Module 2 - Planning for learning

Authors: Sally Gauci and Rosie Greenfield
Year: 2017

Sally Gauci
Welcome to Planning for Learning, I am Sally Gauci and together with Rosie Greenfield we have developed this session on planning - how you plan for teaching that will enable the best possible outcome for your students. Rosie and I worked together in the central learning and teaching centre at Victoria University. Here we collaborated with academics and Directors of Learning and Teaching from the various teaching departments to improve learning and teaching across the university. In addition we co-ordinated and co-facilitated the unit titled Foundations of Learning and Teaching within the Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education. Currently this qualification is a requirement for all teaching staff joining the university. Rosie and I plan together for all of our teaching and our developmental work, something we would highly recommend you do too.

Rosie Greenfield
We are excited about being part of this course and being able to familiarize you with what we believe are the crucial fundamentals of planning for learning. We hope you will find this to be an engaging and challenging professional learning experience. You have begun to explore important aspects of learning and teaching and now we want to introduce you to a broad perspective on planning for learning.

As with any endeavour the most effective way of achieving the desired outcome is to plan! Learning is no different. Our responsibility is to provide the opportunity for learning to occur and to do so in the timeframes we have been allocated. Without planning it is unlikely that all of our students will achieve the required outcomes and/or be fully engaged with their learning! We believe there are four key elements integral to planning for learning that you need to apply regardless of whether you are planning for one or many sessions or for a whole program. The four key elements are the learning context, learning outcomes, learning tasks and checking for learning.

Sally Gauci
The learning context includes consideration of your student characteristics, the program plan, the learning and teaching environment and the learning mode.

The learning outcomes and assessment tasks will enable you to be clear about what it is the students are to achieve including what discipline knowledge and skills are to be learned and thus the purpose of the sessions. The learning tasks will provide the opportunity for learning to occur.

Checking for learning is about gauging the learners progress and using this information to guide them.

Rosie Greenfield
This seems to indicate a specific order of tasks to do – our experience is that it can often be iterative.
You may start with the learning outcomes to be achieved and begin to formulate an approach only to find that you have more questions. Your plan may start as a series of questions or notes on post-it-notes or scribbles on whiteboards as you gather the information that starts to be shaped into your plan. It may mean you need to revisit your early ideas or redevelop your learning tasks or find other ways to check your students' progress.

Sally Gauci
The value of your planning is for you to provide the best possible opportunity for your students to learn.
This module has four sections and each one has self-paced activities, templates and resources to assist you in your planning. Planning is an important skill to practice. Take the time to consider what has gone before and how that might impact your planning. Wonder and tweak, apply and revise all the while keeping in mind the learning context, learning outcomes, learning tasks and the learning progress.

Rosie and Sally
Best wishes for your learning in this module and in your teaching future.