

Meeting no. 01/09
Item no.

Date

Subject	Service Level Agreement: quarterly report to faculties October - December 2008
Background	The Library reports to the General Library Committee on a quarterly basis on the performance of its key performance indicators (KPIs) in its service level agreement with the faculties.
Comments/Issues	<p>The library met or exceeded most performance indicators reported upon for the period.</p> <p>For the first time the report includes responses against the Key Performance Indicators for the Learning Skills Unit (now Service No. 4) and an appendix detailing the learning skills improvements identified in selected courses is also attached.</p>
Recommendation	That General Library Committee note the Library's Service Level Agreement report to the faculties for July to September 2008.
Author	Peter Mathews (Library Planning Executive).

Support Service: MONASH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

 Report Date: **15 January 2009**
Service: No. 1 – Information Resources: Access and Delivery
Service description: Access to materials and resources

Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
Library open 100% of advertised opening hours	All branch libraries were open 100% of their advertised hours.	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of advertised hours that the library opened
90% of items returned from loan reshelved within 24 hours Monday to Friday	More than 97% of all returned items were shelved within 24hrs.	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of items returned from loan reshelved within 24 hours Monday to Friday
85% of students agree that library services are readily accessible	Nothing to report	April 2008		Biennial	Monash Experience Questionnaire Report
The library catalogue available during core service hours Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm with the exception of scheduled downtimes	The catalogue was available for core hours, except between 24 November and 10 December because the server needed to be rebooted 6 times totaling 1.5 hours.	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of hours the library catalogue available during core service hours

Further Information:

Service: No. 2 – Information Resources: Collection Management					
Service description: Development, selection, acquisition, cataloguing, maintenance and overall management of library resources					
Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
95% of items requested within budget are ordered by 31 October	97.2% of items requested were ordered.	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of orders received that are placed by staff in the Information Resources Division
95% of web links in the library catalogue are accurate	97.7% of accurate links in the library catalogue identified by monthly link checking program	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of accurate links in the library catalogue identified by monthly link checking program
85% of students agree that library resources are appropriate for their needs	Nothing to report this period	April 2010		Biennial	Monash Experience Questionnaire Report
Further information: * This result is on target for this time of the year. 26,136 orders were placed from January-June 2008.					

Service: No. 3 – Information Services					
Service description: Information services to enable library customers to identify, locate and effectively use appropriate materials and services					
Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
75% of library users satisfied with the quality of library service	Nothing to report this period	October 2009		Biennially	Customer survey conducted by Australian university libraries
Further information:					

Service: No. 4 – Learning Skills

Service description: Learning skills services to facilitate the development of core skills and attributes that students need to learn within an academic environment and disciplinary context.

Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
Improvement in identified learning skills in a minimum of 3 identified units with integrated learning skills programs.	<p>Most units recorded positive student and/or academic staff feedback and some improved student performance in assessment tasks.</p> <p>The KPI Addendum Report provides details of 16 units (2 Business and Economics, 5 Engineering, 3 Information Technology, 4 Law, 2 Science) with integrated learning skills programs.</p>	January	2008	Annually	Pre and post Unit Evaluation data for selected units ('overall satisfaction' higher than 70% over a mean of 4)
70% of students are satisfied with the opportunities they have had to develop their language and learning skills to meet their needs at university (target mean of 4)	<p>In the 2008 MSEQ 73.9% of students agreed that Library services support their learning effectively (mean 3.87). The target was 70%. Next MSEQ is due in 2010.</p> <p>Next MEQ is due in 2009.</p>	January	2008	Annually	<p>Monash Experience Questionnaire (MEQ), Monash Support Experience Questionnaire (MSEQ) on alternate years. Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) Generic Skills scale. MEQ Generic Skills scale. 2.1.</p>

90% of Higher Degree Research students are broadly satisfied with the opportunities they have had to improve their reading and writing for research through the Learning Skills Unit (target mean of 4)	The learning skills additional question for the 2008 HDR exit survey was not implemented, but will be for 2009. The next PostGraduate Research Supervision Survey is due in 2009.	January		Annually	HDR exit survey and biennial PostGraduate Research Supervision Surveys
Further information: See KPI Addendum Report					

Service: No. 5 – Physical Environment					
Service description: Study and work environment					
Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
75% of library users satisfied with library facilities and equipment	Nothing to report this period	October 2009		Biennially	Customer survey conducted by Australian university libraries
70:1 ratio of on-campus students (EFTSU) to workstations	Current ratio of students to workstations is 1:33.45.	October 2008		Annually	On-campus students (EFTSU) per workstation
Further information:					

Service: No. 6 – Flexible Library Services

Service description: Delivery of library resources to off campus students (a) students enrolled in an off campus learning course; (b) students enrolled in a course that does not require on campus attendance; (c) students undertaking a combination of on campus and off campus courses

Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
90% of requests resolved or forwarded for action within 48 hours of receipt Monday to Friday	Nothing to report this period.	January and July	July - Dec 2008	Biannually	% of requests resolved or forwarded for action within 48 hours of receipt Monday to Friday

Further information:

Service: No. 7 – Document Delivery Services

Service description: Delivery of requested items not available in home campus Monash Library

Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
95% of requests dispatched to first potential supplier within one working day of receipt	95% of requests dispatched to first potential supplier within one working day of receipt	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of requests dispatched to first potential supplier within one working day of receipt
95% of requested material or notice of its availability forwarded to postgraduate students and staff within one working day of receipt	95% of requested material or notice of its availability forwarded to postgraduate students and staff within one working day of receipt	April, July, October and January	Oct - Dec 2008	Quarterly	% of requested material or notice of its availability forwarded to postgraduate students and staff within one working day of receipt

Further information:

Service: No. 8 – Partnerships**Service description:** Services to hospital libraries; services to overseas campuses and centres; co-operative services and partnerships

Key Performance Indicator	Result	Date reported/ to be reported	Period covered by statistics	Frequency to be reported	Measured by
Service level agreements negotiated with partner institutions	Nothing to report this period.	April and October		Biannually	Agreements completed and services provided as defined in service level agreements

Further information:

Learning skills KPI report for 2008

KPI 1 Addendum Report: Units with Integrated Learning Skills Programs

Business and Economics

AFC 3131 - Performance Measurement and Control (Clayton campus, Semester 1, 2008)

1. Rationale and background

Third year management accounting students doing the unit AFC3131 (Performance Measurement and Control) are required to work in groups to complete a major and relatively complex assignment with a 20% assessment weighting and later present it to their peers in tutorials. The group presentation of the written assignment is weighted at 10%.

The experience in previous years was that, despite the fact that most of the students are in their final year at university, they did not understand what effective group work meant, particularly in terms of organising the work, allocating tasks, communicating with each other, resolving conflict, and ultimately operating effectively as team. It was also observed that there was a significant variance in terms of the quality of group presentations delivered by the different student groups.

The above observations made it obvious that many students were lacking on group work and presentation skills, which employers and businesses value highly. This suggested that something could and should be done with regard to the issue.

Following discussions at the Bachelor of Commerce retreat held in Oct 2007, Dr Aldonio Ferreira, unit co-ordinator of AFC3131 and Veronica Png, Learning Skills Adviser supporting the Faculty of Business and Economics at Matheson Library proceeded to implement a partnership initiative that integrated group work and presentation skills within the syllabus of AFC3131, aimed at ensuring the developing of students' skills in these two areas.

2. Learning Skills Partnership with Subject Unit

A four-fold initiative was devised that comprised the following components:

- a) A series of five 1-hour seminars on group work skills (class of 40-60 students);
- b) The compulsory requirement that students submit a group work plan together with their completed written assignment as evidence that they have exercised the group work skills highlighted in the seminar series;
- c) A scheduled 10-15 minute group consultation with the Learning Skills Adviser to monitor progress of the group work plan and identify any issues regarding group dynamics;
- d) A second series of five 1-hour seminars on group presentation skills.

The content and focus of the two seminar series were agreed between Dr Ferreira and Veronica. The responsibility for the delivery of the seminars and conducting the consultations was undertaken by Veronica.

Attendance at these three initiatives, along with the submission of the group work plan, was compulsory and included in the unit outline given to all students. The details of the partnership initiative were clearly explained to the students doing the unit at the start of the semester in lectures and followed up with reminders through Blackboard. The contacts of the Learning Skill Advisers were also included in the Unit

Outline's cover page to further reinforce the partnership and signal to students the importance of the initiative.

3. The outcomes

3.1. Group Work Skills Seminars

A total of 209 students attended the Working in Groups seminar series. This represented more than 80% of the student cohort. Feedback was received from 165 students, who largely indicated that the seminar had been useful (47%). It is also interesting to note that only 10 students in the group (6%) thought the seminar was not useful at all. More details are shown in Figure 1 below.

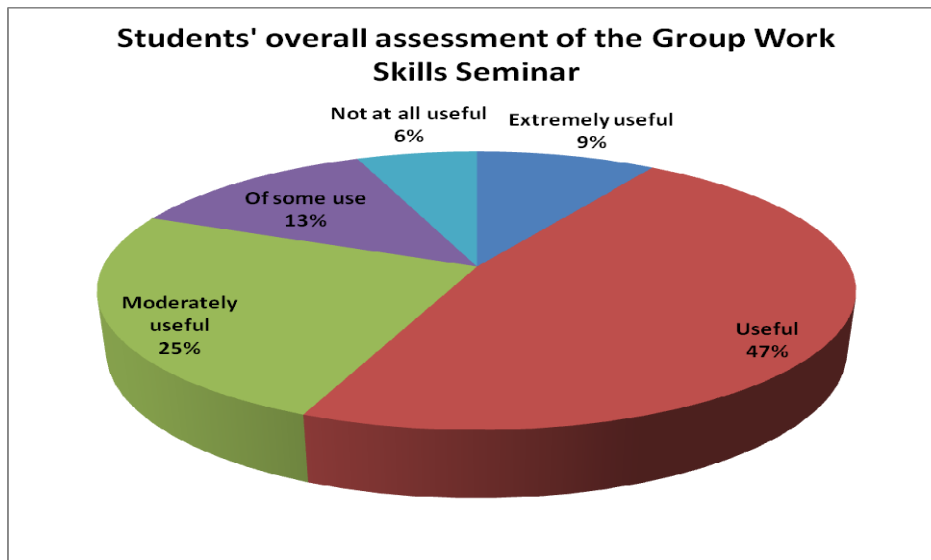


Figure 1 : Pie chart indicating students' overall assessment of the Group Work Skills seminar

Students attending the seminar were also provided with the opportunity to comment on how the seminar would benefit them in practical terms in the completion of their assignment. The most highly cited comments received are listed in Table 1 below:

Comments	No of citations
Co-operation and time management, manage meeting times & task management	32
Techniques for dealing with conflicts; ideas on how to approach situations where disagreements arise	20
Common goals and expectations for the group; to be more organised and respect group mates; contribute as an effective group member, sharing individual skills among group	18
Group meeting agenda and meeting schedule handouts– will use them in my group workings; meeting and a group work agenda tables are very useful; use the handouts in real situations and improve group work activity	18
Working with others and co-operating with others, being patient with group members; team management; planning and communication techniques to complete group assignments	14
How to make a group work efficiently and effectively by delegating tasks to group members; need to designate leader, task manager, etc.; submit work on time and with good quality; accountability for everyone to complete assignment on time or even earlier	12

Table 1: Student feedback on practical benefits of Group Work Skills seminar series

3.2. Assignment Work Plans

Despite many groups struggling to understand the rationale and process of documenting the group's activities in a work plan, all groups submitted their work plans as required. However, many groups submitted very simplistic work plans that clearly lacked substance or showed thoughtful reflection about the tasks at hand. In our view, this was evidence of students' lack of experience in planning the completion of their assignments, suggesting that they completed these tasks on ad hoc basis rather than in a structured planned manner. Nevertheless, a number of well designed work plans were also submitted.

3.3. Group Consultations with Learning Skills Advisers

A total of 47 groups (out of 56) attended the scheduled consultations from 31st March - 9th April 08. There was some confusion among students as to what the purpose of these meetings was and they found it difficult to find a time when all group members could attend the meeting. A number of students had the expectation that the meeting would serve to clarify technical aspects of the assignment, which was clearly not possible nor intended. For the majority of the cases, the group consultations with the Learning Skills Adviser served to act as a check on the progress of the group plans, to reinforce the appropriate group work behaviours, and to identify problems with regard to the operation of groups.

3.4. Group Presentation Skills Seminar

As for the Group Presentation Skills seminar series, a total of 182 students attended the seminar (70% of the entire cohort). Feedback was received from 55 students, with 85% indicating the seminar had been useful or extremely useful and only one student indicating it was not useful. (Note that feedback was not sought in all sessions due to lack of time, but we have no reason to believe the opinions of students in other groups were any different from those that provided feedback.) Figure 2 below provides information about the distribution of the students' responses:

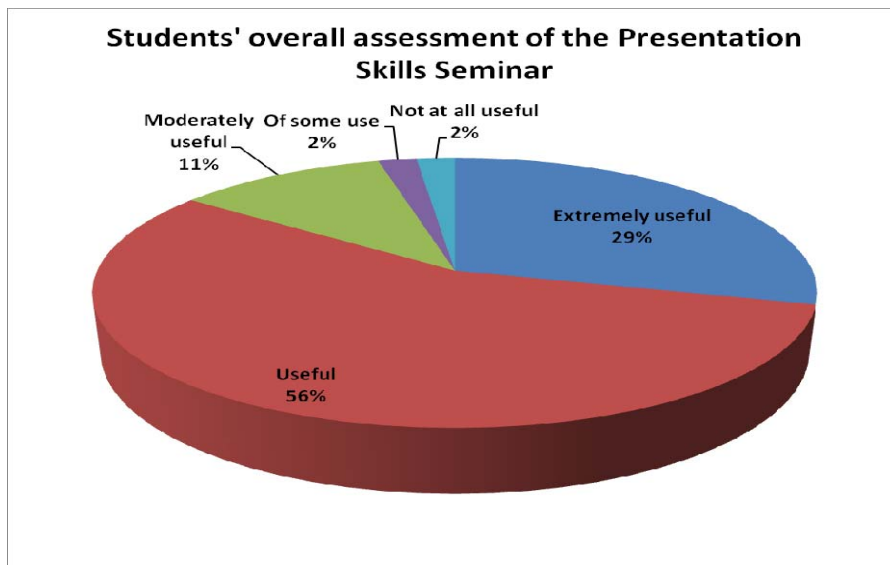


Figure 2: Pie chart indicating students' overall assessment of the Group Presentation Skills seminar

Students also indicated that the video clip, prepared for the purpose of the seminar, which contrasted a poorly rehearsed group presentation with a better rehearsed one was very useful in highlighting to them what they are being assessed for when they delivered their group presentations.

When asked about what they could apply from the seminar to their group presentations, the following comments were received as outlined in Table 2 below:

Comments	No of citations
Need to get together to practice the whole presentation at least three times to have good preparation for the group presentation; rehearsal and support of other group members	21
Preparation, delivery, body language (e.g. hand gestures, facial expression), eye contact with the audience	12
Good sense of audience; how to engage audience in the presentation more	9
Keep diagrams & overheads clear and simple	7
Need to know and be familiar with material presented not merely memorizing and more organised	6
Allocation of tasks; co-ordination and co-operation among presenters; organisation of OHPs	6
Be prepared and speak confidently	5
Engage audience by asking preliminary questions to draw audience attention	1
How to get rid of nervousness; how to organise a presentation	1
Learn what not to do in a presentation	1
The second video was well prepared and delivered. I would like my group to do the same.	1

Table 2: Student feedback on practical benefits of Group Presentation Skills seminar series

3.5. Outcomes from the point of view of the Lecturer and the Learning Skill Adviser

Based on the analysis and reflection on the experience, the following key outcomes of the initiative were identified:

- The assignments submitted by students were of a higher standard compared to previous years;
- There was a smaller proportion of disputes among group members requiring the intervention of the lecturer: 1.8% in 2008 compared to 7.3% in 2007;
- Group presentations were undoubtedly of a much higher standard, with better co-ordination among group members in delivering their presentations and much greater consistency between groups;
- Students' feedback indicated that they had gained important group work and presentation skills such as:
 - o time management skills in the scheduling of group meetings and setting deadlines for individual tasks;
 - o using the templates provided to document a group work plan indicating the distribution and coordination of work among group members and corresponding deadlines;
 - o communication skills in coordinating work among team mates and responding to group conflict and negotiating disagreements;
 - o setting common expectations among group members; having respect for one another;
 - o repeated practice is a must in order to deliver a good presentation;
 - o a good sense of audience awareness is needed when making a presentation;
 - o awareness of body language (voice, gestures, facial expression);
 - o clear and simple visuals to support the presentation;

The experience proved to be a success, though with the benefit of hindsight improvements could be introduced, particularly with regard to group meetings and timing for submission of work plans.

AFC 3230 – Financial Analysis and Valuation (Semester 2, 2008)

1. Rationale and background

Third year financial accounting students doing the unit AFC3230 (Financial Analysis and Valuation) are required to work in groups and submit two major reports analyzing the financial performance and valuation techniques of a listed Australian company. Each report is given a 20% assessment weighting.

To improve the writing quality and structure of the group reports submitted for assignments 1 & 2, a partnership initiative was undertaken by the unit co ordinator, Associate Professor Paul Mather and Veronica Png, Learning Skills Adviser supporting the Faculty of Business and Economics at Matheson Library. Students were required to sign up for the Business Report Writing Skills seminar scheduled from 4 – 8 August 2008. This requirement was stated in the Assessment summary section of the unit outline. The contact details of the Learning Skills Adviser were also included in the Unit Outline's cover page to further reinforce the partnership and signal to students the importance of the seminar series.

2. Learning Skills Partnership with Subject Unit

The partnership initiative comprised a series of four 1-hour seminars on Business Report Writing Skills with classes of 40-70 students.

The content and focus of the seminar series, agreed between A/P Mather and Veronica, focused on three major components, namely:

- * Purpose and structure of Business Reports, and
- * Language and Style of Written Reports
- * Sample report 'Reducing Electrovision's Travel and Entertainment Costs' taken from Bovee, C.L. & Thill, J.V. (2008). Business Communication Today (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education. pp.458 – 471 was used as a demonstration and teaching guide on the format conventions and writing style of business reports.

The responsibility for the delivery of the seminars was undertaken by Veronica.

3. The outcomes

3.1. Business Report Writing Skills Seminars

A total of 258 students attended the Business Report Writing Skills seminar series. This represented more than 80% of the student cohort. A total of 143 students responded to the feedback sheets handed out at three of the four seminar sessions in the series. The key points obtained from the feedback exercise are summarised in Figure 1 below. As illustrated in Figure 1, most students found the seminars useful in helping them format and write their reports. Only 4 % of the cohort did not find the seminar useful for their business report writing needs.

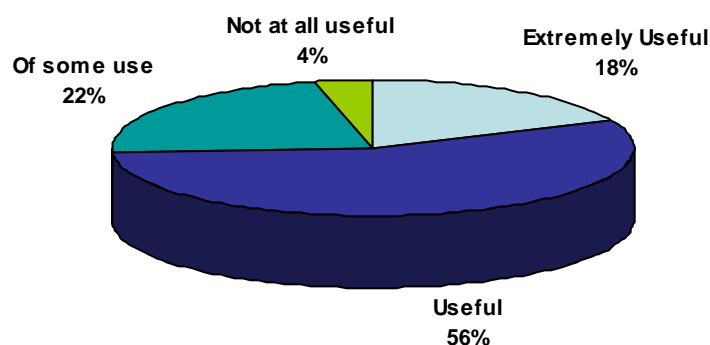


Figure 1: Pie chart showing students' overall assessment of the Business Report Writing Skills seminar

Students attending the seminar were also asked what they could apply from the seminars teaching in writing the two report assignments. The most highly cited comments received are listed in the following table:

Practical applications for writing the Business Report
▪ Structure of report
▪ Parts of a report and their functions
▪ Logical presentation of ideas
▪ Clear, concise writing
▪ Sentence and paragraph structure
▪ Clear linking of paragraphs (transition markers)
▪ Integrate and explain visuals in the main report
▪ Use of appendices

Table 1: feedback on applications of the Business Report Writing Skills seminar series

Student practical

3.2. Outcomes from the point of view of the Lecturer and the Learning Skill Adviser

Based on the analysis and reflection on the experience, the following key outcomes of the partnership were identified:

- The reports submitted by students were of a higher standard compared to previous years;
- The reports were better structured into their relevant parts;
- The language and writing style used in the reports submitted was more appropriate for a professional business report ;
- Students' feedback indicated that they had gained important formatting and writing skills such as:
 - o the different parts of a report and their respective functions;
 - o how to integrate and explain visuals in the main body of the business report;
 - o the need for logical presentation of points;
 - o the use of transition markers to link one point to another;
 - o the need to write clearly and concisely at both the sentence and paragraph levels.

The learning skills seminars proved to be a success providing students with some useful writing skills to produce a professional business report detailing their analyses of the financial strategies and performance of a listed Australian company (JB Hi Fi Ltd).

Engineering

ENG1061

Workshop on writing the Project Brief.

This is an elective L1 unit in which students are required to write several different types of project report. The most complex is the first, the Project Brief. Students were given a one-hour workshop on writing the report. No feedback was received from lecturers.

CIV2263

Workshop on writing Assignment 1, an investigative report, followed by feedback to full class based on review of assignments submitted.

One thing that demonstrates the value of the programme is the continual improvement of unit evaluation results of CIV2263. The overall unit evaluation result (Q8) for CIV2263 is:

2006: 3.20

2007: 3.64

2008: 3.94

Kind regards.

Guangzhi SUN (PhD)
Lecturer in Water Engineering
Department of Civil Engineering
Monash University, Building 60

Summary of Means Unit Evaluation Report 2008 Water Systems - CIV2263 - Time Series Report

Question	2007 Semester 1	2008 Semester 1
	Mean	Mean
1. The learning objectives of this unit were made clear to me	3.84	4.07
2. The unit enabled me to achieve the learning objectives	3.72	3.96
3. I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating	3.53	4.15
4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful	3.71	3.95
5. I received constructive feedback on my work	2.96	3.43
6. The feedback I received was provided in time to help me improve	2.99	3.31
7. The overall amount of work required of me for this unit was appropriate	3.80	3.85
8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit	3.64	3.94

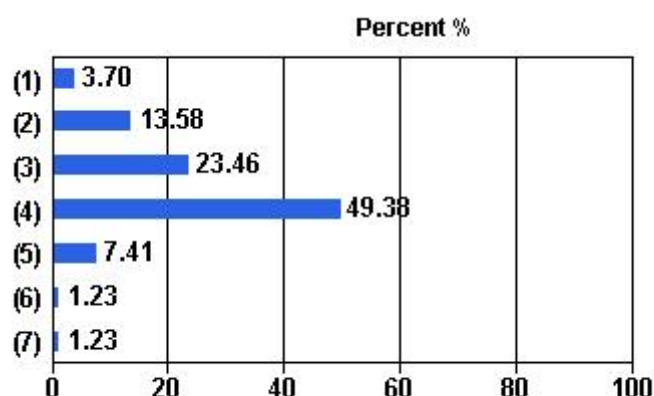
CIV2282

Workshop on writing a Symposium Paper, followed by feedback to full class based on review of assignments submitted. Also, a session on presenting outcomes of project in an oral presentation.

Transport And Traffic Engineering - CIV2282 - Unit Evaluation Report 2009

2. The unit enabled me to achieve the learning objectives

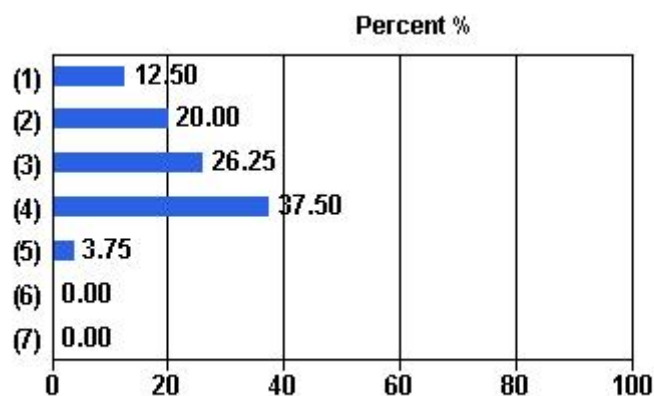
Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	3	3.70%
(2) Disagree	11	13.58%
(3) Neutral	19	23.46%
(4) Agree	40	49.38%
(5) Strongly agree	6	7.41%
(6) Not applicable	1	1.23%
(7) Don't know	1	1.23%
Total (N)	81	100.00%



Mean: 3.44 Std dev: 0.95

8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit

Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	10	12.50%
(2) Disagree	16	20.00%
(3) Neutral	21	26.25%
(4) Agree	30	37.50%
(5) Strongly agree	3	3.75%
(6) Not applicable	0	0.00%
(7) Don't know	0	0.00%
Total (N)	80	100.00%



Mean: 3.00 Std dev: 1.11

MTE2543

A general lecture on writing technical reports, followed by a workshop on writing up a long case report incorporating lab work.

“overall response was that they liked the prac but found the report requirements too much”
Wayne Cook, unit lecturer

Summary of Means

Question	2007 Annual	2008 Annual
	Mean	Mean
1. The learning objectives of this unit were made clear to me	2.36	3.40
2. The unit enabled me to achieve the learning objectives	2.57	3.40
3. I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating	2.43	3.20
4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful	2.50	3.80
5. I received constructive feedback on my work	2.21	3.33

6. The feedback I received was provided in time to help me improve	2.14	3.33
7. The overall amount of work required of me for this unit was appropriate	2.50	3.53
8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit	1.93	3.47

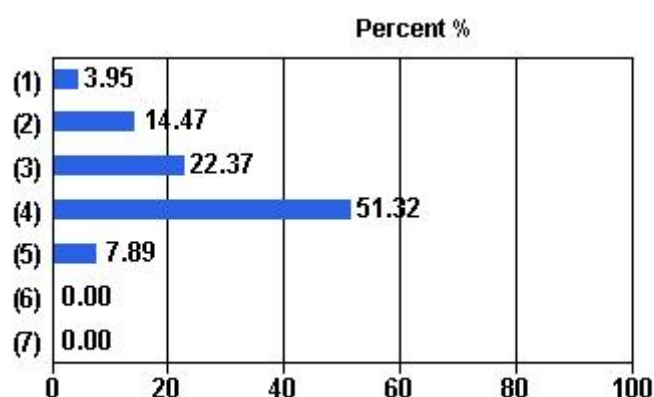
MEC3458

An introductory lecture on writing lab reports in Mechanical Engineering, full class feedback on long project reports, and a session on preparing oral presentations.

The lecturer's anecdotal feedback was that the quality of the lab reports improved during the semester.

8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit

Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	3	3.95%
(2) Disagree	11	14.47%
(3) Neutral	17	22.37%
(4) Agree	39	51.32%
(5) Strongly agree	6	7.89%
(6) Not applicable	0	0.00%
(7) Don't know	0	0.00%
Total (N)	76	100.00%



Mean: 3.45 Std dev: 0.97

Unit Evaluation Report Data (Comments Report):

MEC3458 - Experimental project (FACULTY OF ENGINEERING)

2008 Semester 2 - Unit Level Report by Campus (Comments Report)

Location Name: CLAYTON

Q18.What were the best aspects of the unit?

Comments included the following of relevance to learning skills:

develop writing skills for engineers, presentation skills, working under pressure

Lectures on report and presentation skills were useful.

Learning the proper way to write and present a report, conducting more advanced experiments which are relevant to our field of study

More confident in writing reports and feel better prepared for FYP.

learning how to write a proper report

good method to polish formal report writing and presentation skills

The nature of the unit itself allows students to prepare for their final year projects, improving on important areas such as report writing.

it's great to have a practical class

It taught students to understand the importance of report writing and problem solving.

Q19.What aspects of this unit are most in need of improvement?

Comments covered the following areas:

- lack of time between feedback and final report submission, no time to work on improvements, and insufficient feedback

- too much work and report writing
- inconsistent marking/assessment between lecturers

Final Year Project (all departments)

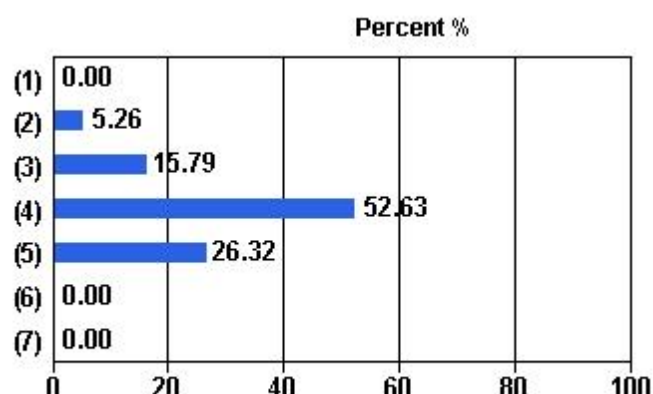
A series of workshops repeated each semester on the assessment tasks for the FYP: writing the project proposal, progress report, literature review, poster, final report, and research paper; preparing and delivering the interim and final oral presentations; editing and referencing.

There are too many lecturers and supervisors involved to request feedback. However, workshop evaluation forms indicate that the sessions are useful and informal feedback from students praise the self-study resources provided.

CHE4180 Unit Evaluation Report 2008

4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful

Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
(2) Disagree	1	5.26%
(3) Neutral	3	15.79%
(4) Agree	10	52.63%
(5) Strongly agree	5	26.32%
(6) Not applicable	0	0.00%
(7) Don't know	0	0.00%
Total (N)	19	100.00%



Mean: 4.00 Std dev: 0.79

Summary of Means Unit Evaluation Report 2008 ECE4095

Question	2007 Semester 1	2008 Semester 1
	Mean	Mean
1. The learning objectives of this unit were made clear to me	3.38	4.29
2. The unit enabled me to achieve the learning objectives	3.25	4.43
3. I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating	4.00	4.43
4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful	2.50	4.29
5. I received constructive feedback on my work	3.25	4.33
6. The feedback I received was provided in time to help me improve	3.00	4.17
7. The overall amount of work required of me for this unit was appropriate	2.75	4.33
8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit	2.75	4.14

Project I - MEC4401 - Unit Evaluation Report 2008

Summary of Means

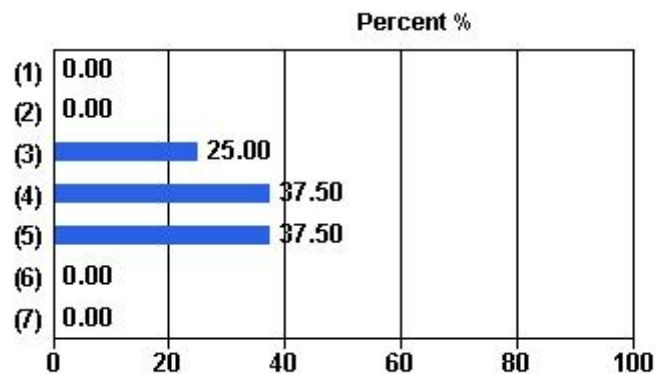
Question	2007 Semester 1	2008 Semester 1
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	Mean	Mean
1. The learning objectives of this unit were made clear to me	4.16	3.82
2. The unit enabled me to achieve the learning objectives	3.97	3.86
3. I found the unit to be intellectually stimulating	4.23	4.14
4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful	3.65	3.68
5. I received constructive feedback on my work	3.59	3.78
6. The feedback I received was provided in time to help me improve	3.63	3.81
7. The overall amount of work required of me for this unit was appropriate	3.91	3.92

Project B - CIV4211 - Unit Evaluation Report 2008

4. I found the resources provided for the unit to be helpful

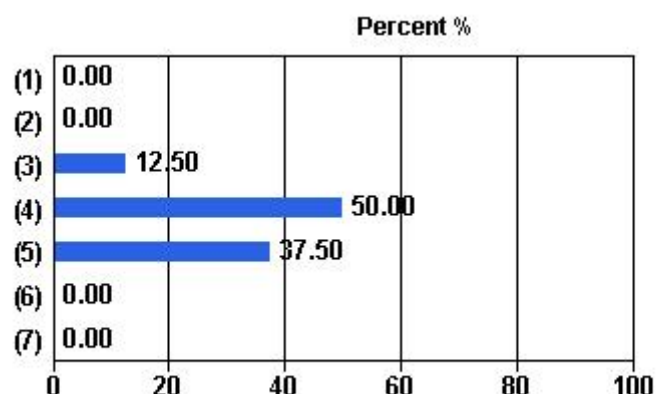
Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
(2) Disagree	0	0.00%
(3) Neutral	2	25.00%
(4) Agree	3	37.50%
(5) Strongly agree	3	37.50%
(6) Not applicable	0	0.00%
(7) Don't know	0	0.00%
Total (N)	8	100.00%



Mean: 4.13 Std dev: 0.78

8. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this unit

Response Scale	Responses	Percent
(1) Strongly disagree	0	0.00%
(2) Disagree	0	0.00%
(3) Neutral	1	12.50%
(4) Agree	4	50.00%
(5) Strongly agree	3	37.50%
(6) Not applicable	0	0.00%
(7) Don't know	0	0.00%
Total (N)	8	100.00%



Mean: 4.25 Std dev: 0.66

Positive comments were also received from students regarding individual consultations related to the above units.

Information Technology (Clayton)

SUMMARY

In FIT 4005: Research Methods unit in which Learning Skills programs were embedded, there was a significant improvement in students' overall satisfaction before and after the involvement of Learning Skills. However, the degree of contribution the Learning Skills programs made to the students' overall satisfaction rate is still inconclusive due to other variables.

INTRODUCTION

Learning Skills Advisers at the Hargrave-Andrew Library offered unit-specific Learning Skills programs in three of the FIT units: namely FIT 1006 Business Information Analysis, FIT 5157 Services Sciences and FIT 4005 Research Methods.

FIT 1006: BUSINESS INFORMATION ANALYSIS

- One 1-hour voluntary workshop was held for this unit during the 1st semester, covering how to prepare and write a data analysis report.
- The workshop was specifically designed for one of the prescribed assignments of the unit.
- Attendance was high and anecdotal feedback from the academic and students indicated positive learning outcomes.
- Although the unit's overall satisfaction rate increased slightly from the year before (from 3.66 to 3.75), there is no substantial evidence that confirms a correlation between the unit's improved performance and the Learning Skills involvement, particularly given:
 - the limited involvement of the Learning Skills
 - that different teaching staff taught the unit in 2007 and 2008

FIT 5157: SERVICES SCIENCES

- A short talk on how to write a literature review was delivered during the lecture time, and the talk was filmed and made available on MUSO.
- Attendance was high, and very positive anecdotal feedback was received from the academic.
- As this unit was offered for the first time in 2008, there was no formal measure of comparative study. With the limited involvement of the Learning Skills, there is no substantial evidence that confirms a correlation between the unit's performance and the Learning Skills involvement.

FIT 4005: RESEARCH METHODS

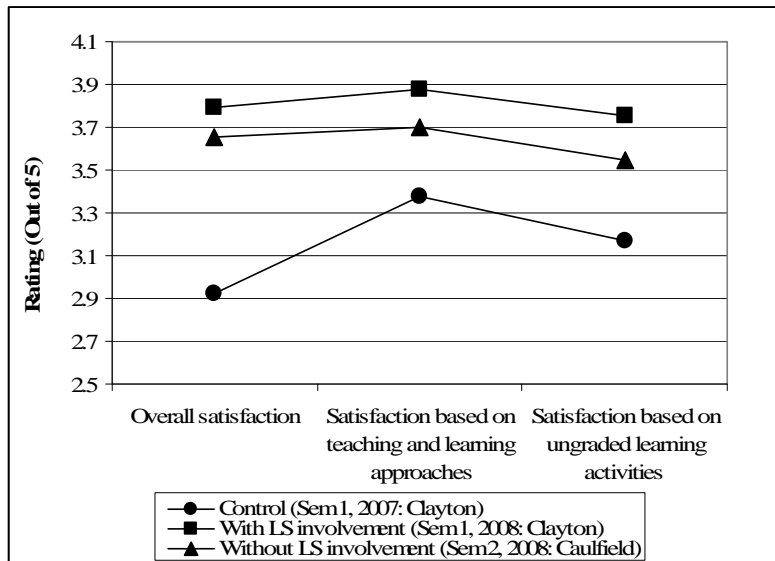
This unit is a core unit for all the coursework master and honours courses in the FIT. In 2008, Prof. David Green took over the unit as leader, and he has made significant changes in the unit's content. In the first semester in 2008 (offered in Clayton), Learning Skills Advisers and the Subject Librarian delivered a total of three workshops during the unit's contact hours. Details of the workshops are as follows.

- Two 1-hour workshops (LS) and one 1-hour workshop (IL) were held for this unit during the 1st semester.
- The workshops covered information research skills, oral presentation skills, and report writing skills, all of which were directly associated with the major assessments of the unit.
- The workshops were well attended and received very positive feedback from the academic.

In the second semester, however, the unit (offered in Caulfield) did not have any Library involvement. As a result, the results from unit evaluation reports from three semesters from 2007 to 2008 can be seen to represent the following analytical categories.

- 1) Without Prof. Green's content (Control)
- 2) With Prof. Green's contents and Learning Skills' relatively substantial involvement
- 3) With Prof. Green's contents but without Learning Skills' involvement.

The figure below shows the comparison of the unit evaluation results for the unit over the three semesters from 2007 to 2008. The three questions were extracted for they hold the most relevance to the effectiveness of the Learning Skills programs offered.



As the figure above shows, the results from Semester 1 in 2008 have the highest overall satisfaction rate, as well as the highest satisfaction rates both for teaching and learning approaches, as well as ungraded learning activities.

From these results, it is possible to conclude that the Learning Skills programs might have contributed to the improvement of the unit's overall satisfaction rate in the Semester 1, 2008. Also in comparison to the results of Semester 2 in 2008, it is also possible to see Learning Skills' positive learning outcomes recognised by the students.

While the above results hold positive implications for Learning Skills, the following issues should be noted.

- 1) The unit evaluation reports used in this reports only had below 50% response rates, with an average of 44 students per semester. It means that there is a significant chance that the figures used in this report do not accurately reflect overall student populations.
- 2) As the questionnaire does not specify the effectiveness of the Learning Skills programs, the results does not actually prove the correlation between the unit's evaluation and the involvement of the Learning Skills.
- 3) Differences in student demography in each semester also affect the unit's overall satisfaction rate. For example, it is widely recognised amongst FIT staff that the backgrounds of Caulfield student cohort and Clayton student cohort are significantly different, where Caulfield students are generally social science trained, while Clayton students come with scientific or technical backgrounds. These differences might also have affected the students' perceptions of the unit.

APPENDIX: DATA USED IN THIS REPORT*

FIT 1006: BUSINESS INFORMATION ANALYSIS

Semester/Year	No. of students enrolled	No. of students responded	Response rate	Rating for teaching and learning approaches	Rating for ungraded learning activities**	Overall satisfaction
S1, 2008	127	48	37.80	3.69	3.94	3.75

S1, 2007	72	29	40.28	3.69	3.83	3.66
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FIT 5157: SERVICES SCIENCES

Semester/Year	No. of students enrolled	No. of students responded	Response rate	Rating for teaching and learning approaches	Rating for ungraded learning activities*	Overall satisfaction
S2, 2008	83	32	38.55	3.77	3.97	3.81

FIT 4005: RESEARCH METHODS

Semester/Year	No. of students enrolled	No. of students responded	Response rate	Rating for teaching and learning approaches	Rating for ungraded learning activities*	Overall satisfaction
S2, 2008	38	20	52.63	3.88	3.75	3.65
S1, 2008	64	24	37.50	3.88	3.75	3.79
S1, 2007	29	13	44.83	3.17	3.38	2.92

* All the data here are available at:

https://emuapps.monash.edu.au/unitevaluations/wr/uewr_rp1_faculty_yearseme.jsp?

** Learning Skills programs fall in this category.

Law

LAW1104 - Research and Writing

Synopsis

There are two components taught concurrently. The Writing component will teach basic skills in legal writing, with an emphasis on the types of writing required for assessment in other law units, including research essays and answers to legal problems. The Research component will provide students with the essential skills to undertake research tasks required for their law studies. Students will learn to analyse a research problem into searchable components; locate and update Australian and foreign primary and secondary materials by using online and hard copy library research tools; use and cite references correctly, and evaluate the relevance and authoritative status of legal materials.

Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, students will be able to:

- * design and implement an efficient research strategy to answer a legal research question, using the most appropriate online and paper-based research tools;
- * critically evaluate the relevance, quality, authority and currency of the materials that they find;
- * correctly use, attribute and cite the work of others and avoid plagiarism
- * identify the hallmarks of good legal writing, and use them to edit and improve their own writing; and
- * apply and develop their higher order thinking skills of evaluation, problem-solving, synthesis, and analysis in writing on legal topics.

Assessment

1. Answer to legal problem (1000 words) - 20 %
2. Research Report, including preliminary annotated bibliography and proposed essay structure (1600 words) - 25%
3. Research Essay (approx 2,800 words) - 40%
4. Final Bibliography - 5%
5. Class attendance, preparation, participation and completion of online research quiz - 10%

Learning Skills involvement

Class 1: Critical reading and developing an argument.

Teach all first-year undergraduates (585 students), 13 streams, one 90-minute session per stream, over weeks 3 and 4 of semester. Answer student queries, see those students referred on from lecturers.

Class 2: Avoiding plagiarism, and using Turnitin

Teach all 13 streams, one 60-session per stream on avoiding plagiarism, then 30 minutes on using Turnitin. These were run over weeks 5 and 6 of semester. Be available to support the lecturers and the students at the end of semester, when students are submitting.

Information Research Skills involvement

Law librarians taught the research component of the unit in lecture theatres to 13 streams (585 students) over 6 weeks from weeks 2 to 7, with a total of 78 ninety minute classes.

- Participation marks (5% for research component) were submitted to stream lecturers

Evaluation

Law Faculty Survey Monkey survey sent to all LAW1104 students. Responses as follows:

This Unit improved my legal writing skills - 66.3% agreed or strongly agreed

This Unit improved my legal research skills. - 78.5% agreed or strongly agreed

A research skills pre and post test was given. All 9 questions in the test showed a significant increase in the percentage of correct responses in the post test.

LAW7212 - Australian Legal System

Synopsis

Australian legal and political institutions, including the institutions of government and the constitutional framework. Sources of law in Australia, including the historical origins of our legal system, common law and equity, legislation and delegated legislation and the contemporary relationship between the courts and Parliament. Legal writing including an introduction to legal terminology, an overview of the different types of writing required in the Law School and a discussion of the criteria for assessment. Case law and statutory interpretation.

Objectives

On completion of the course students should have: (a) developed an understanding of the legal and political institutions in Australia; (b) developed an understanding of the sources of law in Australia and the interrelationship between case law and statute law; (c) acquired an ability to read and analyse cases and an understanding of the process by which case law evolves; (d) become familiar with significant principles of statutory interpretation and acquired an ability to interpret law and an understanding of the role of judges in interpreting legislation; (e) learned how to search for and locate cases, statutory law and secondary materials in the Law Library; (f) acquired an understanding of the requirements of good legal writing, including basic matters of style; g) met the requirements of the Professional Standards Board for Patent and Trade Marks Attorneys in relation to Legal Process and Overview of Intellectual Property (topic group A, part 1).

Assessment

Research paper (3750 words): 50% and either Examination (2 hours): 50% or
Take Home Examination (3750 words): 50% (to be determined by the unit lecturer)

Law librarians and learning skills adviser conducted a full day Saturday class for LLM students enrolled in the unit, Australian Legal System in Semesters 1 and 2.

Evaluation

Positive feedback provided from lecturer.

Good research assignment results.

Unit evaluation semester 1, 2008 - Overall satisfaction mean: 4.14

LAW7285 Legal Research and Communication

Synopsis

This unit is designed to assist lawyers from non-common law and non-english speaking backgrounds to develop their basic legal research and communications skills within the Australian legal environment. By means of seminars, practical workshops and individual instruction sessions, students will be guided in the development of basic legal research skills, critical reading skills and core legal communication skills, including the skills of oral presentation and legal writing.

Objectives

On completing this unit a student should have:

1. a familiarity with the basic sources of law in common law jurisdictions and the methods used to locate those sources;
2. the ability to independently research legal topics for the purposes of selecting, developing and writing a legal exposition and/or critique;
3. the ability to interpret and use legal references, including those found in reading guides, footnotes, bibliographies etc;
4. improved clear and critical thinking skills;
5. improved law related english-language skills pertaining to listening, reading, discussion, note-taking and the delivery of structured oral presentations;
6. an ability to observe the main conventions of english expression, including those most relevant to regular legal discourse;

7. improved legal writing skills, particularly in the areas of structure, expression and style;
8. a familiarity with the use of word-processors as an aid in the development of legal writing skills.

Assessment

Two one-hour class tests (1,100 words each): 15% each Assignment(s) (not more than 4,500 words): 60%

Short presentation: 10%

Learning skills involvement

Support provided for students doing LAW7285, initially for this unit, but widened to provide consultations on appropriate academic structure and expression for all units being studied by these students. This assistance goes beyond the initial semester.

For semester 1 there were 17 students, with 37 scripts reviewed, in addition to basic contribution to LAW7285 of analysis of initial errors followed by consultations, then reading, commenting on and consulting about summaries, followed by the same on one major assignment per student. Some students brought scripts for other units being studied, to have on-going assistance with structure and language issues. Number of hours: 116 (from end of February)

For semester 2 there were 13 students, with 39 consultations. On the basis of the above calculations, the hours totalled 114.5, up to 24 October 2008.

Total hours for LAW7285 only: 230.5 (end February to end October 2008)

Information research skills involvement

Law librarian taught 5 two hour classes in each of semesters 1 and 2, and provided consultations, feedback and marking for research assignments.

Evaluation

Unit evaluations semester 1, 2008 - Overall satisfaction - mean: 4.13

LAW7079 Legal Research and Problem Solving

Synopsis

1. A series of classes in legal problem-solving techniques. A guide to the theory of legal argumentation and how those skills can be applied for maximum benefit in dealing with legal problems.

2. develop students' legal research skills with an emphasis on teaching students how these skills can be applied to produce efficient and accurate legal writing. Students are also required to present and defend a legal submission, hence enhancing their oral presentation skills and their ability to work with others. While print sources will be referred to, a greater emphasis will be placed in the unit on teaching the new and burgeoning electronic sources together with the resources of the Internet.

Objectives

On completion of this subject students will have developed:

1. an understanding of the nature of legal research;
2. an ability for undertaking independent legal research;
3. sophisticated skills in legal research techniques;
4. the ability to analyse legal problems, to apply relevant law and to argue a case (in a written and oral form) to a level appropriate for qualified legal practitioners;
5. an ability to work in groups.

Assessment

Individual Research Test: 20%. This task requires students to research a legal problem and prepare an answer within a class. Draft professional letter, topic to be set by the lecturer. This task requires the student to demonstrate their writing skills in a practical professional context: (20%). Group Research Topic: 60%. This task requires students to divide into groups (of 2-4 students) and research the answer to a large problem. Students are required to research and plan the topic in groups, but prepare and submit an individual answer to the problem. This exercise will require students to: research a legal issue; prepare a submission on the topic (maximum of 2,500 words, not including notes); present their paper,

as a group, to the rest of the class (15 minutes); defend their paper against criticisms/comments made by the rest of the class (10 minutes). This exercise accounts for a total of 60% of the assessment for this unit, which consists of: 35% for the final paper (2,500 words), 25% for the presentation of the paper.

Learning skills involvement

Writing skills sessions (and one reading session) complementing the legal research currently taught. Some units required two sessions in each semester, depending on numbers and timetables. Some sessions were 90 minutes, but most were 120.

Information research skills involvement

Law librarians taught 3 two hour classes to each of 2 streams in each of Trimesters 1 and 3.

Evaluation

Positive feedback from lecturer and students.

100% pass rate for the unit in 2008.

Unit evaluation - Semester 1, 2008

Overall satisfaction - Mean: 3.67

Science

Specific feedback from Academic staff is outlined below for two first year units in Science where adjunct classes were presented by Learning Skills to support assessment tasks. In BIO1011 some 20 classes were held. In SCI2010 6 classes were held.

BIO1011

In Semester 1, 2008, considerable contribution was made by the Learning Skills Adviser, Colleen Cridland, to the process of restructuring the essay assessment task into a draft/final essay model. As a result of this assessment change a framework for continuous evaluation and improvement to assessment practice was developed. This cycle includes:

1. Development and revision of assessment criteria
2. Learning Skills adjunct workshops to support assessment
3. Markers workshops to support interpretation of criteria
4. Alignment of expectations
5. Assessment: draft and final essay
6. Feedback to students
7. Feedback from students
8. Evaluation of assessment process (BIO1011 Co-ordinator , markers, Learning Skills Adviser)
9. Adjust criteria, marker training, workshops

While the objectives of the Learning Skills workshops were to prepare students to consider the range of criteria of the assessment task, preliminary evaluation of one of four workshops was undertaken by the Unit Co-ordinator, Dr Gerry Rayner. This is a preliminary analysis of a small and random group of students. This analysis indicated that students who attended the Referencing Workshop achieved higher marks than students who did not attend the workshops. This is represented in the graph below.

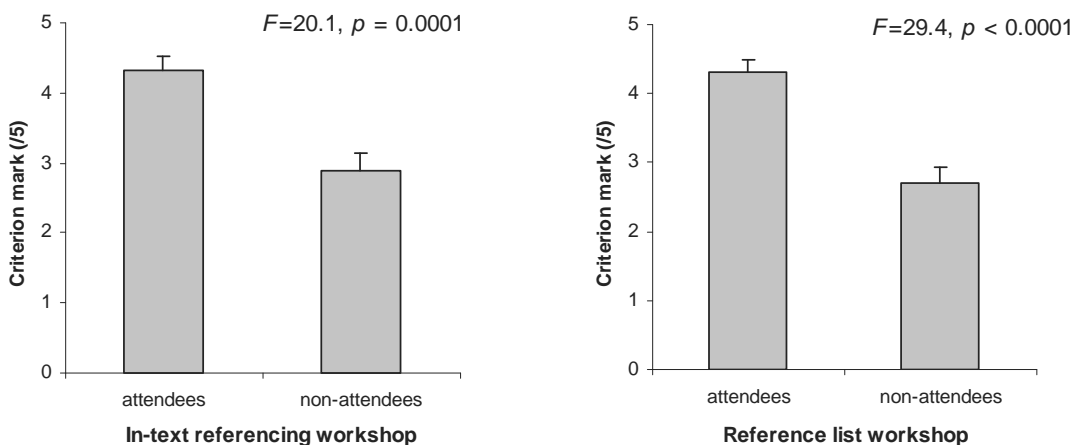


Figure 1. Criterion marks (mean \pm standard error) for (a) in-test referencing and (b) reference list structure, of 15 randomly-selected workshop attendees and non-attendees.

The analysis, though small, demonstrates the positive effect learning skills classes has on the development of academic skills. It is intended that the results of students attending workshops in Semester 1, 2009, will be investigated to determine the effect of workshop attendance on student performance.

SCI1020

Students in this unit were required to undertake a project in small groups from Week 4 to Week 9. The project included conducting an experiment, analysing the data as a group, and writing up a group report. To support students completing the assessment, workshops were presented by Learning Skills in Understanding the Group Process and Writing the Report. Thirty of one-hundred and eighty students

attended the Group Process Workshops. Eleven of those students attended a further workshop on Writing the Report.

A comparison of the performance of students who attended workshops with the whole SCI1020 cohort was carried out by Dianne Atkinson, Lecturer and Head Tutor for the Unit.

The following graph compares the performance of the SCI1020 cohort with the group of students who attended the Group Process Workshops (of whom 11 attended the extra Writing the Report workshop).

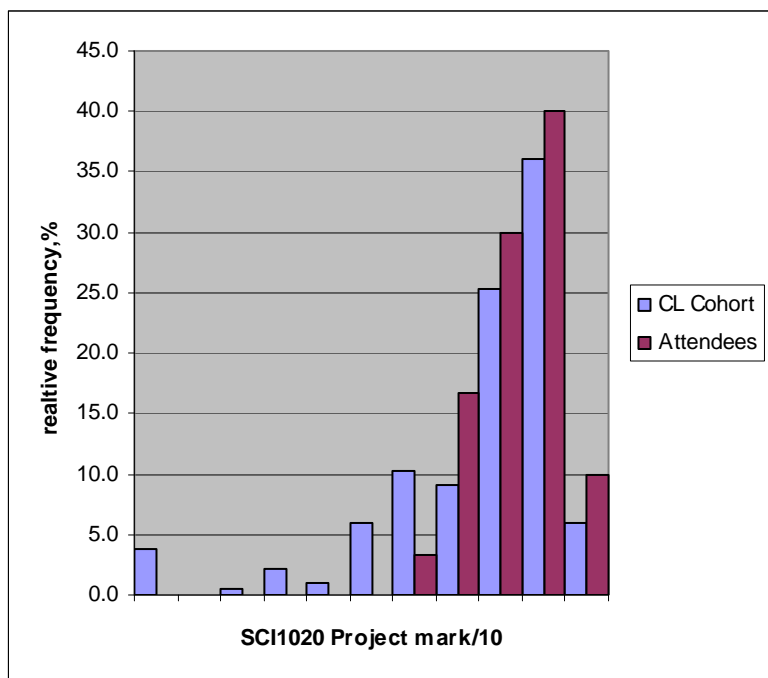


Figure 1. A comparison of whole cohort student marks to workshop attendees

While the average mark of the whole student cohort was 7.09, for students who attended the Group Process Workshop, only one student achieved a mark below that average, while 24 of 30 students achieved a better than average mark. Students attending the Group Process Workshop scored a standard deviation of the cohort mark of 1.00. For the students who attended both workshops, the Standard Deviation to the whole student cohort increased to 1.24.

A table follows setting out the relative frequency of the whole cohort marks with the relative frequency of marks for students attending the Group Process Workshop.

Table. 1. Relative frequency of cohort mark in numbers and percentages

Bin	CL		relative frequencies	
	cohort	Attendees	CL Cohort	Attendees
0	7	0	3.8	0.0
1	0	0	0.0	0.0
2	1	0	0.5	0.0
3	4	0	2.2	0.0
4	2	0	1.1	0.0
5	11	0	5.9	0.0
6	19	1	10.2	3.3
7	17	5	9.1	16.7
8	47	9	25.3	30.0
9	67	12	36.0	40.0
10	11	3	5.9	10.0
More	0	0		

