Internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) in action
A Guide

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Internationalisation in higher education is important in both the local and the global contexts within which universities operate and internationalisation of the curriculum is a critical component of any university's internationalisation strategy.

Australian Government
Office for Learning and Teaching

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All students need an internationalised curriculum

Universities have a responsibility to prepare all graduates to live as well as work in a global society – a complex interlocking world where the local and the global are increasingly connected (Nussbaum 2002). An internationalised curriculum will recognise that as graduates, all students will have social and cultural as well as economic roles and responsibilities. Wherever they are their lives and their work will be influenced by the global environment. International and intercultural skills and knowledge, an awareness of and commitment to connecting positively with cultural others, and the ability to think 'locally, nationally and globally' (Rizvi & Lingard 2010, p. 201) will be important in this world.

As a process, internationalisation of the curriculum is an important part of the periodic, critical review of the curriculum. It should include reflection on the impact and outcomes of teaching and assessment practices on student learning and a review of content and pedagogy. In this process it is important to recognise past successes as well as imagining new possibilities and striving to improve the curriculum. The latter is critical given the rapid rate at which the world around us is changing.

The role of academic staff

Assessment, learning and teaching are at the heart of internationalisation of the formal curriculum - the planned and sequenced programme of teaching, learning and assessment activities occurring in courses making up a program. Academic co-ordinators and their teaching teams control the formal curriculum; they define it and manage it. This means that

it is critical that they are engaged in the process of internationalisation of the curriculum. Yet, academic staff are often uncertain what internationalisation of the curriculum means within their disciplinary and institutional contexts, or do not think it has anything to do with them (Knight 2006; Stohl 2007). A range of blockers and enablers to staff involvement in internationalisation of the curriculum have been identified (Childress 2010; Clifford 2009; Sanderson 2008).

The work of academic staff and the learning experiences of students occur within and are affected by a broader set of conditions which include those of the informal curriculum – the various support services and additional activities provided for students by the university community (sometimes called the co-curriculum).

In considering approaches to internationalisation of the curriculum it is important to take a broad view of the curriculum that considers both the formal and the informal curriculum, the total student experience. In 2010-2011 the Australian Government, through the Australian Learning and Teaching Council in the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funded a national teaching fellowship 'Internationalisation of the curriculum in action'. This guide incorporates the main findings of the fellowship and brings together the key

resources that were developed and trialled during the fellowship. More details can be found on www.ioc.net.au .
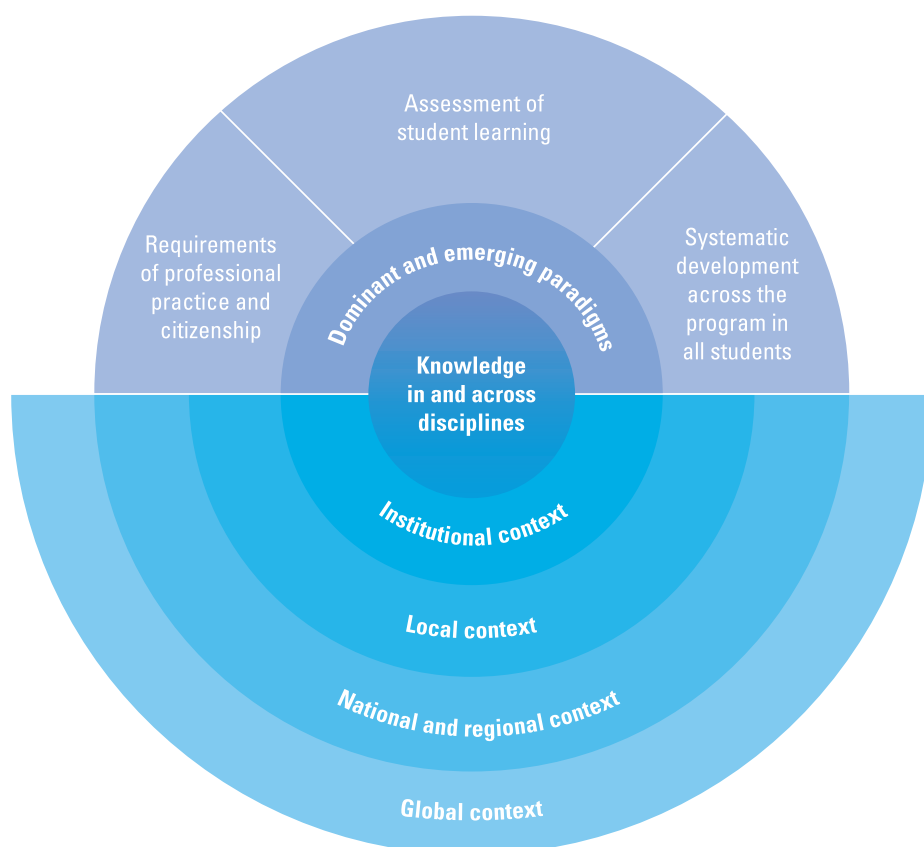
A conceptual framework

Internationalisation of the curriculum, an essential component of the broader concept of internationalisation in higher education, is variously interpreted and enacted. In part, this can be explained by the different ways of thinking and approaching issues that are associated with different disciplines, but other factors are also important. These other factors include the relative importance ascribed by academic staff to the different contexts within which they work. The layers of context and their possible impact on the way academics think about internationalisation and the curriculum are represented visually in the conceptual framework on page 3. Each layer of context directly and indirectly interacts with and influences the others, creating a complex set of conditions influencing curriculum design. In these circumstances the wide divergence in the understandings of internationalisation observed in universities across the world is not surprising.

Internationalisation of the curriculum is the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study (Leask 2009, p. 209).

A conceptual framework of internationalisation of the curriculum

The framework explained

Knowledge in and across disciplines

Knowledge in and across disciplines is at the centre of the framework. The disciplines are the foundation of knowledge, but the complexity of problems faced by the world and its communities requires 'problem-defining and solving perspectives that cross disciplinary and cultural boundaries' (Hudzik 2004,1).

Curriculum design

Dominant and emerging paradigms

The process of curriculum design involves a series of choices about whose knowledge will be included and what skills and attitudes will be developed. This is often decided, by default, according to dominant paradigms, with little if any consideration being given to alternative models and ways of practising a profession or viewing the world. An important part of the process of internationalisation of the curriculum is to think beyond dominant paradigms, to explore emerging paradigms and imagine new possibilities and new ways of thinking and doing. This is a challenging task for academic staff. They have been socialised into their discipline. Through that process they have developed a sense of identity and personal commitment to the shared values and associated ways of doing, thinking and being embedded within dominant paradigms of their discipline communities (Kuhn 1996). Thus, academic staff are themselves culturally bound by their own disciplinary training and thinking (Becher & Trowler 2002).

Requirements of professional practice and citizenship (local, national and global)

The requirements of professional practice are important considerations when decisions are being made about what and what not to include in a curriculum, especially when the program is accredited by an external professional body. But a university education is not just about training for demands of professional practice in a globalised world. The moral responsibilities that come with local, national and global citizenship are also important considerations when planning an internationalised curriculum.

Assessment of student learning

An important consideration in curriculum design is what you would expect students to be able to do at the end of a program and as graduates. This can then be used to plan assessments tasks and learning experiences in different courses at different levels in the program, ensuring that students are provided with regular feedback on how they are performing and progressing. In an internationalised curriculum it is important to specifically provide feedback on and assess student achievement of clearly articulated international and intercultural learning goals.

Systematic development across the program in all students

The development of international and intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes in an internationalised curriculum

requires careful planning, collaboration with colleagues and coordination across a program of study. The development of skills such as language capability and intercultural competence may need to be embedded in a number of courses at different levels. Given that not all students will enter the program with the same capabilities, a range of strategies to assist all students to achieve desired learning outcomes by the end of the program are likely to be required. Finding ways in which student services and the informal curriculum can support the work undertaken in the formal curriculum is an important part of curriculum design. Mapping where desired knowledge, skills and attitudes will be developed and assessed in the formal curriculum is a good starting point.

Context

Institutional context

The formal curriculum does not operate in isolation. The informal curriculum, the various extra-curricular activities and services available to students, are an important part of the context in which the formal curriculum is enacted. Together, the formal and the informal curriculum define the total student experience. Both the formal and the informal curriculum occur within, and are influenced by, the institutional context. Both will, to some extent, be shaped by university mission and ethos. These are reflected in various ways in policies (such as in 'graduate attributes' statements), the range and focus of degrees offered (such as the availability of foreign language study and recognition of concurrent global experience programs), funding priorities (such as to what extent international service learning is supported) and staff development opportunities.

Local context

Developing students' abilities to be ethical and responsible local citizens who appreciate the connections between the local, the national and the global is an important aspect of internationalisation of the curriculum. The local context includes social, cultural, political and economic conditions. All may provide opportunities and challenges for internationalisation of the curriculum. For example, there may be opportunities for students to develop enabling intercultural skills, knowledge and attitudes through engagement with diversity in the local community.

Local accreditation requirements for registration in a chosen profession may require a seemingly exclusive focus on local legislation and policy. However, the local context is reciprocally connected to national and global contexts. Developing all students understanding of these connections is an important part of the process of developing their ability to be critical and reflexive citizens and professionals able to think and act locally, nationally and globally.

National and regional context

National and regional matters and related government policies concerning internationalisation are the background against which institutions formulate policy and academic staff do or do not engage in internationalisation of the curriculum. For example, policies concerning foreign language learning and support for student mobility, the recruitment of international students and the extent to which universities are connected with others in the region will all influence approaches to internationalisation of the curriculum. Different national and regional contexts will to some extent determine the options available.

Global context

World society is not one in which global resources and power are shared equally. Globalisation is being experienced as discriminatory and oppressive in some places and beneficial and liberating in others. It has contributed to increasing the gap between the rich and the poor of the world, and the exploitation of the 'South' by the 'North'. This domination is not only economic. It is also intellectual, the dominance of Western educational models in the developed world defining what is knowledge, who will apply it and to what ends.
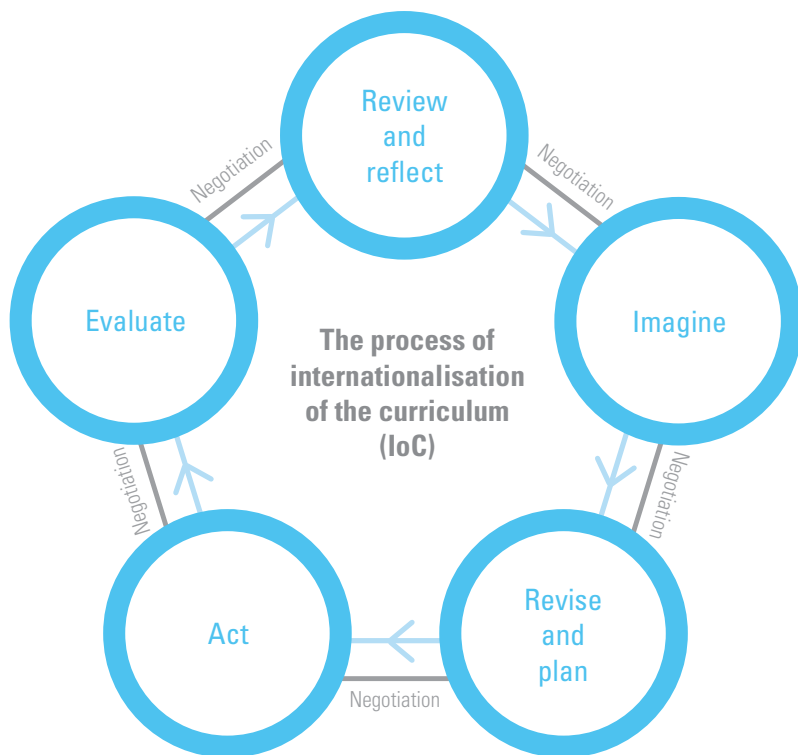
disciplines are less open to recognising the cultural construction of knowledge than others and the international perspectives required of a nurse or a pharmacist will most likely focus more on socio-cultural understanding than those of an engineer. Some will be more influenced by the requirements of local employers or national professional associations than others.

The framework assists understanding of the broad concept of internationalisation of the curriculum as well as the role of the disciplines and academic staff in it. It identifies some of the key questions that need to be considered when engaging in the process of internationalisation of the curriculum in a particular academic program.

While internationalisation of the curriculum is to some extent discipline-dependent, other critical factors will also influence the approach taken by academic staff to internationalisation of the curriculum.

Key messages

1. Internationalisation of the curriculum is multi-dimensional incorporating not only curriculum design, content, pedagogy, learning activities and assessment, but also how these are affected by much broader issues such as institutional, national, regional and global conditions.
2. Internationalisation of the curriculum is an evolutionary and cyclical process and the core work associated with it must be done by academic staff in disciplinary teams.
3. It is important to identify, acknowledge and, in some instances, take action to address the blockers to the engagement of academic staff in internationalisation of the curriculum. Some of these blockers are related to institutional policies, processes and priorities, some to the capacity of individual academics and leaders, others to the cultural construction of the disciplines themselves.
4. Key enablers include leadership (at both the institutional and disciplinary level) and strategic ongoing support for academics involved in the process. Key support mechanisms include the establishment and maintenance of networks of champions and leaders within and across disciplines.

Framework summary

Each contextual layer of the framework directly and indirectly interacts with and influences the others. This creates a complex set of conditions within which the curriculum is constructed by academic staff and experienced by students. Hence we find that conceptualisations and enactments of internationalisation of the curriculum vary between disciplines in the one institution, and in the same discipline in different institutions. For example, some

The process of internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC)

The diagram shows a cycle: Review and reflect → Imagine → Revise and plan → Act → Evaluate, connected by "Negotiation".

> **The role of the facilitator in the process of IoC is critical to ensuring the success of the process. One of the most important skills is that of negotiation.**

The process of IoC

The core work involved in IoC must be done by academic staff in disciplinary teams.

It is critical to approach the task of internationalisation of the curriculum in a scholarly way, as an action research process. This is best done in a program team consisting of those staff responsible for designing and teaching a program of study. This makes it possible to harness the combined resources and perspectives of the team to ensure coherence across the program and the systematic identification and development of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes in all students.

Action research is a reflective and cyclical process of problem solving. When applied to internationalisation of the curriculum the process involves the program team as a community of practice. The purpose of the action research process is one of continuous quality improvement. Changes may occur whilst research is being conducted. When applied to internationalisation of the curriculum team members are actively engaged in reviewing rationales for internationalisation of the curriculum, related goals and performance and making changes which are then evaluated and further changes made. The cycle is repetitive and may be undertaken as part of the normal review process, or outside of that process.

The five stages of the process of IoC emerged during extensive work with teams of academic staff across Australia from 2010-2012. Possible focus questions and key activities associated with each stage were developed. The process can be lead by an internal and/or an external facilitator. Most teams, in working through this process, have enlisted the support of an external facilitator in the early stages.

Resources used to support each stage, and a guide for facilitators, are available from www.ioc.net.au .

Review and reflect

Focus question: 'To what extent is our curriculum internationalised?'

The activities associated with this stage might include:
- establishing/reviewing/reflecting on the rationale for internationalisation of the curriculum in the program
- reviewing content, teaching and learning arrangements and assessment in individual courses and across the program in relation to internationalisation of the curriculum
- reviewing student evaluation and feedback in relation to international and intercultural elements of the curriculum
- comparing and contrasting feedback on different elements of the program from international students, Australian students and offshore students
- reviewing feedback from other stakeholders such as professional association and industry stakeholders
- reviewing institutional goals related to internationalisation of the curriculum and the alignment of the program with these
- reflecting on achievements and identifying possible areas for improvement
- negotiating meaning.

Key resources

A stimulus for reflection and discussion, the questionnaire on internationalisation of the curriculum (QIC), assists staff to identify what is already happening and, where appropriate, what action might be taken to further internationalise the program. It prompts staff to think beyond their unit to consider the broader context of what is happening in other units as well as the institutional context in which the program is taught. They are prompted to discuss individual elements of the curriculum such as content, assessment and teaching and learning arrangements across the entire program. A guide to using the QIC is also provided.

Imagine

Focus question: 'What other ways of thinking and doing are possible?'

The activities associated with this stage might include:
- discussing the cultural foundations of dominant paradigms in your discipline
- examining the origins and nature of the paradigm within which you work
- identifying emergent paradigms and thinking about the possibilities they offer
- imagining the world of the future: what and how will your students need to learn, in order to live and work effectively and ethically in this future world?
- imagining some different ways of doing things in the foreseeable future
- negotiating possibilities.

Key resources

The conceptual framework on page 3 is a useful resource to prompt this discussion. Case studies of internationalisation of the curriculum in other disciplines, available on the website, provide valuable insights into how others have approached the task.

Revise and Plan

Focus question: 'Given the above, what will we do differently in our program?'

The activities associated with this stage might include:
- establishing goals and objectives for internationalisation of the curriculum in your program
- identifying blockers and enablers for individuals and the team in achieving these
- identifying experts, champions and latent champions in your team and across the university who can help you to achieve them
- identifying and sourcing support and resources to assist staff and students to overcome major obstacles
- setting priorities and developing an action plan focussed on who will do what, by when, and what resources and support will be required
- discussing how you will evaluate the effectiveness of any changes you make to the curriculum, including their effect on student learning
- negotiating the roles of individual team members in the process of internationalisation of the curriculum in the next two stages.

Key resources

Some key program planning questions have been developed to assist teams to establish program goals and objectives for internationalisation of the curriculum. A short questionnaire concerning blockers and enablers to individual staff engagement in internationalisation of the curriculum is a useful aid to planning who will do what.

Act

Focus question: 'How will we ensure that students and staff are best supported to achieve our internationalisation plan?'

The activities associated with this stage might include:
- negotiating and implementing new teaching arrangements and support services for staff and students
- trialling new support arrangements in the informal curriculum
- introducing compulsory workshops for all students prior to a multi cultural team work assignment
- introducing new assessment tasks
- introducing a new course/unit
- collecting evidence to evaluate the development of intercultural and international knowledge, skills and attitudes in students (qualitative and/or quantitative).

Key resources

The website www.ioc.net.au provides a range of resources, both general and discipline-specific, which describe further strategies to assist the process of internationalisation of the curriculum.

Evaluate

Focus question: 'To what extent have we achieved our internationalisation goals?'

The activities associated with this stage might include:
- analysing evidence collected from stakeholders, including students and staff
- reflecting on the impact of action taken
- considering any 'interference' factors e.g. unexpected events that may have had a positive or negative impact on achievement of goals
- considering any gaps in the evidence and collection of post-hoc evidence if necessary
- summarising achievements and feeding results into 'Review and Reflect' stage
- negotiating ongoing roles and responsibilities for internationalisation of the curriculum within the program team.

More information

All resources referred to in this brochure as well as additional resources are available from www.ioc.net.au . The full report of the fellowship is available on the website http://www.olt.gov.au/altc-national-teaching-fellow-betty-leask .

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Glossary

PROGRAM = a course of study leading to a qualification offered by the university, e.g. Bachelor of Nursing. In some universities the terminology used is 'course'.

COURSE = the components of a PROGRAM, e.g. Nursing 1, Anatomy and Physiology 1. In some universities the terminology used is 'subject' or 'unit'.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES = formal statement of generic competencies of a university graduate, usually associated with a formal process of ensuring the PROGRAM curriculum contributes towards the development of these competencies.