CASE STUDY: ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

The Issue: Communicating the course structure to students in a way that makes sense to them can be difficult. This is made more problematic by the extensive use of online enrolments where students are wholly responsible for their own enrolment. If they chose incorrectly or misunderstand the course structure they may find that they have not fulfilled the graduation requirements. These issues may be further complicated by the jargon used in the university materials a first year student is especially vulnerable to a lack of understanding of the requirements on them. Teaching staff often have the added responsibility of addressing these kinds of administrative issues.

User-friendly University Materials

The **University of New England** has a clear and detailed online course planner. It also contains a link to "AskUNE" the university's help facility. There is also a link to "Student Assist", an administrative service to help students throughout their degree and after graduation into employment. The **University of Sydney's** handbook is also a very clear and detailed document, in contrast to the web based information. **Edith Cowan University's course planner** has a clear and detailed course planner available online. This tool allows students to "build" a program according to the institutional regulations, using online tools and technology such as shopping carts and calculators similar to those used by commercial websites.

Administrative Mechanisms

Flinders University's Bachelor of Arts is not "owned" by one Faculty. Administratively, it straddles 2 faculties and is instead administered by a separate unit: the BA Office. This Office is responsible for assisting students with administrative enquires such as enrolment advice. Other universities also provide a similar service. These services take away the burden of administrative questions from teaching staff. The **University of Western Sydney** has a Head of Program role which is clearly articulated in its institutional policies as an administrative position. As a consequence, the administrative workload of this position is recognised and the teaching workload compensated for. There is also a Head of Program Network which is designed to allow the flow of information from executive management, academic Senate and to support cross-disciplinary perspectives.

For information on recognised administrative positions in BA curriculum management see the "Closing the Gap in Curriculum Development Leadership" project in the BA related projects dataset.

Review processes

The **University of Ballarat's** review process reviews the program across all disciplines and examines how each discipline feeds into the Arts program.

Disclaimer: The information described above emerged from interviews, discussions and observation of publicly available materials during the BA Scoping Project which commenced in March 2007 and concluded in August

2008. As a result, the practices described in this case study may not reflect current practices or institutional policy. They are a reflection of the understanding at the time the scoping project was in progress.