

Melbourne Experience Support Programs

Benchmarking the LLSU

*An investigation into the policies and practices
at ten partner institutions for quality
improvement purposes*

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Executive Summary

In 2006, the Language and Learning Skills Unit (LLSU) conducted a benchmarking exercise with the Group of Eight and three international Universities 21 partner institutions. Common themes identified were:

- managing service demand, including expectations and perceptions;
- the importance of strong university relationships and a recognised service profile; and
- managing staff workload and responsibilities.

The benchmarking project reinforced the fundamental principle underlying all language and academic skills (LAS) centres: that of assisting students to develop independent academic skills appropriate to a tertiary environment. It also demonstrated that all centres provide assistance in predominantly the same way: through a combination of individual consultations, workshops and self-access resources.

In general, the language and academic support services of the LLSU compare favourably with our benchmarking partners, and there are many examples where there is an affirming similarity of practices. However, it became clear that all LAS centres experienced problems managing the heavy demand on and unrealistic expectations of services, and the project helped identify practices and innovative strategies that could help guide the LLSU's approach to a more effective and student-centred support service in line with the *Melbourne Model*.

The project also identified the need for greater representation within the university's committee structure and a stronger alignment with the vision and direction of the DVC (Academic). The former was acknowledged by the majority of LAS centres as critical to networking and informing stakeholders, and the latter was discussed in terms of a 'champion' to support the aims and initiatives of the service within the wider university context.

Finally, a comparison of workload responsibilities with classification across LAS centres has highlighted the need for a career pathway within the LLSU that recognises and values the evolving complexity and increased responsibility of the learning skills adviser's role.

In light of the above findings, the benchmarking project enabled the articulation of eight recommendations for improvement:

1. Develop a more effective strategy for promoting the role and services of the LLSU to the wider university.
2. In consultation with the Standing Committees and faculties, review the LLSU's individual tutorial program with a view to providing more targeted delivery to students.
3. In consultation with the Standing Committees and faculties, review and increase the LLSU's workshop program to better meet student needs at the discipline level.
4. Identify opportunities for more collaborative relationships with other parts of the University in the development and delivery of academic support programs.
5. Seek greater representation on committees involved with teaching and learning at both the faculty and University levels.
6. Establish a stronger alignment with the vision and direction of the DVC (Academic), including a more direct line of reporting, on matters related to student learning and the Melbourne Experience.
7. Review the LLSU's workload formula to reflect more accurately the changing nature of the work within the Unit, and to ensure equity and understanding about roles and responsibilities.
8. In consultation with HR, develop a career pathway for advisers that recognises their enhanced skills and responsibilities, enabling those that meet the essential criteria and work at a higher capacity, to link advance to HEW 8.

Introduction

The Language and Learning Skills Unit (LLSU) is a central student service delivering academic literacy and language programs at the University of Melbourne. As a central support service, the LLSU is charged with the support of all students, including students at remote campuses and outposts, such as teaching hospitals. In addition, as the name suggests, the LLSU is also responsible for supporting the academic language development of non-native English speakers (NNES), in particular international students, who make up approximately 50% of our client base.

The LLSU provides a range of services, both generic in nature and also discipline and subject-specific upon request. We work closely with faculties and other University services to determine the most effective method of support, and indeed collaboration is critical to the success of our programs. Our suite of support programs range from cohort-specific workshops and short courses, such as postgraduate writing programs, to discipline-specific support, such as adjunct tutorials and subject level workshops targeting assessment requirements. Many of our programs are embedded within faculties (and indeed the trend in our service delivery over the past five years has been to deliver programs where students perceive them as the most relevant). In 2006, 70% of our workshop program was discipline-specific.

In addition to the teaching programs, which include the individual tutorial service, the LLSU invests significant resources in the development of self-access resources, both print and online. We currently offer interactive activities designed to develop the academic literacy skills of undergraduate students, as well as online short courses in academic writing.

Background

Language and academic support for an increasingly diverse student body continues to be a focus at the University of Melbourne in response to university strategic plans. As the University looks to expand the diversity of its student population through targeted programs such as *Access Melbourne* and the implementation of alternative entry pathways, the delivery of academic skills support as a strategy for the retention and success of these groups becomes a key issue. The increase in the University's international student population (25.9% of the student cohort in 2006) with plans for further growth in ensuing years also creates an expectation of and demand for academic support, in addition to those of local students, that significantly affects delivery. In addition, the implementation of *Growing Esteem* from 2008 will impact on learning support with the introduction of broad generalist undergraduate programs, including studies in a breadth discipline, leading to a professional postgraduate program. Addressing the academic and communication needs of students under this model means a shift in the way support is conceptualised and delivered.

The Language and Learning Skills Unit has significantly increased its profile and services at the University in a relatively short period of time. In the past three and a half years, the LLSU has undergone a major amalgamation with the Centre for Communication Skills and English as a Second Language (CCS and ESL), with the brief to centralise language support to NNES, students, specifically international students. In 2005, the LLSU negotiated enhanced provision of services on a fee-for-service basis, moving from the traditional generic offerings to more discipline-specific, targeted support at the faculty level. The year 2005 also saw the launch of the *Academic Interactive Resource Portal (AIRport)* and *Postgraduate Essentials*, two online programs that enhanced the suite of LLSU resources as well as its profile at the University. These three major shifts in direction, amongst others, have resulted in the tripling of staff for the Unit, from 5.6 EFT in 2003 to 15 EFT in 2006, an increase of over \$100,000 in income generated and the doubling of the hours of delivery provided by the LLSU in both workshops and individual tutorials

With a significantly increased staff undertaking more complex responsibilities, and in

Rethinking the provision of high quality academic and literacy support services is critical in this time of growth and change

light of the University's commitment under the *Melbourne Model* to "make possible great student learning" and to "set a new standard in Australia," rethinking the provision of high quality academic and literacy support services is critical in this time of growth and change.

Aims

With this in mind, the LLSU undertook a benchmarking process in 2006 as a formal means of firstly assessing practices and processes, and secondly improving performance. The benchmarking process has kept to the spirit of Jackson and Lund's (2000) definition of benchmarking:

Benchmarking is first and foremost, a learning process structured so as to enable those engaging in the process to compare their services/activities/products in order to identify their comparative strengths and weaknesses as a basis for self improvement and/or self-regulation. (p 6)

As discussed by Garlick and Pryor (2004), benchmarking used for the purpose of improving performance becomes a tool for reflection, learning and collaboration. Essentially, it is a more effective way to facilitate change because it is a learning process as opposed to a competition, and it fosters networks as opposed to competitors. As they state, "[the] mutually reinforcing force created by learning and collaboration ... underpins [this] approach to improvement." (p 2)

The objectives, therefore, of the LLSU's benchmarking project were:

- To investigate the policies, practices and organisational structures and cultures of key university language and academic skills (LAS) centres with a view to critical reflection of their benefits in relation to those of the LLSU
- To identify methods of best practice to support the core values of the LLSU
- To recommend and implement ways to improve services to support both the aims of the *Melbourne Model* and the increasingly complex work of the Unit
- To develop networks with Group of Eight and Universitas 21 partners
- To report to the Melbourne Experience Committee on best practice services to support student learning

Method

In May and June of 2006, a questionnaire (see Appendix A) was completed by the Group of Eight Universities¹ (Go8) and three of our international Universitas 21 partners: University of Auckland, University of British Columbia and University of Nottingham. The aim of the questionnaire was to gather information on a number of broad areas for improving practice, including governing structures; management processes and quality assurance; service delivery models and clients; formal and informal relationships within the university; and staffing arrangements.

Respondents were asked to complete an electronic survey consisting of 22 questions requiring either a tick in the appropriate box and/or an explanation if an option needed clarification or was not applicable.

A set of unique questions, resulting from the institution's responses on the questionnaire, was developed for follow-up interviews, and in the ensuing months, the LLSU conducted interviews with partner institutions, either by phone or by visiting the institution². One interview was conducted by email due to the time difference³. The aims of the follow-up interviews were:

¹ Australian National University, Monash University, University of Adelaide, University of New South Wales, University of Queensland, University of Sydney, University of Western Australia

² Institutions visited included: University of Western Australia, University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, University of Queensland, Monash University, and University of British Columbia.

- to clarify and expand upon information from the surveys and therefore provide a more accurate picture of the processes and practices of our partners and
- to provide an opportunity for mutually beneficial networking and collaboration.

Assessing the information obtained from the surveys and interviews, the LLSU identified key areas for improvement and began implementation of practices and processes that could be adopted to facilitate the change. A consultative process was undertaken within the LLSU before the final report was generated and sent through the Melbourne Experience Committee.

The final step will be to integrate an evaluative mechanism to ensure that the changes are meeting objectives.

The LLSU also interviewed on site a further three institutions: Curtin University, University of Washington (USA) and Pacific Lutheran University (USA).

³ University of Nottingham.

Findings⁴

A. Policy Frameworks – governing structures and policies

Each of the ten LAS centres surveyed sits within different, but not dissimilar, divisions within their respective universities. Four centres sit within a student services division; three within a quality division; two within an academic development division; and one within a continuing studies division.

1. Divisions			
Student Services	Quality	Academic Development	Continuing Studies
5	3	2	1

2. Guiding Principles		
Mission Statement	Service Charter	Other
8	2	1

3. Policy Documents		
University strategic/operational plan	Department strategic/operational plan	Teaching and learning management plan
11	8	6

Five (Auckland, Monash, UQ, NSW and Melbourne) of these centres have recently been affected by a review process resulting in a divisional or departmental restructure. Reasons mentioned for the reviews included responding to national audits to provide an enhanced student experience (NSW), addressing institutional agendas for greater accountability and improved work practices (Monash and UQ) or merging areas with similar briefs into one department (Auckland, Melbourne).

All of the LAS centres surveyed have goals and targets underpinned by university strategic plans and/or departmental and educational policies similar to those at the University of Melbourne. Their overarching mission (with variations) is to assist students to develop their academic potential in order to maximise success in tertiary study. Many of the centres phrase this in terms of assisting students to develop effective or appropriate approaches to learning and to adjust to a new academic culture. In discussions with all centres, a strong emphasis is placed on the importance of students taking responsibility for their learning. As highlighted by one service, “Our ethos and the way we work encourages students to become independent through analysing their study difficulties and devising ways to solve them; individual sessions are not about doing it for the student but working with them to help them do it themselves” (Nottingham). Two centres mention their role as helping students who encounter difficulties in their studies.

The majority also mention working closely with colleagues across the university as another way to support learning – as one centre director explained, “This is a place where all would come to learn: academics, students, alumni” (UBC). For those learning skills centres located within an academic development division or a continuing education division, working with colleagues included responsibility for professional development of teaching staff.

Melbourne’s LLSU sits within the Academic Services Division and has targets integrated into both the Teaching and Learning Management Plan and also the University’s Strategic Plans. The LLSU also has an operational plan to which it reports annually against targets. Our mission

Our ethos and the way we work encourages students to become independent through analysing their study difficulties and devising ways to solve them

⁴ All statistics include those from the LLSU.

statement is to assist local and international students to maximize their independent learning potential by developing academic skills, language proficiency and graduate attributes.

B. Usage and quality assurance

1. Service Groups			
University staff	Faculties	Students	External (eg schools)
7	11	11	3

The primary function of all the LAS units surveyed is to support students and faculties. Seven units also provide services to staff while three provide services to external organizations such as schools.

In terms of providing services to staff, five centres participate in tutor training programs while others work directly with teaching staff to assist in improving teaching practices for three main reasons: 1) they are academic units charged with “providing leadership and strategic input and advice to the University with respect to teaching and learning”(Monash); 2) for historic reasons, such as voids in tutor training providers; 3) or pedagogical reasons, i.e. most units believe that supporting teaching staff is another way to support students. Examples of the latter include advising on curricula and assessment materials, team teaching integrated programs and advising on cross-cultural and inclusive teaching practices. These services are most often at the request of the faculty or individual staff member. For those centres whose brief is not formally that of tutor training, professional rather than academic classification and boundary issues are acknowledged as complicating this kind of service provision.

Melbourne’s LLSU falls into the third category in terms of providing services to staff. Supporting staff has historically been on request, rather than actively promoted, because of the more narrow definition of student support services: those only *directly* supporting students, as opposed to *indirectly* by working with teaching staff. As noted above, the LLSU’s professional staff classification and boundary issues with other staff development providers can inhibit opportunities to support students through collaboration with teaching staff.

2. Quality Assurance measures					
Staff induction	External review	Staff mentoring	Professional development requirements	Peer review	Program evaluation
8	4	6	9	5	9

Quality assurance measures used by LAS centres vary. However the majority regularly evaluate their programs and services, soliciting feedback from staff and students alike for the purpose of continuous quality improvement. In addition, many centres require staff to undertake professional development in areas related to their work. Seven centres have a staff induction procedure and five have a staff mentoring program; half use peer review, one on an informal basis. Half the units invite external reviewers as part of their quality assurance measures.

Melbourne’s LLSU has a staff induction procedure along with staff mentoring for new staff members. Professional development is required of all staff according to their individual needs and operational objectives. A peer review program is in place for learning skills advisers, and programs are routinely evaluated for satisfaction and improvement. The services of the LLSU are also routinely surveyed as part of the university-wide Quality of Administrative and Student Support Services evaluation cycle.

3. Student groups								
International	Local	NESB	Mature age	Low SES	UG	PG	DE	Targeted entry
10	10	8	10	8	10	10	8	8

All LAS centres serve the following student groups: international, local, mature age, postgraduate, and undergraduate. Nine serve NNES, low SES, targeted entry, and distance education students. Two centres provide services to students researching or working off campus although these universities have no formal distance education course. Two units (Queensland and UNSW) conduct an orientation or bridging program specifically for AusAID students. In addition to supporting all students, one centre has a significant focus on assisting students with specific learning difficulties.

4. User satisfaction				
Student surveys	University surveys	Feedback box	Usage numbers	Faculty feedback
10	6	5	10	6

The LAS centres use a variety of evaluation measures, with the majority using three or more. All conduct student surveys. Other measures to gauge user satisfaction include faculty feedback and university surveys used by seven centres and a feedback box used by six. All centres measure usage numbers as an indicator of success. One LAS centre considers repeat requests by faculties as evidence of user satisfaction. One also includes online surveys, focus groups and minute papers.

At Melbourne the LLSU uses a variety of methods to measure satisfaction with our services, including routine student evaluations of the individual tutorial service (three times per semester), student and faculty evaluations of teaching and online programs, and longitudinal usage statistics.

C. Service Delivery

1. Kinds of services offered					
Individual appointments	Email appointments	Workshops	Short courses	Credit subjects	Online courses
11	7	11	9	6	2

1. Kinds of services offered (cont.)					
Online resources	Print resources	Bridging programs	Mentoring programs	Staff development	School outreach
10	10	3	3	3	2

All of the centres surveyed provide individual appointments (for specific variations see F.3) and workshops. Designated drop-in times are used by several units, usually during semester. The content of the workshops is similar across all universities. Short courses are provided by all but two units; online resources and print resources are provided by all but one. Email appointments are provided by six units. Six centres teach credit bearing subjects, which are usually 'owned' by a faculty. In addition, three centres deliver bridging programs, but only two provide high school outreach. Two centres indicated that they provide online courses. Three formally provide staff development while other units specify that their workshops are open to all students and staff.

In addition to the range of individual tuition, teaching and resource development, the LLSU at Melbourne is also heavily committed to developing online resources and programs, and has received university funding to increase this mode of support as both a means of flexible delivery

All centres provide assistance in the same way: through appointments, workshops and self-access resources

(highlighted as a key objective of the *Melbourne Model*) and of managing student demand for services. In 2006, the LLSU also piloted a drop-in service in the University's main library. Other activities that the LLSU engages in include developing mentor training programs for target cohorts and fee-for-service outreach programs for secondary schools.

2. Type of service: generic vs. discipline-specific					
Generic: Discipline-specific ratio					
100	75:25	70:30	60:40	50:50	30-35:65-70
2	1	3	1	1	3

Almost all LAS units had a higher ratio of generic to discipline specific services. Percentages for generic services range from 100% (Nottingham) to approximately 60% (UNSW), with one unit (UBC) reporting approximately 50/50. However, as one unit pointed out, although the percentage of discipline specific services may be less if contact hours are the measure, the number of students reached is greater. The three exceptions (ANU, Monash, Queensland) provide approximately 70% discipline specific services. All but one centre believe that targeting skills development to the specific discipline is the most effective way of teaching academic skills.

Like the majority of LAS centres, the LLSU at Melbourne also holds that skills development is at its most effective when tailored to the discipline or content area; equally important is that students take up support more readily at this level, as the support is more relevant and applicable to their needs. We have significantly increased our discipline-specific offerings whilst reducing our generic sessions for these reasons.

3. Services embedded within faculties		
None	Some	Most
2	8	1

Strong faculty relationships are characteristic of most LAS centres. The majority reported that their work was embedded within faculties. Some centres have a formal relationship (eg a fee-for-service arrangement) while others work within faculties in response to specific requests. In some centres, specific staff members work primarily with a particular faculty and are in fact physically located there.

The type of work LAS staff perform at the faculty level includes co-teaching with subject lecturers, tutor training/induction, diagnostic testing and follow up, assignment-specific workshops, adjunct tutorial teaching, credit subject teaching, developing resources and individual tuition.

D Management Processes

1. Strategies to encourage participation						
Promotional material	Academic recommendation	Email	Hurdle requirement	Completion certificates	Referrals	Credit
11	11	10	1	3	10	3

2. Demand Management				
Drop-in	Wait list	Group sessions	Supervised self-access	Restricted access
8	4	5	1	3
Appointment limit	A/H appointments	Online services	Phone/email appointments	
6	5	3	6	

Managing the individual consultation service

All of the LAS centres surveyed have implemented policy and procedures to manage the high demand for the individual consultation service, the potential for dependency, and the expectation of the 'quick fix'. These procedures range from capping appointments to establishing parameters within which students have access to the service. Like the University of Melbourne's LLSU, many of the learning centres surveyed limit student use by imposing appointment quotas; restricting time allocated to access the service (such as only offering half-hour appointments or drop-in appointments); and setting hurdles, such as making students submit work in advance of the appointment or attend workshops beforehand. Another strategy employed by two universities is to limit appointments to students with marked work; this eliminates both the expectation for advisers to correct work. This strategy also underpins the message to students about taking control for their learning, a key value of all centres. Other strategies are to provide group only consultations and to limit the number of times a student may bring the same piece of work for assistance.

A variety of strategies are employed to manage the high student demand for individual consultation

Three universities have also implemented practice that targets intensive support to clearly identified students. These are most commonly students at risk (having received warning letters or presented before academic progress committees), students in certain equity cohorts (disability or NNES) or students for which special funding has been provided (AusAID). For all other students, there is a suite of support opportunities ranging from drop-in services to workshops and self-access resources.

In addition to the above-mentioned practices, six learning centres have implemented peer mentoring programs which assist in managing the demand on learning skills support, in addition to their primary objective of developing communities of learning. At the University of New South Wales, the Peer Writing Assistants Program, which hires, trains and mentors PhD students to work one-to-one with students, is responsible for 80% of the individual consultation program. It is also a Carrick Award recipient, as is the Peer Assisted Study program at the University of Queensland. Although not officially part of UQ's learning centre (the program belongs to the faculties running it), staff from UQ's LAS centre are responsible for training students in the program. UBC also runs an award-winning peer mentoring program which employs undergraduate students who "are happy to provide feedback on your writing assignments, answer questions, guide you through the writing process, and show you how to format your papers." The UBC tutors (currently enrolled undergraduate students) are responsible for the individual tutorials at their writing centre. Other examples of peer programs are UWA's *Writing Circles* and *Language and Culture Exchange*, and Adelaide's host program that bring students together for conversation.

Managing the appointment process also included implementing policy regarding missed appointments – which, particularly during periods of high demand, impacts on the opportunity for others students to obtain an appointment. Several learning skills centres suspend such students from future appointments for a limited period of time (eg one or two weeks).

This practice, in theory, is supported by the majority of centres. It is in contrast to that of Melbourne's LLSU, in which no consequence results from missed appointments, despite the collective belief of the LLSU staff that such measures are necessary. The LLSU also struggles with the heavy demand for the individual tutorial service, and employs a range of strategies to manage this, from imposing appointment limits, to providing drop-in times and varied length appointment times. We also strongly encourage students to take advantage of online resources and courses, as well as workshops and short courses.

Managing the workshop program

With the exception of students at risk, all academic support units believe that offering a comprehensive workshop program and self-access materials are the best use of their limited resources. Workshops and print and online resources encourage students to take responsibility for their learning whilst reducing the demand for the one-to-one service. Furthermore, they

maximise the opportunity for more students to take up support. As one university expressed, “We are a bus for many, as opposed to a Rolls Royce for a few” (UWA).

However, contrary to the high demand for the individual consultation service, many of the LAS centres surveyed identified a common difficulty with encouraging students to take up support in a group format. Attendance at workshops and short courses is erratic, with some attracting high user rates (more often the postgraduate programs) and others much lower participation rates (more likely generic and undergraduate programs).⁵ Learning skills units did acknowledge that teaching programs embedded at the faculty or department level tend to attract higher participation rates because students perceive them to be more relevant.

Most centres reported erratic attendance at workshops, despite this service being a better use of limited resources

As noted earlier, the LLSU has increased its discipline-specific course offerings consistently over the past four years, and this has resulted in attracting greater audiences to our workshops. However, the attendance rate at generic workshops and short courses continues to be problematic, with very small numbers of students attending at the undergraduate level, so much so that we have significantly reduced our generic courses and invested instead in other forms of support, in particular, online. Attendance at our faculty-based programs is much higher, and this can be attributed to both the greater relevancy of the support as well as the promotion by lecturers and faculty staff.

3. Support Infrastructure				
Database	Online registration	IT support	Receptionist	Office/Unit mgr
11	6	7	11	8

Many LAS units have implemented online registration and confirmation of enrolment practices that encourage students to commit to attending a workshop. Examples of the latter are reminder phone calls and emails.

The LLSU introduced online registration for its generic courses in 2006, and is looking for ways to expand this to the faculty programs as a more effective method of both enrolling students and recording information for reporting purposes.

E Promotion and Synergies

1. Promotion strategies					
Print materials	Web site	Email lists	O-week	Student organizations	Mail outs
11	10	7	10	10	8

All LAS centres promote their programs through a variety of ways: orientation activities, faculty promotions, student organisations, web site presence, mail-outs and electronic means. All centres have collaborative relationships with academic departments and/or central services, such as the libraries or staff development.

2. University relationships		
Collaborative relationships with services/faculties	Formal representation – University student learning/ access committees	Formal representation – Faculty student learning/ access committees
11	9	8

⁵ Although not a benchmarking partner for the purpose of this project, it is worth noting that Curtin’s LAS centre has a consistently high rate of attendance at workshops, which may be a result of their policy that limits access to the individual consultation to students who attend 10 hours of workshops and are referred by their supervisor or course coordinator.

All of the LAS centres surveyed work closely with faculties and other university services in the development and promotion of programs and services supporting students, and the importance of these relationships was highlighted during the follow-up interviews.

Representation within the university committee structure was the norm, not the exception

All but two learning centres have some representation on relevant university or faculty committees, those mentioned most frequently being the teaching and learning or education committee, and academic progress committee. Although representation may not always include voting rights, these learning centres are expected to have a role to play in both directing and informing policy regarding academic literacy and language proficiency. One of the learning centres without committee representation deals with disability issues and has places on Advisory Groups for their specialist advice (Nottingham).

Melbourne's LLSU is unique amongst the Go8 and its Universitas 21 partners in that it does not have formal representation on any faculty committee nor university committee involved with either teaching and learning or academic progress. However, in 2006, the Task Force on English Language Bridging and Support Programs was established and representation from the LLSU was included in its membership.

F Staffing and program responsibility

1. Advisor classification			
Academic	General	Both	N/A
Lecturer A, B & C	HEW 7, 8 & 9	Academic & General	
3	4	3	1

Of the eleven universities surveyed, half of the LAS centres classify staff as academic, half as general with three employing both academic and general staff because of historic reasons (eg amalgamations). It is worth noting, however, that of the Go8, only three of the eight LAS centres are academic.

Academic staff are employed as Lecturer A, B and C, with those at level C most often being the directors of their respective units. All general staff units in Australia are currently at HEW 7, 8 or 9 levels. However, as part of the restructure process underway in two of the LAS centres surveyed, one general staff centre is being reclassified to HEW 7 from HEW 8(UQ) and one academic staff centre will be reclassified to general HEW 7 in 2007 (Monash).

Not including these latest developments, the classification levels and remuneration at all centres surveyed are in contrast to those at Melbourne's LLSU, where advisors are classified at HEW 7, with currently only one senior advisor position at HEW 8. In comparing classification levels, however, it is worth noting that the project did not compare job complexity and levels of responsibility.

2. Minimum qualifications				
Teaching	UG	PG	University tutoring	Workplace experience
3	4	7	1	1

Minimum qualifications for advisers vary across the universities. All eight of the Australian universities require post graduate qualifications, with one university employing staff with PhDs exclusively (although this is not an essential criterion). Some universities want expertise in relevant disciplines, such as Education or Applied Linguistics. Others have a preference for Arts/Humanities while some employ a range of discipline expertise. Two universities will accept undergraduate degrees, one of which requires some tutoring experience. Three universities require teaching experience, both Adelaide and Melbourne at the tertiary level.

Qualifications amongst learning skills advisers vary across institutions

Although not listed as a requirement, in practice six universities have staff with ESL qualifications or experience.

Melbourne’s LLSU states a Masters degree with tertiary teaching experience as the minimum requirements for employment as a Learning Skills Adviser. Because of our brief to specifically support language development for international and local NNES, more than half of our advisers also have TESOL qualifications, and this is considered a highly desirable criterion in the selection process. Similarly, although a PhD is not required, our work with research higher degree students makes it incumbent on us to provide expertise in this area, and thus a PhD is also highly desirable.

3. Kinds of work					
Individual consultations	Group teaching	Research	Staff development	Online moderation	Resource development
11	11	10	7	3	10

Work undertaken across all LAS centres includes individual consultations and group teaching; the majority are also involved in resource development and research of some kind. However, as noted above, the level of responsibility and supervision was not part of the project’s brief.

The format for individual consultations ranges from 15-minute appointments for quick questions (a drop-in service), to one or two hours (a booked appointment), depending on the assignment length. The level of individual tutorial service provided at each LAS centre depends on their resources and their culture: the more staff available, the more demand can be met; likewise, if the culture caters to meeting student demand, more opportunities for individualised service are provided. To illustrate the former, several universities have an advisor available to meet with any student who turns up at any time; others can only provide group tutorials if more than one student attends the drop-in service, as the staffing is not available. Four universities use a peer writing program, employing either postgraduate or undergraduate students to conduct the individual consultations.

Teaching is similar across all universities, with the majority being group workshops or short courses, with some centres also responsible for the delivery of credit bearing subjects.

Resource development includes print and online resources for self-access purposes.

The majority of units encourage research, regardless of the staff classification, because it is recognised as an important feature of developing credibility within their institution and of professional development for staff. In those LAS centres with academic classification, staff are entitled to a specific number of days each year for research, although there is a general understanding that supporting students takes precedence: centre policy often restricts research to non-teaching times. It is expected that the research is directly related to the work, for example, student learning and academic literacy. In centres with general staff classification, research time is optional, depending on the motivation of individual staff, the encouragement of management and the time and funding available. However, all non-academic units acknowledge the difficulty of justifying research time in a support service. As one centre director noted, “Research in a student support unit is a hard issue!”(ANU).

Research in a student support unit is a hard issue!

All centres rely on casual staff during busy times of year; units involved in fee-for-service also use casual staff to backfill permanent staff involved in these income-generating programs. One service imposes a \$10 registration fee for unlimited access to individual consultations and workshops. The income earned (\$100,000) allows this service to employ additional staff.

The LLSU at Melbourne generally divides work into three main areas: individual tutorials, group teaching and resource development. As noted previously, we are investing more time into the development of our online capabilities, both self-access and tutor moderated, as a way to

increase flexibility and access, as well as reduce demand on the individual consultation. We also encourage staff to take on research or projects that will inform the work of our unit and the University in general. In 2006, the LLSU presented three papers at local and international conferences, and submitted two journal articles for publication, in addition to researching the benchmarking project.

4. Workload formula	
Yes	No
5	6

Approaches to workload vary across the centres. Six have no workload formula although one of these, an academic centre, plans to establish one based on Lecturer B teaching load + 20% to compensate for the lack of marking. Their proposed formula is roughly 60% teaching, 20% research, 20% administration, including meetings. One unit's guiding principle is not more than five hours teaching per day, which includes individual tutorials. Another uses a 60% teaching, 30% administration, 10% research formula, varying the latter should staff opt out of being research active.

The LLSU has outgrown its current workload formula of ten individual consultations per week and six hours of teaching (not including development) in light of the increased complexity of the services provided and the faculty work commissioned as fee-for-service (see Background). When this formula was devised, the LLSU was one-third its current size, with no online presence or commitment to discipline-specific and faculty-based programs.

Advisor location	
Central unit	Central unit & faculties
9	2

The majority of LAS centres are centrally located while two have staff located in both the central service and in faculties. Generally, universities with multiple campuses rely on visits from the central service, with the exception of Monash and University of Sydney which locates advisers at all campuses.

Melbourne's LLSU is responsible for supporting all students, including those located at outposts (eg teaching hospitals) and remote campuses (three). Advisers travel to the hospitals and campuses when requested, provide resources and conduct phone or email appointments on demand. However, as with many LAS centres, we do not have the resources to replicate the level of support available to students located at the Parkville campus, and this causes some concern from an equity perspective.

Conclusions and recommendations

The benchmarking process highlighted several common themes amongst learning skills centres, and equally importantly, identified some ways forward for the LLSU. The issues shared by all centres and of particular importance to the LLSU include managing perceptions, expectations and demand; developing successful relationships and a profile of expertise within the university community; and workload and responsibilities that reflect classification.

Managing perceptions and demand

Two overarching and interconnecting issues mentioned by all learning centres regarding their management processes are: managing perception and expectations, and managing demand, both under and over-use.

Managing perception and expectation

A common misperception of both university students and staff alike is that the learning skills staff provide a proofreading or editing service. Many students self-select or are referred to learning skills support with the expectation that the advisers will correct their work, so much so that the majority of centres clearly state on promotional material that they do not proof read or edit; all of the centres surveyed expressed their concern about the ongoing misperception that they can 'fix' students who are underachieving and/or have inadequate language and academic skills. This perception is significantly different to the ethos of LAS centres, which see themselves as "providing *scaffolding* as opposed to *handholding*" (Curtain).

A common misperception is that learning skills advisers can 'fix' students

This misperception may be due to the lack of understanding regarding the nature of learning skills on the part of students. Developing levels of competency in a tertiary environment is a process involving a significant commitment on the part of the *student*, as opposed to that of the *adviser*. Too often students⁶ expect to get help with an assessment (short term achievement) - and understandably in terms of wanting a high mark - as opposed to wanting to develop their own independent academic and communication skills (long term investment). Students' expectations for a quick fix put pressure on LAS units to provide services that are both contrary to our ethos and also unrealistic in terms of available resources.

Managing demand

This trend for short term gain can be clearly seen in the heavy demand for the individual consultation service at assessment time, in contrast to the often low attendance rates at workshops and short courses offered throughout the academic year (which LAS centres view as a proactive approach to learning as opposed to reactive). Managing demand, therefore, becomes critical from both a pedagogical as well as a resource perspective for all centres surveyed. The repercussions of not being able to meet demand can be seen in student feedback about services. At the LLSU, for example, despite a significant increase in service delivery over the past four years (quadrupling of individual consultation hours in the past three years), evaluations from students consistently mention the desire for unlimited appointments and longer appointments times.

Central to these overlapping issues of managing perceptions, expectations and demand is the balance between providing enough support to assist in the developmental process, whilst avoiding relationships of dependence: "when too much help is *too* much!" (UBC). The LLSU recognises that managing perceptions, expectations and demand creates unrealistic pressure on

⁶ Many centres commented on the higher expectations and demands of international students for more immediate and long-term assistance, which is not surprising given the higher stakes involved in their educational experience and the more complex issues they face due to language and culture. International students represented 51% of the individual tutorial service offered by the LLSU in 2006, but made up 24% of the student enrolment.

our service, and for both pedagogical reasons and resource implications, makes the following recommendations for improvement:

Recommendation 1: Develop a more effective strategy for promoting the role and services of the LLSU to the wider university:

- produce an annual report to the University; and
- establish an administrative role within the LLSU to take responsibility for coordinating promotions.

Recommendation 2: In collaboration with the Standing Committees and faculties, review the LLSU's individual tutorial program with a view to providing more targeted delivery to students:

- implement a priority service to target cohorts (NNEs, disability, unsatisfactory progress), using a referral process as direct access to individual support;
- implement a peer assisted writing program as core business to address writing skills development for all other students;⁷ and
- investigate a hurdle requirement for obtaining an individual support.

Recommendation 3: In consultation with the Standing Committees and faculties, review and increase the LLSU's workshop program to better meet student needs at the discipline level:

- establish an LLSU presence in each new generation and current degree program to liaise, advise on and develop integrated academic literacy programs that will attract greater student participation; and
- investigate, in liaison with the Board of Undergraduate Studies, the provision of a core workshop program addressing the academic literacy needs, including English language, of undergraduate students.

Strengthening University relationships and LLSU profile

A commonly expressed notion amongst LAS centres was the importance of developing good relations within the university. For LAS services, good communications and networking mean the difference between the success and failure of program initiatives. Programs which are developed either collaboratively with faculties or result from discussions with other departments have a higher success rate in implementation. As explained by one manager, "It's much harder to block or ignore these kinds of initiatives when there is a team effort involved." For example, ANU has been successful in the implementation of their tutor training program because of the collaborative efforts of the Colleges and the Information Literacy Program – parts of the university which saw a void in professional development for this cohort and who collaborated to get the program up and running. At UWA, good relations with the libraries mean that the LAS centre can quickly and easily promote upcoming programs using library communications systems.

All centres acknowledged the importance of relationships, committee representation and leadership to the success to their programs

Recommendation 4: Identify opportunities for more collaborative relationships with other parts of the University in the development and delivery of academic support programs:

- expand and consolidate the drop-in program within the libraries;
- investigate re-establishing the Heads of Services Group, in collaboration with the managers, Melbourne Experience Programs and Student Services, to discuss and advise on issues related to student support;
- seek out faculty contacts with which the LLSU can collaborate on programs directly related to student cohorts and needs, eg Honours students; and
- consider ways, in consultation with the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, to better utilise the Unit's expertise of the student learning experience, in particular through participation in staff forums and induction programs.

⁷ 90% of students attending individual tutorials at the LLSU do so for assistance with writing.

Committee representation was also mentioned as strategic in terms of facilitated networking and collaboration with all parts of the university, and indeed supports the recommendations generated from the University's Academic Services - Shared Services Review (2005). Having a formal place within the university committee structure also means that there is opportunity to provide expert advice on policy and practices associated with student learning. In essence, the LAS centres believe that committee representation both recognises and values their expertise within the whole-of-university student experience.

Recommendation 5: Seek greater representation on committees involved with teaching and learning at both the faculty and University levels:

- identify key committees, in consultation with the VPAR and DVC (Academic) to which the LLSU may provide information and advice;
- formally request LLSU representation or participation on these committees; and
- regularly disseminate reports of interest to these committees.

Another frequently mentioned notion was that of having a 'champion' – a head of department or division, or a very senior academic in a leadership position whose advocacy and support leads to enhanced programs and opportunities for representation and input within the wider university community. Strong leadership from the DVC (Education) contributed to the success of the ANU tutor training program mentioned above and was also cited as being integral to the ability of their service to “draft, comment and promote a call for developing policy on matters related to academic and language support”. The ability of NSW to fill a void in tutor training was also supported by their then PVC (Education and Quality Improvement). At UWA, the registrar endorses the LAS unit's philosophy of “helping students do it themselves” and supports their practice of referring students to workshops, as opposed to increasing individual consultations to meet demand.

Recommendation 6: Establish a stronger alignment with the vision and direction of the DVC (Academic), including a more direct line of reporting, on matters related to student learning and the Melbourne Experience.

Recognising staff workload and responsibilities

As mentioned earlier, the work of the LLSU has become increasingly complex, with the roles and responsibilities of many advisers developing beyond their original brief as the Unit takes on a more strategic role within the changing environment of the University. As highlighted by the benchmarking project, the qualifications and attributes of the learning skills adviser are not uniform; nor does the work of the adviser fit easily into already existing frameworks. To complicate the situation, some advisers are academic, whilst others are general staff. The adviser's work can include most if not all of the following: coordinating university or faculty-wide support programs, developing and teaching workshops, advising students individually, developing print and online resources, administering diagnostic tests, researching. Although several LAS centres in our survey have developed workload formulas, many admit that this is fraught because of these variations across service providers and institutions.

However, in consideration of the changes within the LLSU and the need to recognise the enhanced role of advisers, it is worth revisiting the workload formula in order to recognise the higher level duties that often come from such changes.

Recommendation 7: Review the LLSU's workload formula to reflect more accurately the changing nature of the work within the Unit, and to ensure equity and understanding about roles and responsibilities:

- establish a working group to review and consult with advisers about the workload formula.

Recognising and valuing job complexity and increased responsibilities are fundamental to good workplace management

Recommendation 8: In consultation with Human Resources, develop a career pathway for advisers that recognises their enhanced skills and responsibilities, enabling those that meet the essential criteria and work at a higher capacity to link advance to HEW 8.

Summary

The benchmarking project has shown that the LLSU compares favourably to similar local and international institutions, in both the range of services provided and the commitment to high quality delivery. All LAS centres share the common goal of developing students' independent learning skills in order to optimise their tertiary study experience. All struggle with the expectation of both students and staff that we can 'solve' academic literacy and language problems.

The project also identified issues common amongst LAS centres, and effective and innovative ways in which to manage them. As a result of shared information, the LLSU has already modified a number of practices and has plans for further program improvement, including the establishment of a writing centre. We have also taken steps to implement a more targeted service delivery that supports both currently enrolled students and those enrolling in the new generation degrees as part of the *Melbourne Model* in 2008. However, more work needs to be done to engage more effectively with all parts of the University, building and strengthening relationships as well as finding avenues for input and advice on matters related to academic literacy and language proficiency.

Information obtained from the project about adviser classification levels also provided the LLSU with the evidence to support the establishment of a career pathway within the unit. Recognition of advisers' higher level duties and the critical role they play in an increasingly complex area of academic literacy support has been a not insignificant boost to staff morale.

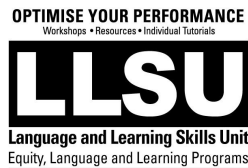
Finally, the benchmarking project has been very successful as a networking exercise, facilitating collaboration between partner universities and opportunities for sharing information and supporting new ventures. In particular, the project has led to direct collaboration between three of the LLSU's partners in both research endeavours and knowledge transfer. We are very grateful to all the LAS centres who participated in this project for their time and candidness.

References

Garlick, S. & Pryor, G. (2004) *Benchmarking the university: Learning about improvement*. A report for the Department of Education, Science and Training (Canberra: DEST).

Jackson, N. & Lund, H. (Eds) (2000) *Benchmarking for Higher Education* (Buckingham: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open Court).

Appendix A: Benchmarking questionnaire



Language and Academic Skills Services Benchmarking Questionnaire 2006

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. The information that you provide will be used to assess and improve current practices and procedures at the Language and Learning Skills Unit, University of Melbourne. Once information has been collated, and follow-up interviews conducted, a comprehensive report will be written. If you would like to have a copy of this report, please let us know.

University: _____

Name of service: _____

Would you like a copy of the final report? yes no

A. Policy Frameworks

1. Which Division or Department within the university does your service belong to?

(Please attach an organisational chart, if possible.)

2. Does your service have any of the following published guiding principles?
 Mission statement Service charter Other

(If 'yes' to any of the above, please attach or provide web reference.)

3. Which, if any, of the following institutional policy documents underpin the services that you provide:

university strategic/operational plan
 departmental strategic/operational plan
 teaching and learning management plan
 other: _____

B. Usage and quality assurance

1. Who do you provide services to?
 university staff faculties students
 external (eg schools) other: _____

2. Which of the following quality assurance measures does your service use:
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> staff induction | <input type="checkbox"/> professional development requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> external review | <input type="checkbox"/> peer review |
| <input type="checkbox"/> staff mentoring | <input type="checkbox"/> program evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |
3. Which of the following student cohorts have access to your services?
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> international | <input type="checkbox"/> local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NESB | <input type="checkbox"/> mature age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> low SES | <input type="checkbox"/> undergraduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> postgraduate | <input type="checkbox"/> distance education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> targeted entry | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |
4. Which of the following evaluation measures does your service use to determine user satisfaction?
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> student surveys | <input type="checkbox"/> university-administered surveys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feedback box | <input type="checkbox"/> usage numbers (hours or users) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> faculty feedback | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |

C. Service Delivery

1. What kinds of services do you offer?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> individual appointments | <input type="checkbox"/> email appointments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> workshops | <input type="checkbox"/> short courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> credit subjects | <input type="checkbox"/> online courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> online resources | <input type="checkbox"/> print resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> bridging programs | <input type="checkbox"/> mentoring programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> staff development | <input type="checkbox"/> school outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ | |
2. What percentage of your service is generic? _____ Discipline-specific?

3. Are your programs embedded within faculties?
- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> some | <input type="checkbox"/> most | <input type="checkbox"/> all |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|

D. Management processes

1. Which, if any, of the following strategies does your service use to encourage participation in programs?
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> promotional material | <input type="checkbox"/> certificates of completion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> academic recommendation | <input type="checkbox"/> referrals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> email notification | <input type="checkbox"/> credit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hurdle requirement | <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____ |
2. How do you manage, if at all, student demand of individual appointments service?
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> drop-in time | <input type="checkbox"/> appointment limit |
|---------------------------------------|--|

- research
 online moderation
 other: _____
- deliver staff development
 resource development

4. Does your unit have a formula or guiding principles for adviser workload (eg hours of teaching per week)?

- yes no

If 'yes', please explain: _____

5. Where are your learning skills advisers located?

- in a central unit in the faculties
 part in the central unit and part in the faculties
 other: _____

Thank you for your input! Please email your completed survey to Laurie Ransom, Manager, Language and Learning Skills Unit at lransom@unimelb.edu.au

Appendix B: Benchmarking statistics

Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
A. Policy Frameworks

University	A. Policy Frameworks								
	1. Division/Dept	2. Guiding Principles			3. Policy Documents				Comments
		Mission statement	Service charter	Other	Uni strat/op plan	Dept strat/op plan	T&L mgmt plan	Other	
Adelaide	Director of CLPD reports to Deputy VC & Provost	X			X	X			
ANU	Division of Quality Enhancement & Statistical Services	X			X	X	X		
Auckland	Centre for Academic Development	X			X	X	X		Policy documents on website
UBC	Continuing Studies	X			X	X	X		
Melbourne	Student Services	X	X		X	X	X		
Monash		X			X				
Nottingham	Student services w/in Academic Office of Registrar's dept				X	X			
NSW	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education & Quality Improvement) but division is to be abolished & restructured	X			X		X		Currently DVC Academic, will be Pro VC Student & Registrar
Queensland	Division of Student and Administrative Services				X				Soon to be restructured
Sydney	Student services, Registrar's Division, Portfolio of the DVC (Community)			X	X	X			
WA	Student service	X	X		X	X	X		LLRS has input into these, no official report back on indicators or targets

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
B1. Usage and Quality Assurance**

University	B.Usage and quality assurance											
	1. Services to					2.QA measures						
	Staff	Facs	Studnts	Extnl	Other	Staff induction	Ext review	Staff mentor	PD reqmts	Peer review	Pgm eval	Other
Adelaide	X	X	X	X			X		X	X	X	
ANU		X	X		Contribute to tutor trng: staff use as a)ss HDR/Jrnl pub b) advice re ss c)referral							
Auckland		X	X		Bus & med school tutor trng	X		X	X	X (in formal)	X	
UBC	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
Melbourne	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Monash	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	
Nottingham	X	X	X			X		X	X			Regular mtgs w/ Head of Service
NSW	X	X	X		Broader community via website	X					X	
Queensland		X	X			X	X		X		X	Student evaluation as part of pgm evaluation
Sydney		X	X			X			X		X	
WA	X	X	X					X	X		X	

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
B2. Usage and Quality Assurance**

University	B. Usage and quality assurance															
	3. Student cohorts										4. User satisfaction					
	Int'l	NESB	Low SES	PG	Targeted entry	Local	Mature age	UG	DE	Other	Student surveys	Feedback box	Faculty feedback	Uni surveys	Usage numbers	other
Adelaide	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X				X	
ANU	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Ss working off campus/ research	X	X	X	X	X	X
Auckland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	all	X	X	X	X	X	
UBC	X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	
Melbourne	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X	
Monash	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X	
Nottingham	X			X		X	X	X	X		X			X	X	
NSW	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	
Queensland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	AusAID	X	X			X	
Sydney	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
WA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	Extensive eval pgm includes online surveys, focus groups, minute papers, etc.

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
C1. Service Delivery**

University	C1. Service Delivery												
	1. Kinds of services												
	Ind Appt	W/ Shops	Cred subj	Online resrces	Bridge Pgms	Staff Devlop	Email appts	Short courses	Online courses	Print resrces	Mentor pgms	School outreach	other
Adelaide		X		X					X	X			Daily helpdesk (drop-in at designated time)
ANU	X	X		X		X	X	X		X			Developing online courses collaboratively w/ unis; no longer provides senior high school outreach
Auckland	X	X		X			X	X		X			
UBC	X	X	X	X				X	X		X		
Melbourne	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		X	
Monash	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		
Nottingham	X	X		X		X				X			
NSW	X	X	X	X	X			X		X	X		
Queensland	X	X		X			X	X		X			w/shops open to all ss, faculty & school based by request
Sydney	X	X	X	X			X	X		X			
WA	X	X	X		X		X	X		X		X	

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
C2. Service Delivery**

University	C2. Service Delivery					
	Types of service		Embedded within faculties			
	% Generic	% Discipline specific	No	Some	Most	All
Adelaide	70	30		X		
ANU		~70		X		
Auckland	mostly			X		
UBC	50	50	X			
Melbourne	30	70		ABP, Eng, Ed, Law		
Monash	30	70			X	
Nottingham	100		X			
NSW	60	40		X		
Queensland	~30~35	~65~70		X		
Sydney	75	25% (based on contact hrs)		X		
WA	70	30		X MBA, Law, Eng, Med (fee for service for customized w/shops)		

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
D1. Management Processes**

University	D1. Management Processes							
	Strategies to encourage participation							
	Promotional material	Academic Recommend	Email notification	Hurdle requirement	Completion certificates	Referrals	Credit	other
Adelaide	X	X	X			X		
ANU	X	X	X		X	X		Certificates of contribution when ss participate in panels as part of ASLC pgms
Auckland	X	X	X		X	X		
UBC	X	X	X	X		X		
Melbourne	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Monash	X	X	X			X	X	
Nottingham	X	X	X					
NSW	X	X	X			X	X	
Queensland	X	X	X			X		
Sydney	X	X	X			X		
WA	X	X				X		

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
D2. Management Processes**

University	D2. Management Processes									
	2. Demand management									
	Drop-in	Wait list	Group sessions	Supervised self-access	Restricted access	Appt limit	a/h appts	Online services	Phone email appts	Other
Adelaide	X		X							
ANU	X		X				X		X	
Auckland	X	X	X			X			X	
UBC					X	X		X		
Melbourne	X				X	X	X	X	X	
Monash	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Nottingham	X		X							
NSW		X					X			
Queensland	X	X				X				
Sydney						X			X	
WA	X						X		X	Our services are arranged so that ss have a wide range of choices for learning support. Appts are available but not focus of our services.

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
D3. Management Processes**

University	D3. Demand Management					
	3. Infrastructure					
	Database	Online registration	IT support	Receptionist	Office mgr Unit mgr	other
Adelaide	X		X	X	X	
ANU	X	X	X	X	X	
Auckland	X	X	X	X	X	
UBC	X	X	X	X	X	
Melbourne	X	X		X	X	
Monash	X			X		
Nottingham	X		X	X	X	
NSW	X			X	X	
Queensland	X		X	X	X	
Sydney	X	X	X	X		
WA	X	X		X		

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
E. Promotion and Synergies**

University	E.Promotion and Synergies													
	1. Promotion strategies							2.collab. relationships		uni committees groups		faculty committees groups		
	Print materials	Web site	Email lists	Oweek	Student orgs	Mail outs	other	Yes	no	Yes	no	yes	no	
Adelaide	X	X		X	X			X		X		X		
ANU	X	X	X	X	X			X		X		X		
Auckland	X	X	X	X	X	X		Service level agreements: Grad studies, Bus school		Int com, Acad. Prog. Com, Library Com		Bus School T&L Com		
UBC	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		Continuing studies, Eng dept		X		
Melbourne	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		Int'l Students Consultative Committee			X	
Monash	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		
Nottingham	X	X				X		X			X		X	
NSW	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X		X		
Queensland	X			X	X	X		X		T&l Com on smaller campuses				
Sydney	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		Uni L&T Com, Library Com, SWOT pgm (O-week)		Econ & Bus Faculty L&T Com, various working parties		
WA	X	X	X	X	X		Use n/works to distribute info libraries, colleges, faculties. Flyers,	X		Uni T&L Committee, Student Services Executive,			X	

							posters, pc, mouse mats bookmarks (no budget funds from ss services			UWA eL Standing Committee			
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	---------------------------------	--	--	--

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
G1. Staffing**

University	G. Staffing									
	1. Advisor classification					2. Minimum qualifications				
	Academic	\$	General	\$	Both	Teaching	UG	TESOL	PG	Other
Adelaide	X					X			X	
ANU			HEW 8	62,000					X	Masters
Auckland	X expect research but not all do, if want promotion do but ss come 1st						X			at least some tutoring at uni
UBC					X	X				Industry experience (eg journalist)
Melbourne	Tutor A and Lecturer B		HEW 7	58,585-63,418	X		X (past)		X	
Monash	X								X	
Nottingham					N/A	X	X			
NSW			HEW 8-9						X	
Queensland			HRW 8							X PG preferred at least Honors
Sydney					X		X		X	Gen staff:UG Acad Staff PG
WA			HEW 8						X	

**Benchmarking the LLSU
Response to Questionnaire 2006
G2. Staffing**

University	G. Staffing													
	3.Kinds of work							4. W/load formula		5. Advisor location				
	Ind consult	Research	Online moder	Grp teach	Staff devel	Resrce devel	Other	Yes	No	Cent unit	Cent &fac	Fac	other	
Adelaide	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X				
ANU	X approx 30% of work	X		X	X	X	Staff develop = for tutors in colleges (incorporating faculties)	Formula to calculate reading time so advisors can prepare to meet w/ ss w/ long texts; although research time, such time is made avail – min 12 days /yr		X				
Auckland	X	X		X	X	X		Permanent contract = 60%teach, 30% admin, 10% research		X				
UBC	X	X	X	X				Students on Work study can only work 10 hrs/wk		X				
Melbourne	X		X	X		X		X		X				
Monash	X	X		X	X	X		Guiding principles not > 5hrs/day			X			
Nottingham	X			X	X	X			X	X			Visit other uni sites regularly	
NSW	X	X		X	X	X			X	X				
Queensland	X	X		X	X	X	Mainly ind consult & grp		X	X				

							teach						
Sydney	X	X		X		X			X		X		
WA	X	X		X		X	Project work w/ areas in uni, consulting services on ss learning projects		X	X			

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