Enhancing the employability of Science graduates: a Faculty of Science initiative

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We are developing a skills awareness program to:

- raise awareness of the key role of generic skills in enhancing progression and success in a science career
- provide a mechanism for students to self-assess their awareness of, and competence in, the various skills
- provide students with a framework to understand the nature of the skills by incorporating them in a series of illustrative case scenarios
- show students how to use a portfolio to demonstrate their skills competence to potential employers
- help students learn the language of these skills so that they can identify them in curricula

What are we producing?

A WEBSITE FOR ALL SCIENCE STUDENTS which will explain the range of skills expected of science graduates. The site will be structured such that students explore definitions and examples of the skills areas (shown at left). Current science students have created sample scenarios of experiences in the degree program which helped them to develop particular skills. Using all these materials students can progress to creating their own activity records and a portfolio (as shown below). Students will be encouraged to begin this process early in their undergraduate career, to revisit the site regularly to reflect on skills acquisition, and to document examples of progress and proficiency. Initial trials of some sections of the site have been carried out with students in 2003 and a full scale trial is planned for 2004.

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RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR STAFF will be developed to act as guidelines when identifying skill development opportunities for students within the curriculum. Future curriculum development within the Faculty can focus on explicitly identifying to students where opportunities are provided to practise a full range of skills. At the same time assessment activities must be incorporated which allow students to demonstrate proficiency in these skills.

Recommendations will be presented to the Faculty outlining how to mandate an audit process whereby students self-assess and keep a personal record of their development.

For more information on the project visit: http://science.uniserve.edu.au/projects/skills/