

PROSPECTS FOR THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT @ VU

Professor Brian King, Director “Making VU”
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**VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY**

**A NEW
SCHOOL OF
THOUGHT**

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE

- Highlight VU's distinguishing characteristics as a multi-sectoral institution
- Outline the University's key strategic directions in the context of differentiation within the higher education sector
- Evaluate the prospective impact of a Diploma Supplement
- Use the Tourism & Hospitality course cluster as an example of an area which could be impacted by the introduction of the Diploma Supplement

THE VISION – VICTORIA UNIVERSITY IN 2016

- an **international** university with strong **community** values
- highly responsive to the changing nature of **work & the workplace**
- providing **every student** with a confident path to a **career of the future** & the opportunity for a good job even prior to graduation
- making a real difference to the lives of people in Melbourne's west as a **catalyst for knowledge** transfer between **the west & the world**
- challenging conventional thinking as **A New School of Thought**

VU's DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGY

'Making VU a New School of Thought'

- The key institutional directions are highlighted by the “5 Commitments”
- Commonwealth Government support for implementation through CASR funding
- The emphasis on engagement and job-readiness will distinguish VU from the positioning & directions of many other Universities
- Effective communication of the “Five Commitments” to students & employers will be critical

THE FIVE COMMITMENTS

1. A focus on **12 Industry & Community clusters** with input from **Roundtables** chaired by prominent industry & community leaders
2. Make **Learning in the Workplace & Community** a universal feature of VU courses (a minimum of 25%)
3. The provision of **Personalised Learning Packages** offering students enhanced advice, imaginative course combinations, targeted learning support & personalised transition
4. **Vocational education** will be repositioned **to meet emerging labour force needs & skill shortages**
5. Major initiatives **to provide tangible improvements for life in the western region of Melbourne**

STUDENTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH CONTINUOUS REMINDERS

- The University is already asserting its distinct capabilities
- Over the course of the Making VU Project, future & prospective students will need to be made aware of tangible benefits
- Active communication will also be needed for industry & community partners
- The Diploma Supplement could be a useful means of communicating with students

VU'S POSITIONING & THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

- For a multi-sectoral institution (FE, VE & HE) like VU, the established testamurs are limited in their effectiveness
- VU is committed to differentiation & the Diploma Supplement provides a potential opportunity to highlight distinction
- A balance will be needed between the established university offer (a standardised degree or diploma testamur) & the capacity to highlight key distinguishing features
- The Diploma Supplement offers useful possibilities

RELEVANT ASPECTS OF THE DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGY

- Students will spend at least 25% of their studies in workplace/community focussed activities
- Course structures will provide opportunities rarely available at University (eg HE students undertake VE unit electives)
- Students will receive acknowledgement for any leadership roles undertaken

THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT - OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Students are likely to welcome obtaining a summary of their diverse university experiences
- The Diploma Supplement could complement a resume & job application
- It will provide a more standardised statement of achievement for prospective employers & educational institutions
- These are important attributes for an institution that is emphasising student “job readiness”

THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT - OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES (CTD)

- Standardised formats will need pilot testing because of the greater complexity of presentation than in traditional academic statements
- The EU model (eg ECTS) emphasises standardisation, albeit with enhanced detail
- A requirement for excessive detail could over-emphasise compliance (more detail as well as uniformity)
- The multi-dimensional nature of the 5 Commitments suggests that excessive complexity should be avoided

CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF THE VU EXPERIENCE

- How do we provide students with proper recognition of any periods spent in industry?
- How do we encourage and acknowledge overseas experience (work & study)?
- How do we capture the richness of experience for students who have combined VE & HE studies?

THE CLUSTERS

INFORMATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Construction & Civil Engineering
Manufacturing & Mechanical Engineering
Information & Communication Technology
Transport & Logistics

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Health, Environment & Community Services
Sports & Recreation
Cultural & Creative Industries
Education & Transition

BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE

Tourism & Hospitality
Financial & Economic Services
Law & Legal Services
Marketing Services

PROSPECTIVE APPLICABILITY FOR TOURISM & HOSPITALITY EDUCATION (THE)

- Most THE students at VU are interested in industry engagement &/or learning in the workplace
- Many THE students in Australia are FFPOSs who need to communicate the essence of what they have studied in their home country & beyond
- The international focus of the THE field stimulates student interest in spending time overseas
- Professional endorsements (UNWTO, THE-ICE) are of increasing importance

WHAT ELEMENTS MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENT?

- For VU links most closely with commitments 2 & 3
- Student experience of Learning in the Workplace (LiW)
- Study abroad experiences
- Attainment of Core Graduate Attributes (CGAs)
- Evidence of leadership on-campus & beyond

WHAT ELEMENTS MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENT?

(ctd)

- Professional accreditations &/or course endorsements
- Units of study completed in FE &/or VE &/or HE
- Connects with the development of student e-portfolios
- Links closely with Commitment 3

THE CASE OF COMMITMENT 3: PERSONALISED LEARNING PACKAGES

Two elements of PLP are particularly suited to the Diploma Supplement:

- **Personalised course choices**
 - Pathways from award to award with multiple entry & exit points
 - Inclusion of cross-sectoral & cross-cluster elective modules
- **Leadership opportunities**
 - Implementation of a reward & recognition program

KEY ISSUES & CHALLENGES FOR THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT @ VU

- The prospect of additional compliance for universities – cost benefit analysis?
- The greater the quantity of information, the greater the challenge of monitoring its accuracy
- Some students may not appreciate the provision of additional information (eg details about their prior studies)

ISSUES & CHALLENGES FOR THE DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT @ VU (ctd)

- To what extent should the availability of the document be on-line?
- Should students participate in the maintenance of their record/details?
- Should the record of activity incorporate only objectively verifiable information?

THE FUTURE

- Given VU's institutional profile the Diploma Supplement prospectively offers support for the Making VU Project
- Students & employers may benefit from readily communicable information & improved mutual understanding
- The Diploma Supplement can potentially complement university positioning efforts, whilst pursuing consistency of approach
- The Dilemma – VU is particularly complex. The Diploma Supplement should clarify and not complicate!