Teaching Improvement Fund 2003 (Faculty of Science)

Enhancing the employability of Science graduates: increasing the awareness of staff and students to the needs of the employers

http://science.uniserve.edu.au/projects/skills/

Status report No. 3
18 June 2003

The project team meets fortnightly.

The preliminary phase has been completed.

Development phase:

- Articulation of generic attributes and skills to be included in the project – completed
- Discipline-specific skills identified and documented – awaiting input from Biological Sciences, otherwise completed
- Interpersonal skills trial
  - Description of higher order skills and background skills – completed
  - Documentation of some typical tasks where the skills might be practised – completed
  - Template for the students to record identified activities – completed
  - Template for the students to log their progress in acquiring the higher order skills – completed
- Two student focus groups were conducted to test if the process and templates would lead to the envisaged outcomes. Students were from three different disciplines and were not from first year. Feedback from the first focus group was implemented before conducting the second so that we would not go over the same territory.
- The Interpersonal skills trial was very successful – the discussion was frank and considered and we were given a number of valuable suggestions which we have acted upon.

The next step in the project will be to test the planned student scaffolding, i.e. the information that will be delivered to students and the way in which it will be presented. The information will be delivered electronically to students and so the next trial will be testing a pilot of the site. To conduct an effective test we need to have more than just one of the higher order skills in place, so we are in the process of filling out two more of the higher order skills, namely communication skills and research skills.

Scaffolding trial:

- Description of generic attributes, i.e. good world citizen, professional scientist, lifelong learner – in progress;
- Description of higher order skills and background skills for communication skills and research skills – draft sent to the Reference Group for comment
- Articulation of the scaffolding for students to make the linkages relating to generic attributes, i.e. storyboarding the process – in progress
- Documentation of typical tasks for communication skills and research skills – in progress
- Description of online tutorial(s) that will be provided for the students – not yet commenced
- Trial is scheduled for 29 August.

The project is on schedule.

Anne Fernandez
Project Manager
18 June 2003