

Submission to the New Zealand Productivity Commission

4 May, 2016

In July 1998 Regional Education began at Lincoln University providing opportunities for domestic Kiwi students to begin university “where they live and work”. This was a new tertiary education model designed to allow New Zealanders who could not attend on campus because of family or work commitments but who wanted to undertake university qualifications.

Regional Education was an alternative learning model at the University level. It was developed after extensive research and interviews had been conducted during the previous 12 months. It provided a contrast to the stair-case lecture theatre. It was clear that Kiwis wanted a student-centred university learning model that was face-to-face with learning flexibility and choices. Students had twelve weekly face to face group meetings with a Lincoln University approved subject expert who was also a skilled facilitator (Learning Coordinator). Groups were kept small to ensure all learners participated fully and completed their studies with good grades.

Regional Education -

- Provided support for new university students to overcome perceived thresholds and move seamlessly from school or community into university studies
- Developed long term relationships with New Zealand remote and rural communities and their schools where access to university was not readily available.
- Added significant numbers of new domestic students to Lincoln University (in 2006 35% of the total new Lincoln University Domestic Undergraduate Degree students)
- Enabled employees in industry and workplaces to re-engage in specialist university learning – e.g. Managers and staff at Foodstuffs (South Island) met on site after work to pursue accounting and finance degree subjects
- Regional Education students achieved successful learning outcomes which were significantly greater than on-campus students studying the same subjects.
- Regional Education students reported achieving promotions in their workplaces as a result of their university studies.
- Opportunities were provided to students who struggled with normal on-campus delivery techniques (particularly for second and third time enrollees in a subject to re-directed into this alternative delivery with individualised learning support.
- RE and academic staff developed high quality learning resources using Instructional Design processes to convert on-campus courses into twelve weekly modules accompanied by a variety of blended learning resources.
- Networks were established with various industry groups, e.g. Road Transport Forum, Work and Income etc., and workplace partnerships, e.g. Foodstuffs, Gen-i, Hirequip, NZ Post, Resene Paints, etc., resulting in numerous and ongoing enrolments.
- RE delivered undergraduate subjects to Maori students who study with Learning Coordinators on their own maraes. It transformed at least one North Island Marae through these studies.
- Achieved successful grades and many RE students were among the top 5% of all students when both on and off campus students are ranked together. E.g. in 2005 in an Accounting 101R test Regional Education students had an average test mark of 79.8% while on campus the average test mark was 58.6%. In 2006, Regional Education students formed one third (1/3) of the total ACCT 101/QCCT 101R Accounting Fundamentals class.

Focus on the Learner

The needs of the learner must be central to any new model of tertiary education.

The emphasis needs to be on learning rather than teaching.

Overlap between secondary and tertiary levels in the NZ Education Curriculum

A careful analysis was carried out on all first year university subjects to see where the subjects main concepts were first introduced in secondary school. My work with Lincoln's Regional Education programme evolved so it really began with the Year 11 teachers of this subject in the High Schools. Many NZ students begin the study of the main subjects which are studied at NZ Universities at Year 11 e.g. - Maori, Accounting, Chemistry, Commerce subjects, Global Environmental Sciences, etc., I assisted Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 level high school teachers with appropriate teaching resources - pre-university textbooks, powerpoint lectures, simulations, games, testbanks (testbanks are usually developed by focussing on student's errors /difficult concepts etc) so students could more easily follow on with these subjects at the University level. I believe that this relationship with the Year 11, 12 and 13 subject teachers was critical to the high success levels that RE students achieved in their University subjects. The Year 13 Curriculum in most major subjects is very close to Year One at University Level with only one or two new concepts being added at University level.

The tracking of Discretionary Entrance Lincoln University students clearly shows NZ students are marking time in the study of their chosen academic subjects if they study the same subject in Year 13 and then again in Year One at University.

Recognition of the Globalisation of subject Knowledge – textbooks, test banks, case studies, electronic learning, web-sites, Webquests etc.

Many of the global publishers have produced a wide variety of teaching materials for tertiary subjects after long periods of research and development. Error analysis exposes where students have difficulty when they are coming to grips with new concepts in their subject. There is a need to make these teaching and learning materials more widely available to New Zealand students. I am aware that the development of some globalised tertiary learning materials can take more than five years. Why then are NZ University teachers not allowing their students to make full use of these subject learning materials? Students have different learning needs. Students should know that their subject has a variety of learning materials available. Students can then choose not to use these options!

Group Productivity - Teams are essential

Group productivity and the development of high performance teams are essential.

Module 0¹ – Keys to Success focuses on the importance of working and learning in a group.

P9 & 10 discusses 'task' and 'relationship' and how high productivity can be achieved through high performing groups must pay attention to both.

Successful Teams are greater than the sum of their parts. Teams provide psychological safety and allow people to be vulnerable and take risks. Teams allow people to speak "equally" and listen to each other including listening to the weakest member etc.. Teams are data driven, etc., All team members can contribute to the conversation and wrestle with efficiency vs productivity.

¹ Module 0 – Keys to Success – developed to assist LU's off-campus student needs during Week Zero – prior to the first week of study. It was designed to ensure students academic studies begin with a confident attitude and established robust study support structures from the very beginning of their academic programme. Where appropriate materials have been tested over some years in various tertiary settings and found to have contributed to helping tertiary students begin their academic studies well.

NZ Teens and emergence of a “GAP” year

Greater discussion and parental advice is needed on where young people should take a GAP Year. Many are being encouraged to take a GAP year for “Year 14” and then proceed to Year One University. However, there is also need to explore the benefit of taking a “Young Professional” GAP year after the completion of University studies.

Critical Importance of the First Three weeks at University.

Between 1998 and 2006 our work enabled comparisons between on-campus and off-campus university students. It became very clear that the first three weeks of university study particularly in Year One is critical for success.

I have been concerned for some years about the lack of attention to what is planned for these critical first three weeks at University level.

Hopefully I will be given permission to share the **Module 0 – Keys to Success** which all Regional Education students were given at least 10 days prior to the start of semester. **Learning Cards** were also developed for use throughout the semester.

Here are some of the elements that are addressed in this publication –

Learning in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Understanding Distinctive Features

Bi-Culturalism in Regional Education takes many forms

What is the difference between Bi-Culturalism and Multi-Culturalism

Some Bi-Cultural Steps in RE Learning Centres

1. Greetings
2. Group Introductions – Using a Bicultural Process
3. Acknowledgement of Bi-Cultural Etiquette

Helping Women and Men Learn together

1. Common types of sexist behaviour
2. Some techniques for Encouraging Women and Men to Participate in Mixed Groups
3. If you are the facilitator
4. If you are not the facilitator

Developing High Performance Groups:

1. Focussing on Tasks and Relationships
2. Focussing on Roles in Groups
3. Forming Peer Self Help Study Groups
4. Developing High Performance Study Teams

Effective Questioning: To Assist Understanding

Providing Good Feedback: Encourages Growth

How DO I learn Best? (A test)

Knowing your Preferred Learning Style:

Importance of Feedback Processes

Students feedback is very valuable. It is important to provide opportunities for learners to give feedback before and during the study period – not just at the end of the semester. Feedback needs to be seen by the Programme Manager as well as teachers and administrators.

University of Wollongong’s Cultural Requirements for Year One ‘People Subjects’

During my years teaching both women and men, MBA + Undergraduate subjects in Management, Organisational Behaviour, Marketing with the University of Wollongong in Dubai, United Arab

Emirates there was a great diversity of students from very different cultural backgrounds. I was impressed with that University's requirement for all teachers to integrate into their courses - Geert Hofstede's Culture and Organisations, Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and its Importance for Survival. Pub McGraw Hill,1991 (later publication 1997).

As I recall the MBA + Undergraduate subjects started out with students from different cultural backgrounds forming small groups to explore and share the five dimensions of their own cultural background and what happens when people from different cultures meet etc., Then every assignment in every subject had to include some knowledge and reference to Hofstede's findings.

I strongly suggest the NZ Productivity Commission ask the University of Wollongong Department of Management to share what the "culture dimensions" knowledge and requirements are for all students studying these subjects. Certainly I was impressed and saw first hand how many University students (many Muslim, African, Middle Eastern and Asian) lives were transformed through this requirement by the University of Wollongong.

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