

Enhancements in Practice:

- Implementation of UC-wide Graduate Profile

Dr Andrew Bainbridge-Smith
Academic Registrar
University of Canterbury

What is the UC Graduate Profile?

Five key attributes:

- **Critically competent in a core academic discipline of their degree**
Graduates will know and can critically evaluate and, where applicable, apply this knowledge to topics/issues within their majoring subject.
- **Employable, Innovative and Enterprising**
Students will develop key skills and attributes sought by employers that can be used in a range of applications.
- **Engaged with the community**
Students will have observed and understood a culture within a community by reflecting on their own performance and experiences within that community.
- **Biculturally Competent and Confident**
Students will be aware of and understand the nature of biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand and its relevance to their area of study.
- **Globally Aware**
Students will comprehend the influence of global conditions on their discipline and will be competent in engaging with global and multi-cultural contexts.



Key Challenges

- Very ambitious aim to deliver graduates in such a short timescale who have gained something measurable from all five areas
- Post-earthquake, financial and physical challenges, limited extra resource
- Biculturalism – not widely considered at UC
- Expectation of decentralised management, not driven from the centre
- Varied knowledge of constructive alignment etc
- Communication



Implementation of UC- Wide Graduate Profile

- UC's Self-review report, described work in early stages.

Academic Audit report recommends:

“that in order to achieve institution-wide integration of the new Graduate Profile in all programmes, and to enable future students to achieve the graduate attributes, the University considers the areas where the Panel has expressed concern and urgently gives attention to the planning, resourcing and high-level oversight for the project.”

AQA Report of the 2014 Academic Audit of the University of Canterbury – Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha



1. Developing the solution

- Objectives and Management

- The graduate profiles must be real and not aspirational.
- Not tokenistic, at-least two touch points in the qualification.
- Learning Outcomes based approach.
- Devolved development to Colleges.
- Two approaches: planned top-down and evolutionary down-up.
- Missteps in management.
- Strong leadership (and more staff) from Office of the AVC (Māori)



2. Developing the solution

- What does it look like?

It can look like qualifications we have been offering for years, but it also requires new courses and revised courses that reflect the graduate attributes. Not every course includes every attribute!

At degree level:

The Bachelor of Teaching and Learning The BTchLng has been leading UC across a variety of graduate attributes for many years. In particular the degree is an excellent model of embedding Bicultural Competence and Confidence across a degree. Key distinctions include:

1. a compulsory noho marae experience;
2. key underlying threads of bicultural competence woven through the degree;
3. accolades from the Education Council of New Zealand in terms of bicultural competence and,
4. Language competence Te Reo Māori



3. Developing the solution

- What does it look like for staff?

It has involved changing how we teach and assess.

“To improve our coverage of the UC graduate attributes across the programme, we have slightly altered the content to be delivered into Protein Science, such that two new lectures have been introduced to provide the students with an appreciation of commercialisation in science and a new tutorial (and in-term assessment) has been designed to provide the students with an appreciation of how to communicate with iwi.” Associate Professor Ren Dobson BSc

“The student who learns, in the first few weeks of lectures, about the essays of Francis Bacon and Michel de Montaigne, and then writes an essay comparing works by each of those writers in terms of form and content, is engaged in ‘pure scholarship’. However, if the same student writes an essay that analyses works by Bacon and Montaigne and applies the findings to her own experience, or that of a real-world community, then this kind of activity constitutes ‘engaged scholarship’.” Professor Philip Armstrong, BA



4. Developing the solution

- What does it look like in practice?

KEY COMPONENTS (adapted from Hughes & Barrie, 2010)

Conceptualisation – shared institutional conversations about what it is and who is doing it (e.g. Frameworks)

Implementation –

1. Curriculum viewed as a Programme of Study
2. Assessment aligned with LOs
3. QA (e.g curriculum maps, student surveys through institutional research, self-assessment by students)
4. Staff development/engagement- workshops, Professional Development

Student Engagement- student charters, course outlines, tracking attainment of GAs, relating GA attainment to future opportunities

5. Developing the solution

Bicultural Competence & Confidence

- A process of self-reflection on the nature of 'knowledge' and 'norms'.
- The nature of contemporary Māori organisational structures e.g. rūnanga, hapū, iwi, iwi corporations.
- Traditional and contemporary realities of Māori society e.g. tikanga and kawa, Te Reo Māori.
- The Treaty of Waitangi and Aotearoa New Zealand's bicultural history.
- The processes of colonisation and globalisation.
- Other indigenous models of development, knowledge and behaviours.
- Application of bicultural competence and confidence in a chosen discipline and career.

Employable, Innovative & Enterprising

- Working effectively and professionally with diverse communities.
- Communication.
- Analytical, critical thinking and problem solving in diverse contexts.
- Digital literacy.
- Innovation, enterprising and creativity.

OUR UC GRADUATES

Globally Aware

- Self-reflection on the nature of one's culture, language, and beliefs on one's systems of knowledge.
- Understanding the global nature of one's discipline.
- The ability to engage critically and effectively in global and multicultural contexts.

Engaged with the Community

- Engagement: Gaining knowledge and understanding of a community by interacting with a community.
- Reflection: Gaining knowledge and understanding of a community through reflection on one's experiences with that community.
- Application: Understanding and articulating how the content and/or skills of the subject/programme enhances the community.

Monitoring the implementation

- Surveys – including GDS
- Student self-assessment
- Reporting to the Crown
- Academic reviews



What are employers expecting?

Employers are looking for graduates who have cultural and civic literacy, adaptability, excellent communication and team skills, and social and cultural awareness in addition to disciplinary skills

“We accept that students from across NZ will have excellent degrees. We are looking for that ‘something extra’ or something that differentiates them. Students who can convey their knowledge beyond the discipline are valued.”

Deloitte NZ staff to the NZ Deans of Business

Christchurch City Council advert: “Looking for people who have a strong sense of connection to the city and surrounding towns and understanding key agencies in the city and partner agencies across NZ and internationally.” *Christchurch City Council*



What are students saying?

Our students tell us how the Graduate Profile makes them distinctive

“Bi-cultural competence is always important in NZ as we live in a bi-cultural nation and Māori values and influence runs deep in our society.”

“Community engagement may help keep students grounded and dispel the ‘stuck up’ student stereotype.”

“Point of difference for employers – competitive edge.”

“Working on practical life skills & focusing on opportunity improves the integration of student from studying to full time work (finding a balance along the way).”

“Holistic consciousness – able to see both sides of an argument and cultural differences.”



References

- Hughes, C., & Barrie, S.C. (2010). Influences on the assessment of graduate attributes in higher education. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 35, 3, 325-334.
- Spronken-Smith, R., Bond, C., McLean, A., Frielick, S., Smith, N., Jenkins, M., & Marshall, S. (2013). How to engage with a graduate outcomes agenda: A guide for tertiary education institutions. *Ako Aotearoa*.
- Biggs, J. & Tang C. (2011). Teaching for Quality Learning at University. 4th Edition. Open University Press.