Developing a holistic evaluation strategy for the University-wide program, Professional and Community Engagement (PACE): opportunities and challenges

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Sydney, Australia
1. WIL in Higher Education in Australia
2. What is PACE?
3. PACE Research and Evaluation Strategy
4. Mechanisms and evidence of impact
5. Challenges and opportunities for measuring impact of WIL initiatives
Work Integrated Learning in Australian Higher Education context

ENHANCING THE EMPLOYABILITY DEVELOPMENT OF GRADUATES

• Work-integrated learning (WIL) is considered a key strategy for promoting graduate employability (Rowe & Zegwaard, 2017)

• Diverse models of WIL e.g. internships, fieldwork, projects/consulting, simulations etc.

• Learning outcomes of WIL – employability, citizenship, develop and apply skills, introduction to profession etc.

• National Strategy on WIL in University Education (2017).

• 2018 National WIL audit
Providing students with Professional and Community Engagement experiences that “involve tasks, and engagement of the emotions as well as the intellect”
What is PACE?

ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

- Institution-wide WIL program **embedded in all Macquarie’s undergraduate degrees** through credit-bearing academic units

- Students apply classroom learning and gain practical experience in a range of settings

- **Reciprocity** is key: through PACE students make an active contribution to economy and society as part of their own personal and professional development

“We will expand PACE as a signature program that distinguishes this University”

*Our University: A Framing of Futures*
PACE by numbers

25,000 students in PACE since it began, and growing

87 PACE units available across all areas of study

More than 2,500 organisations partner with PACE locally, regionally and internationally

More than 40 countries have hosted 1,000+ PACE International activities
So how did we go about it?

BRINGING STAFF, PARTNERS AND STUDENTS ONBOARD
Lessons Learned

1. PROVIDE TIME AND SPACE TO SUCCEED

- Build on existing practice
- Identify champions
- Meet, understand and respond to the sceptics
- Be reflective and adaptive
- Identify and address gaps and failures
- Communicate and celebrate success

Students Enrolled in PACE Units

Number of PACE Units in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOA</th>
<th>FBE</th>
<th>FHS</th>
<th>FMHS</th>
<th>FSE</th>
<th>PACE</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

2. ONE SIZE DOESN’T FIT ALL

– Collaboratively agree standards and principles
– Encourage and accommodate diversity

3. HUB-SPOKE MODEL

Image: timeshighered.com
Quality and integration framework

SENATE CRITERIA FOR PACE UNITS AND ACTIVITIES

- **community engagement**: mutually beneficial partnerships that helps partner achieve their mission and goals
- **rigorous academic framework** to develop key graduate capabilities

**ORIENTATION**
- mutual expectations
- organisational/admin requirements
- any preparatory assessment tasks

**EXPERIENCE/PROJECT**
- experience itself
- assessment tasks and learning activities
- monitoring of learning outcomes

**FINAL WRAP-UP**
- debrief
- any post-experience assessment tasks
- evaluation (partner, student and peer feedback)

<< SCAFFOLDING FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT; REFLECTION >>
MULTIPLE WAYS TO ENGAGE

- Internships
- Remote/virtual consultancy projects
- Field trips
- Mentoring and PAL

• Community development projects
• Project-based learning through industry panels
• Research projects
• Service learning
Disciplinary and interdisciplinary diversity

NAL, NORTH RYDE
Speech and hearing

BOOKS IN HOMES, MANINGRIDA
Health and Sociology

ACCOUNTANTS IN THE PROFESSION
Accounting

UNIVERSAL MAGAZINES
Media

AUSTRALIAN ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY
Astronomy

BAHAY TULUYAN, PHILIPPINES
Law

ACCESSIBLE ARTS
Business

MANLY SEA LIFE SANCTUARY
Marine biology
How do we know we are having an impact?
PACE R&E strategy

GUIDING OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

R&E OBJECTIVES
- Continuous program development and improvement
- Justification and accountability
- Knowledge generation, exchange and dissemination

Cycle of Inquiry (Wadsworth 2010)

Plan

Act

React

Observe

RECIPROCITY

PACE Team

Faculty Staff

PACE Partners

Students
Benefits of evaluation

THIS WILL HELP US TO...

**PACE Team**
- Streamline data management and reporting to improve ability to articulate program outcomes
- Strengthen ability to support faculty staff
- Foster quality program development
- Strengthen program accountability

**Faculty Staff**
- Streamline data management and reporting to improve ability to articulate program outcomes to faculty, students and (prospective) partners
- Help build business case for resourcing and support
- Support quality program design and delivery

**PACE Partners**
- Provide a mechanism to inform ongoing program development
- Improve pathways to engagement
- Encourage participation

**Students**
- Provide a mechanism to inform ongoing program development
- Inform students’ selection of PACE units
- Strengthen learner experience and outcomes
Articulation & shared vision of what the program is trying to achieve for students, partners & the university.
PACE Evaluation

PHASE 1 OF THE EVALUATION – FOCUS ON STUDENT EMPLOYABILITY

Long-term outcome

Increased Macquarie graduate employability*

Domains

Student employability

Reputation of Macquarie graduates

Reputation of Macquarie with employers

Outcome areas

Engaged and active citizenship  Career readiness  Expanded Networks

Successful student activities  Successful graduate employment

Macquarie has more, deeper and multi faceted relationships with industries and community

Increased industry, community and University interconnectivity

Ultimate outcome

Macquarie graduates are life-long learners who contribute to social change and innovation

* Employability defined as: Students and graduates can discern, acquire, adapt and continually enhance the skills, understandings and personal attributes that make them more likely to find and create meaningful paid and unpaid work that benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.

Oliver 2015, p. 59
Data collection

STUDENTS & GRADUATES

Pre PACE Student Survey

Post PACE Student Survey

Graduate Outcomes Survey (4 months post graduation)

MQ Graduate Destination Survey (12 months post graduation)

PACE Graduate Data Collection (2-3 years post graduation)

Replace the Learner Experience of PACE

Contains PACE specific questions
Phase 2: PACE Evaluation Framework

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What is the intended and unintended impact of the PACE program for students, partners and the University?
2. To what extend are students and partners engaged and having a positive experience of the PACE program?
3. Which program components are the most beneficial in enhancing outcomes and experience?
4. How can the PACE program be improved?

Outcomes Evaluation (Program Effectiveness)
Process Evaluation (Program Efficiency)
PACE Evaluation Framework

OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

**Students**
- Active & engaged citizenship
- Career-readiness skills
- Clarification of career goals & paths
- Expanded professional networks
- Employment or further research/study

**Partners**
- Increased organisational capacity
- Talent identification & recruitment
- Capacity development
- Community benefits
- Enhanced organisational profile & reputation
- Networks with MQ & other partners

**University**
- Research projects & collaboration
- Industry, community & University interconnectivity
- Curriculum responsive to industry & community
- Rewarding teaching experience
- Closer student involvement with university
## Data Collection

### PHASE 2 - MIXED METHODS DATA COLLECTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>PARTNERS</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• PACE Student Survey</td>
<td>• Partner Survey- post activity (pilot end of S1)</td>
<td>• University stakeholder data collection (S2 2018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• GOS &amp; MQGDS</td>
<td>• WIL Partnership Tool</td>
<td>• Analysis of program data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Graduate data collection (2-3 years post PACE)</td>
<td>• Most Significant Change technique</td>
<td>• Purposeful case studies</td>
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PACE Evaluation Framework

PROCESS FRAMEWORK

- PACE Unit
- Partnerships
- Preparation
- Systems & processes
- Wrap-around support
- PACE Activity

Program Outcomes
PACE Evaluation

UPCOMING DATA COLLECTION & PROJECTS

- End of Session 1 Student Survey
- Partner Survey pilot end S1
- Outcome dashboards- pilot starts end of S1
- Digital Competency Project
- Purposeful Case Studies
- R & E Data Bank
PACE Evaluation

UPCOMING DATA COLLECTION & PROJECTS

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• Partner Survey pilot end S1
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• R & E Data Bank
Challenges & opportunities for measuring the impact of WIL
University-wide Evaluation

COLLABORATION IS KEY!

Scale, scope and diversity of PACE

Multiple stakeholders

5 faculties, 87 PACE Units

Involves all undergraduates
Questions