments, and accessing support and information. Students develop confidence when they gain knowledge about the self, the program content, and the institution. Enabling educators consider this confidence building to be a core aspect and outcome of enabling education because it empowers students to become independent learners engaging in self-discovery. In addition to indicating that enabling education helps students 'learn how to be a university student', many participants also believed that enabling education develops students' life skills.

Many of the enabling educators reported that they focused on establishing relationships, providing pastoral care and support, and building a community of learners. The majority emphasised the importance of a student-learning-centred, holistic approach that was adaptable and flexible and that considered the diversity of the enabling student cohort. There was a shared understanding amongst the participants that they knew they should not hold any pre-conceived ideas about their students' starting points due to the range in the students' knowledge, skills and prior educational experiences at commencement of the programs.

3.2.1 Thematic analysis findings

The multiple themes and subthemes from the qualitative analysis of the staff focus groups can be expressed in terms of 'purpose', 'values', and 'features':

1. Purposes of enabling programs

- a. Enable access to higher education and offer a taste of university.
- b. Provide academic preparation and development of literacies and skills.
- c. Familiarise students with the academic culture, its expectations and conventions.
- d. Foster a wider set of skills and personal development.

2. Values underpinning staff approaches

Staff are committed to:

- a. a student-learning-centred and holistic approach
- b. inclusiveness and diversity
- c. fostering growth
- d. support, care and empowerment
- e. excellence in teaching and learning
- f. community.

3. Features of enabling programs from the staff perspective

The purposes and values inform the following features. Enabling programs provide and/or foster:

- a. access and opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds, entry levels, and prior educational and life experiences
- b. a student-learning-centred and holistic approach to teaching
- c. academic preparation, acculturation and acclimatisation
- d. personal discovery and critical thinking
- e. empowerment, confidence building and independence
- f. a culture of care, empathy and support
- g. a non-judgmental, inclusive and open environment
- h. relationships and learning communities
- i. a collegial environment.

3.2.2 Summary of principles arising from staff focus groups

- FG1. Enabling curricula embody a student-learning-centred approach.
- FG2. Enabling curricula are holistic, covering not only teaching and learning but also pastoral care and support.
- FG3. Enabling curricula are designed around open access, with entry to programs requiring no prior level of educational attainment (applicable to open access programs only).
- FG4. Enabling curricula facilitate critical thinking.
- FG5. Enabling curricula empower students and facilitate personal discovery, building confidence and capacity for independent learning.
- FG6. Enabling curricula foster a collegial environment and build student learning communities.

There is a high degree of agreement between staff from each institution on the purposes and values that guide staff in implementing the enacted curriculum. However, a difference in emphasis is visible here. Where the principles emerging from the curriculum mapping

exercise concentrate on the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the development of academic skills, knowledge and university-ready behaviours, staff in the focus groups are much more concerned with students flourishing, a concern characteristic of enabling educators that might be termed an *ethos of care*. Staff in the focus groups focussed on the importance of making important elements of the hidden curriculum explicit in the enacted curriculum, which are inevitably invisible in the curriculum mapping exercise. For example, (FG2) mentions pastoral care and support. Such considerations are not traditionally part of curriculum documents and are certainly not likely to be assessed.

3.3 Student survey

A total of 211 students, comprising 60 males and 151 female respondents, participated in the survey (response rate 12%). Of the respondents, 53.6% were from Edith Cowan University, 28.0% were from The University of Newcastle and 18.4% were from the University of Tasmania. Survey questions can be found In Appendix D.

3.3.1 Enabling students’ experience of their enabling curriculum

Exploratory factor analysis identified six key themes from the student survey responses that were subsequently named:

1. hidden curriculum
2. intended/experienced curriculum
3. academic skills development
4. purpose
5. knowing
6. developing confidence for being

Hidden curriculum

Responses to questions for this theme indicated that students experienced a curriculum that was inclusive, respectful, caring, supportive, non-judgmental, equitable, encouraging, explicit and student-learning-centred. These match with the staff descriptions of the values that guide them to make important aspects of the hidden curriculum an explicit part of the enacted curriculum.

Intended/experienced curriculum

Responses to questions for these themes indicated that students’ experiences of their enabling curriculum at their institutions reflected the stated programs’ graduate attributes and unit learning outcomes. Students found their enabling program curriculum to be realistic and rigorous, holistic and confidence building. Student responses also indicated that they experienced a curriculum that was relevant, successfully developed their academic and non-academic skills, and familiarised them with the university environment and culture.

Academic skills development

At each institution, students responded that their curriculum developed their writing and research skills. They also responded that they developed skills that allowed them to successfully understand what was required for each assessment and to be reflective and

learn independently; that is, they believed that the intended curriculum, in terms of skills development, had been successfully delivered.

Purpose

Students' responses to questions for this theme indicated that the main reasons students enrolled in enabling programs were to gain self-fulfilment, to prove to themselves or others that they were capable of learning at university and to improve their academic confidence. Gaining a job was not a reason students enrolled in their enabling program.

Knowing

Students' responses to questions for the 'knowing' theme indicated that their enabling programs developed not only discipline-specific content knowledge for their undergraduate degree, but also cultural capital and knowledge of how to be successful at university. Students developed cultural capital by gaining knowledge about academic integrity, ethical conduct, communication, computers and information technology.

Developing confidence for being

Student responses to questions loading onto this theme indicated that enabling staff modelled how to behave at university and provided role models for students. Enabling staff also helped students to perceive themselves as successful learners. Students also indicated that their perception of education and knowledge were challenged, prompting them to think differently and more confidently about study and other aspects of their lives.

3.3.2 Similarity in student experiences across the three programs

Student survey responses revealed a significant level of similarity in students' experiences and preparation for university across the three institutions despite substantial differences in their intended curricula. Figure 3.1 presents the average aggregated Likert-scale score for questions loading onto each factor for each institution.

A chi-squared test of independence performed to analyse the relationship between each of the six curriculum design factors and the university attended found there were no statistically significant differences between university attended and 'hidden curriculum' ($p = 0.2143$, $df = 2$), 'intended/experienced curriculum' ($p = 0.8651$, $df = 2$), 'academic skills development' ($p = 0.9918$, $df = 2$), 'purpose' ($p = 0.2846$, $df = 2$), 'knowing' ($p = 0.3056$, $df = 2$) or 'developing confidence for being' ($p = 0.1970$, $df = 2$). In this report we are only presenting the results of the chi-squared analysis performed for each factor against university attended. Results from analyses of the remaining demographic factors against these factors will be presented in a later publication.

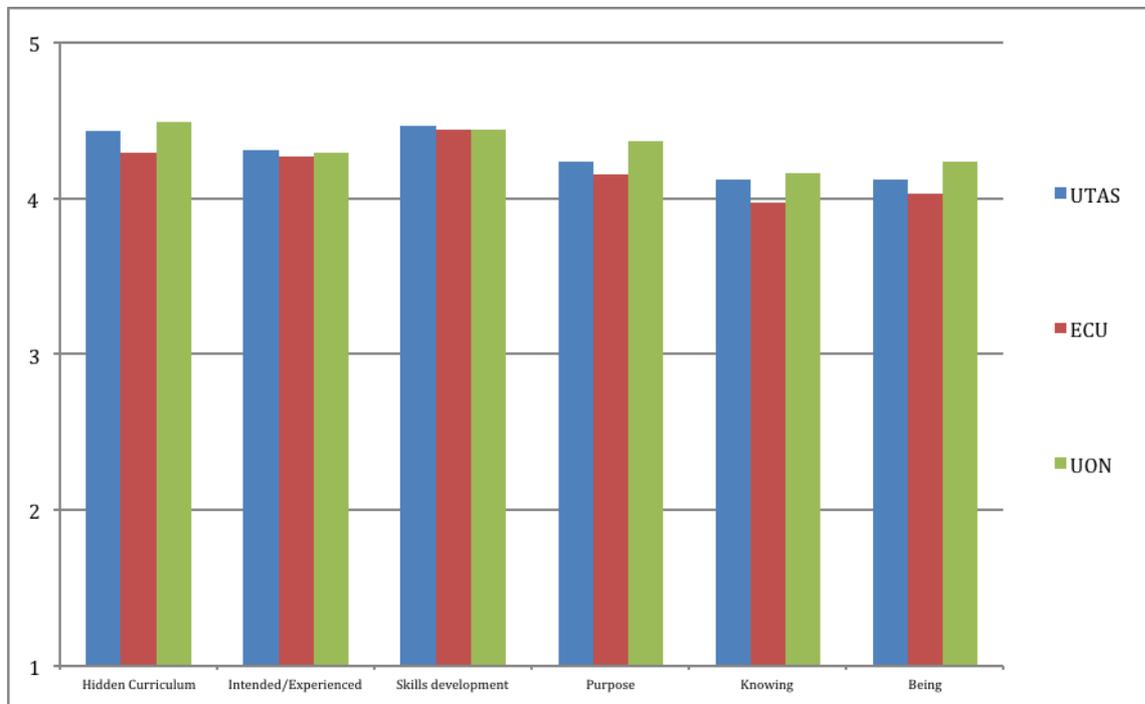


Figure 3.1: Average aggregated Likert-scale scores for each of the six curriculum design factors at Edith Cowan University, University of Tasmania and The University of Newcastle

3.3.3 Building in success

Overall, students from each university reported that their confidence to undertake university study increased as a result of participating in their enabling program. Only 13.7% of students responded that they had been confident or very confident in their ability to be successful at university prior to beginning their enabling program. However, 83.5% of students replied that they felt ‘confident’ or ‘very confident’ in their ability to be successful at university after completing their enabling programs.

3.3.4 Summary of principles arising from student survey

- SS1. Enabling curricula are student-learning-centred, holistic and inclusive.
- SS2. Enabling curricula develop student confidence in their capability to study successfully at university.
- SS3. Enabling curricula align learning objectives and assessment items.
- SS4. Enabling curricula explicitly teach the rules of, and expectations for, academic study at university using relevant content.
- SS5. Enabling curricula establish inclusive and respectful learning communities through staff–student relationships.
- SS6. Enabling curricula develop a student’s knowledge of the university environment in an authentic supported and scaffolded manner.

Again, there are some differences from the two previous sets of principles, but there are also some important areas of overlap, especially regarding aspects of the hidden curriculum important to staff. In this section, the findings show how the curriculum is *experienced* by students, measuring its success as well as pointing to its nature as being more than the formal documentation of the intended curriculum. Note that student experience reflects the ethos of care that emerged in staff interviews. The most significant result is the high level of similarity in the student experience across the three programs, including experience of the ethos of care, despite the substantive differences in their intended curricula.

Chapter 4: Principles underlying curriculum design in open access enabling programs

4.1 Context of principles

The mixed-methods approach utilised in this project to investigate the complexity of the enabling curriculum provided a range of perspectives. Results from each approach were analysed and integrated into a set of principles that underlie enabling curriculum, accurately and adequately representing the different aspects of the intended, enacted, experienced and hidden curriculum.

Consequently, a number of points should be kept in mind when reading this list of principles in Section 4.2. Firstly, the principles presented here are an *articulation* of what are currently perceived to be the principles at work in the enabling curricula of the three enabling participating programs; this list is neither a statement of what *should* be nor an evaluation of these principles. It also concentrates on principles distinct to enabling programs, rather than including general principles of good curriculum design.

Secondly, the principles as listed are a synthesis of inferences from the data arising from the three data collection methods. Different abstractions from the data are possible given that the data may be organised differently. Project team members find the list given consistent with their experience of enabling programs and those of their colleagues who willingly participated in the NAEEA and FABENZ workshops. One of the project aims was to stimulate discussion on the principles underlying curriculum design in Australian enabling programs, and this set of articulated principles provides a starting point for such discussion.

Finally, these principles are especially appropriate for *open-access*, on-campus programs similar to those investigated in this study. While in all probability these are broadly applicable to the wider range of enabling programs with varying academic entry requirements, there may also be variations to them depending on the different levels of entry requirement. It is reasonable to assume, for example, that as the level of academic competence required for entry into a given program rises, these principles evolve to resemble those for first-year undergraduates described by Kift et al. (2010), but this expectation is subject to further research. Any such differences are expected to emerge in a subsequent sector-wide discussion of these principles.

4.2 Guiding principles in curriculum design

A clear set of guiding principles underlying the curricula of enabling programs emerges from the three areas of investigation:

Principle 1. Preparation for university study

Enabling curricula prepare students academically and personally for undergraduate study.

Enabling curricula develop students' confidence in their ability to study at university by teaching academic skills and discipline-specific content necessary for study in a higher education environment.

Principle 2. Student-learning-centred and holistic approach

Enabling curricula are student-learning-centred and holistic.

Enabling curriculum design takes into account the diversity of prior academic achievements and life experiences of students enrolling in these programs. Developing the academic skills and requisite background knowledge of these students is a focus of these programs; however, equally as important is the provision of pastoral care and support. Enabling curricula are centred not just on the students' learning but on the students developing their learner identity. This approach addresses the social justice agenda of enabling programs. Enabling curricula build cultural capital by developing students' knowledge of university through authentic and scaffolded experiences.

Principle 3. Explicitness

Enabling curricula make the hidden curriculum clear, by making the implicit elements explicit. Enabling curricula document and teach the rules, values, knowledge and academic skills necessary to study at university, which in turn develops students' confidence and capability to enrol and succeed in higher education.

Enabling program documentation explicitly details and ensures alignment between program attributes, unit learning outcomes and assessments. As well, enabling educators explicitly teach the values and rules associated with learning in a university that students with diverse backgrounds may not be aware of.

Principle 4. Establishing inclusive and respectful learning communities

Enabling curricula are enacted by educators who work to establish inclusive, respectful and engaging learning communities.

Enabling educators display excellence in teaching and learning approaches, establishing respectful and non-judgmental staff–student relationships and allowing students to develop confidence in their ability to engage in learning in higher education.

Principle 5. Fostering transformative experiences

Enabling curricula provide transformative life and educational experiences for students by challenging their beliefs about education and knowledge. Enabling curricula also develop students' capacities for reflective and critical thinking, allowing students to develop positive images of themselves as successful learners.

Chapter 5: Discussion and recommendations

5.1 Deep congruence in the enacted, experienced and hidden curricula of enabling programs

By identifying a common set of principles underpinning curriculum design for the diverse enabling programs at the three participating institutions, this research addresses concerns raised by Kemp and Norton (2014), Baker and Irwin (2015), and Pitman, et al. (2015) about the diversity of enabling program curriculum design approaches.

Although the curriculum mapping exercise revealed some surface contrasts in the intended curricula across the participating programs, the student experience of the curriculum paints a picture of much greater similarity between the programs. When each factor of student experience was analysed, comparisons between institutions lacked statistical significance. This finding suggests that difference in curriculum design at the three institutions does not impact on students' development of knowledge and skills needed for success in undergraduate university study.

The design of each program in this study reflects the local context and history of when it was established. However, the similarity of the enacted and experienced curriculum of each suggests that the three enabling programs share common principles found in the role of making the hidden curriculum explicit. It is worth noting that the shared ethos-of-care aspect of the hidden curricula of these programs plays a significant part in their success, at least as perceived by students and staff.

The curriculum mapping tool, staff focus-group questions and student survey produced as part of this project can now be used by other institutions offering enabling programs in order to validate the findings of this project and to reflect upon their own enabling program curriculum design approaches.

5.2 Exposing the significant role the hidden curriculum and fostering an 'ethos of care'

A major point that emerges from the three areas of investigation is that making aspects of the hidden curriculum explicit plays a significant role in enabling programs.

Across all three programs, there are features of the enacted curriculum experienced by students that, although not explicitly documented in the intended curriculum, are congruent with it. This is especially clear in relation to the crucial ethos of pastoral care and development expressed in both the staff focus groups, representing the enacted curriculum, and student surveys, representing the experienced curriculum. Across all three programs, this important part of enabling curriculum as it is practised is not substantively present in the intended curriculum; it is located solely in the enactment of the hidden curriculum by staff.

Noting the general curriculum principle that the content of the curriculum should be assessable in objective terms, it should be recognised that principles regarding the hidden

curriculum are not assessable in any relatively accessible way. The importance of exposing the hidden curriculum raises significant issues of how, or if, its features should be explicitly and transparently expressed in formal enabling-program documentation.

5.3 Enabling programs and their design principles differ from undergraduate programs

This project reinforces the findings of Hodges, et al. (2013) that enabling programs are markedly different from undergraduate programs. Participation in enabling programs enables students to develop confidence, skills and knowledge that foster personal development, and empowers students to confidently participate in university and community environments. Enabling curriculum design emphasises fostering a positive student experience in preparation for undergraduate study.

There are similarities between Kift's (2009) first-year undergraduate transition pedagogy principles and the principles derived here. The emphasis of Kift's (2009) principles is on ensuring that first-year curriculum design encourages the retention of students already enrolled in undergraduate programs by improving their engagement with it. In contrast, in enabling programs, the emphasis for curriculum design is on ensuring that enabling students' experiences of returning to and engaging with education are positive, in preparation for undergraduate study. In fact, Hodges, et al. (2013) found that some attrition is desirable in enabling programs; enabling education plays an important role in helping students decide if higher education study is "for them" by offering them a positive but genuine low-stakes experience of university study. Therefore, enabling curriculum design is informed by student experience when re-engaging with education, resulting in identification of a similar but different set of principles to Kift's (2009). As such, Kift's (2009) first-year transition pedagogy principles do not directly transfer between first-year undergraduate and enabling programs.

5.4 Recommendations

The project raises a number of important issues, only a sample of which we note here. Other issues are addressed in the publications arising from this project.

1. **Specific enabling program outcomes:** It is recommended that enabling educators engage with their relevant university policy makers to develop specific enabling program outcomes that differ from undergraduate graduate outcomes and reflect the appropriate level of achievement required by students to successfully complete an enabling program.
2. **Extension and replication:** It is recommended that the NAEAA Enabling Curriculum Special Interest Group engage with the NAEAA community and as many other open access and restrictive access enabling programs as possible to (a) ascertain, using the approach and tools employed in this project, the completeness and general applicability of the general principles articulated here and (b) enhance the curricula employed by providers according to this shared knowledge and collaboration.

3. **Role of making the hidden curriculum explicit:** It is recommended that the NAEAA Enabling Curriculum Special Interest Group engage with the NAEAA community and as many other open access and restrictive access enabling programs as possible to investigate the usefulness and practicability of making aspects of the hidden curriculum an explicit part of the intended curriculum.

Chapter 6: Project outputs

- Curriculum mapping tool
- Articulated set of principles guiding enabling curricula (see Chapter 4)
- Validation and discussion of principles with university and non-university providers of enabling programs via facilitation of different forums, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Presentation of workshop: NAEAA Southern Symposium (September 2016)
 - b. Presentation of workshop: FABENZ conference, Auckland NZ (December 2016)
- Dissemination of the findings on participating institutions and national websites (e.g. [NAEAA website](#) and Hodges, et al's (2013) [retention website](#))
- Establishment by members of the project team of a national Special Interest Group, led by the team members, within NAEAA to shape and facilitate debate on enabling curriculum design at a national level.

6.1 Analysis of factors critical to success and those that impeded the project

For this project, the collaborative attitude and diverse knowledge of the team members contributed to its success. The mix of new and established researchers in the project team created a situation whereby mentorship was provided as needed. The diverse, discipline-specific professional, research and teaching backgrounds of each team member contributed to its success. Each team member brought experience in different methodologies to the project.

Regular meetings, at approximately fortnightly intervals, were held for the duration of the grant. These meetings keep the project on track and built a collegial and productive working relationship amongst the team members.

The short time of the project hampered more extensive curriculum mapping of all units offered by the participating institutions, particularly The University of Newcastle as its offerings of units is so large. Another limitation of this study was that the participants who responded to the student survey and staff focus group invitations were those whose experiences of their enabling programs were generally positive. It is unlikely that staff and students whose experience of their enabling program was less than ideal would have responded to the invitation. Therefore, although this project has identified some principles in enabling curriculum design, there may be other aspects of enabling curricula that are still to be identified.

Chapter 7: Project impact, dissemination and evaluation

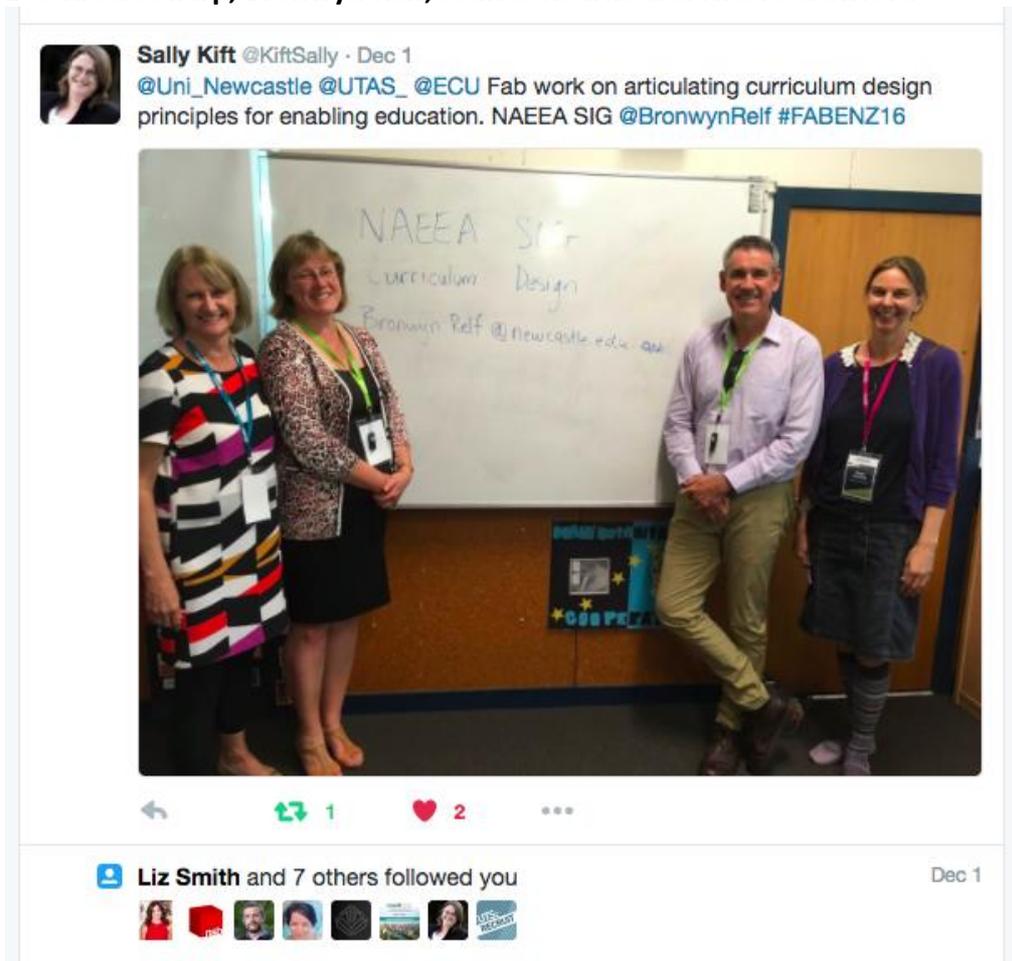
The project has already had a significant impact on enabling educators. It has attracted the interest of the professional association, the NAEAA, which has subsequently established the Enabling Curriculum special interest group on the [NAEEA website](#).

Project findings have been presented nationally and internationally to enabling educators through presentations and workshops, which have been enthusiastically received. The resulting energetic discussions indicated strong interest in the issue, which bodes well for carrying the discussion further into other institutions of higher education.

Table 7.1: Lighting the path(way) project impact mapped to the Impact Management Planning and Evaluation Ladder model

1.	Team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further collaboration between team members resulted in their successfully obtaining funding for a Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program National Priorities Pool grant proposal. Two team members were invited to join an enabling pedagogy project at The University of Newcastle.
2.	Immediate students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles have been used to assess current units taught by team members.
3.	Spreading the word	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project findings were presented at the NAEAA Southern Symposium. Project findings were presented at the international FABENZ conference in New Zealand. Project findings were presented at the FACE Conference in Glasgow, Scotland in June 2017. FABENZ conference: Professor Sally Kift, then Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at James Cook University, attended the FABENZ presentation and tweeted about the project (see Image 1). Workshops were held at Southern Cross University, Central Queensland University and the University of Southern Queensland in April 2017. A workshop was held at University of Tasmania in May 2017. Workshops were held at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia in June 2017.
4.	Narrow opportunistic adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum design Special Interest Group has been established and three meetings have been held to date. At present five academics are participating in the group. International colleagues have expressed interest in joining the Special Interest Group.
5.	Narrow systemic adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact is not expected to be seen until 6–24 months after completion of the project.
6.	Broad opportunistic adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact is not expected to be seen until six months after completion of project.
7.	Broad systemic adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination of project findings to another tertiary institution within Australia after presentation at the NAEAA Southern Symposium.

Image 1: Screen shot of Sally Kift's tweet from FABENZ presentation. L to R: Sue Sharp, Bronwyn Relf, John O'Rourke and Nicole Crawford



Appendix A: Certification

Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)

I certify that all parts of the final report for this learning and teaching grant provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Name: Professor Deborah Hodgson Acting DVC (Research & Innovation)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hodgson', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

Date: 04/04/2017

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Appendix C: Staff focus group questions

1. Could you please share with me your understanding of what an enabling program is? (What are the goals, aims, purpose? What do the students learn?)
2. What is the focus of the enabling program at your university – e.g. skills/literacies, content, discipline knowledge, other?
How important is this? What are the pros and cons of the approach of your enabling program?
3. Could you please tell me about your cohort? Who are the students in your program? (How would you describe your students? What brings them to the program? What do they learn? How do you think they change? What impact does the course have on them? What type of challenges do they face?)
4. What is your role as a teacher in an enabling program? How important is your role? What do you think are the required qualities/attributes/attitudes/values of a teacher in an enabling program? What do you bring to the program?
What attitudes (of teachers) do not work in an enabling program?
5. What do you notice are the results, impacts, benefits of such a course?
Challenges? Areas for improvement? Could you provide some examples?
6. What are the distinguishing features of enabling programs and crucial aspects?
[If you've taught in undergrad courses, what do you notice is different between undergrad teaching and teaching in an enabling course? Or between TAFE courses and enabling course?] What makes it what it is? What is crucial for the success of your program?
7. What do you think you and your colleagues do that goes un-noticed, but, in your opinion, is important to your students' experience and success?
[If prompting needed, how do you support your students?]
8. What does the term "curriculum" mean to you?

Appendix D: Student questionnaire

Each university customised its questionnaire based upon the subjects and degree program offered their institution. The survey instrument below was administered to students from University of Tasmania.

All surveys were administered online through SurveyMonkey.

Section 1: Your details

1. Select your gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

2. Select your age

- <=20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- >=50

3. Please select the category/categories that best describe you: (select all that apply)

- First in immediate family to study at university
- Mature aged student
- Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander origin
- Having a disability or medical condition
- Non-native English speaker
- Living in regional or remote location
- Recent Australian arrival
- Refugee/humanitarian visa holder
- Concession or health card, holder
- Other (give details)

4. Please select your employment status **during your enabling program:**

- Working full-time
- Working full time (Fly in Fly out, FIFO)
- Working part-time
- Working casually

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- Not employed
- Stay-at-home parent/carer
- Retiree

5. Has your employment status remained the same in your undergraduate program?

- Yes
- No (If no, please state how your employment status has changed)

Section 2: About your study

1. Select the University you completed your enabling course at.

- Edith Cowan University
- University of Newcastle
- University of Tasmania

2. Please indicate the mode of delivery of your enabling course.

- Full time On Campus
- Part Time On Campus
- Full time On-line/Distance students
- Part-time On-line/Distance students
- Mixed Mode delivery
- Other: Please indicate:

3. Select the units you completed during your enabling course. Please select ALL units that you studied.

- Study Skills
- Introduction to Academic Writing
- Academic Writing
- Communication Skills
- Information Skills
- Using Technology
- Online Learning
- Academic Numeracy
- Bridging Mathematics

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4. Select the undergraduate discipline you are enrolled in.

- Agriculture & Environmental Science
- Architecture & Design
- Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
- Business
- Computing & IT
- Education & Teaching
- Engineering
- Health Sciences & Community Care
- Journalism, Media & Communications
- Law
- Marine & Antarctic
- Maritime Studies
- Medicine
- Music, Creative & Performing Arts
- Nursing
- Pharmacy
- Psychology
- Science

5. How important were the following factors in choosing to enrol in your enabling course?

	N/A don't know	Not Important	Some Importance	Neutral	Important	High Importance
Gaining access to higher education	<input type="radio"/>					
Valuing learning in higher education	<input type="radio"/>					
Gaining a job	<input type="radio"/>					
Preparing for undergraduate study	<input type="radio"/>					
Advancing life / family circumstance	<input type="radio"/>					
Improving my academic confidence	<input type="radio"/>					
Gaining self-fulfilment	<input type="radio"/>					
Personal development	<input type="radio"/>					

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Achieving a long-held personal goal	<input type="radio"/>					
For career development	<input type="radio"/>					
Proving to myself and/or others that I can learn at university	<input type="radio"/>					
Trying higher education to determine if it is for me	<input type="radio"/>					

Other: Please identify any other motivation/s to undertake your enabling course(s)

Section 3: Course curriculum and objectives

In this section of the survey we would like you to tell us how clear the aims of your enabling course units were?

- 1 In regard to **your experience in your enabling course**, please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.'

In my enabling course the:	Not applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
unit outlines made the learning outcomes clear	<input type="radio"/>					
resources (unit outlines, lecture and tutorial materials, etc) supported my learning	<input type="radio"/>					
academic support provided was helpful	<input type="radio"/>					
completion of units gave me the background subject knowledge for the undergraduate units I am studying	<input type="radio"/>					
completion of units gave me the academic skills needed for	<input type="radio"/>					

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university study						
assessments fairly assessed the academic skills taught	<input type="radio"/>					
assessments fairly assessed the subject knowledge taught	<input type="radio"/>					
feedback on assessments contributed to my learning and improvement	<input type="radio"/>					
course material taught was related to my goals	<input type="radio"/>					
learning environments (lectures, tutorials, online) supported my learning						

2. Indicate your level of agreement with the following aspects of your enabling course.

The enabling course developed my:	N/A/don't know	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
academic writing skills necessary for undergraduate study	<input type="radio"/>					
academic research skills	<input type="radio"/>					
ability to analyse questions and approach to assessment tasks						
communication skills	<input type="radio"/>					
relationships with staff and students	<input type="radio"/>					
respect for diversity	<input type="radio"/>					
sense of belonging to the university community	<input type="radio"/>					
engagement in learning	<input type="radio"/>					
personal responsibility for learning	<input type="radio"/>					
independent learning skills	<input type="radio"/>					
reflective and/or critical thinking	<input type="radio"/>					

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information technology, computer skills and understandings	<input type="radio"/>					
understanding of the requirements for academic integrity and ethical conduct	<input type="radio"/>					
assumed knowledge for my chosen undergraduate degree	<input type="radio"/>					

3. What did you learn in your enabling course that is of use to you in your degree studies? **Indicate your level of agreement** with the following statements.

The course developed my:	Not applicable	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
academic written skills, (paragraph and sentence structure, grammar)	<input type="radio"/>					
academic skills, (eg writing structures, essays, reports)	<input type="radio"/>					
academic skills (referencing skills, avoiding plagiarism)	<input type="radio"/>					
academic skills (critical reading, note taking, synthesis of information)	<input type="radio"/>					
numeracy skills: computational skills	<input type="radio"/>					
numeracy skills: understanding mathematical concepts	<input type="radio"/>					
oral communication skills	<input type="radio"/>					
understanding and access of support systems available at my university	<input type="radio"/>					
information communication, computer and technology skills	<input type="radio"/>					
goals and career aspirations	<input type="radio"/>					
background knowledge for my undergraduate degree units	<input type="radio"/>					

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finding information and research skills	<input type="radio"/>					
time management skills	<input type="radio"/>					
academic and social knowledge of university life	<input type="radio"/>					
understanding that learning can be hard and you need to persist	<input type="radio"/>					
knowledge of how to be a university student	<input type="radio"/>					
understanding that it is okay to make mistakes – they help you learn	<input type="radio"/>					
confidence in my own ability to learn	<input type="radio"/>					
understanding the expectations and standards required at university	<input type="radio"/>					
ability to identify how to improve my marks	<input type="radio"/>					

4. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following:

My impression of my enabling course was that:	N/A/don't know	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
there was a culture of academic support for students	<input type="radio"/>					
staff cared about my progress	<input type="radio"/>					
there was a culture of non-academic support for students	<input type="radio"/>					
there was a respect for diversity	<input type="radio"/>					
there was a sense of community	<input type="radio"/>					
engagement in learning was encouraged	<input type="radio"/>					
personal responsibility was encouraged	<input type="radio"/>					

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reflective and critical thinking was developed	<input type="radio"/>					
students were treated equally, fairly and with respect	<input type="radio"/>					
independent learning was encouraged	<input type="radio"/>					
staff went out of their way to help my learning	<input type="radio"/>					
it changed my perception of education and its purpose	<input type="radio"/>					
staff were passionate about teaching and learning	<input type="radio"/>					
staff were passionate and knowledgeable about their subjects	<input type="radio"/>					
it allowed me to realise I had the ability to study at university level	<input type="radio"/>					
staff explained concepts in a way I could understand	<input type="radio"/>					
staff understood the impact of my personal circumstances on my learning	<input type="radio"/>					
staff believed in my capability to study	<input type="radio"/>					
it challenged my beliefs about education/ knowledge	<input type="radio"/>					
it made me think differently about other aspects of my life	<input type="radio"/>					

5. Please indicate your level of confidence in your ability to be a successful learner at university:

My level of confidence in my	No confidence	Low confidence	Somewhat confident	Confident	Very confident
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ability to be a successful learner at university:					
Pre - UPP course	<input type="radio"/>				
Post - UPP course	<input type="radio"/>				

6. Please indicate your level of confidence to be involved in activities/community outside of university:

My level of confidence in my ability to be a successful in areas outside of university:	No confidence	Low confidence	Somewhat confident	Confident	Very confident
Pre- UPP course	<input type="radio"/>				
Post- UPP course	<input type="radio"/>				

6. In regard to course delivery and teaching staff in your enabling course, please indicate your level of agreement.

My enabling course / teaching staff:	N/A/don't know	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
reduced my anxiety about university life	<input type="radio"/>					
gave me a more positive image of myself as a successful learner	<input type="radio"/>					
supported my personal growth	<input type="radio"/>					
improved my study techniques	<input type="radio"/>					
encouraged networking with other students and staff	<input type="radio"/>					
helped me balance work and study	<input type="radio"/>					
assisted me to implement deeper learning strategies	<input type="radio"/>					
developed my academic knowledge	<input type="radio"/>					

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and skills						
encouraged me to persist	<input type="radio"/>					
supported my learning and learning style	<input type="radio"/>					
provided a space where I felt safe to ask questions	<input type="radio"/>					
connected me with content related to my future university studies	<input type="radio"/>					
taught me how to be a university student	<input type="radio"/>					
modelled how to be a university student	<input type="radio"/>					
helped me understand the strategies for success at university	<input type="radio"/>					
provided me with a role model for studying at university	<input type="radio"/>					

7. What were the best aspects of your enabling course? ie most useful?

8. What aspects of your enabling course could be improved?

9. How has your attitude to learning changed since completing your enabling studies?

10. Further comments