3 Rs of Teaching: Respect, Relationships and Reciprocity

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University of South Australia | University of Southern Queensland
Deakin University | Australian Council of Deans of Education

8 February 2013

RRR Proposal Excerpt

Project proposal to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
(AITSL) for development of a unit outline and content to support
the provision of initial teacher education to improve teaching
in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

University of
South Australia

UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTHERN
QUEENSLAND

DEAKIN
UNIVERSITY

ACDE
AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF
DEANS OF EDUCATION INC

1 RRR proposal summary

This proposal entitled *3 Rs of Teaching: Respect, Relationships and Reciprocity* is submitted in response to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Request for Proposal #13-093 distributed in January 2013.

The proposal outlines the approach to the design and development of a unit outline and relevant content to support the provision of initial teacher education to improve teaching in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

The project will be led by Professor Peter Buckskin from the University of South Australia with three consortium partners comprising University of Southern Queensland, Deakin University and the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE), The consortium will leverage established influence, capability and networks including the *More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative* (MATSITI) and education faculty leaders to deliver a quality unit within the available timeframe.

The proposed budget for the design and development of the unit is **$350,000** (ex GST).

1.1 Project scope

The unit outline and content will address the common elements of an initial teacher education unit aimed at providing pre-service teachers with the necessary knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the Graduate career stage Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4 of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The unit outline and content developed through this project will be available for initial teacher education providers to incorporate into their programs.

Planning, design and development of the unit will be completed within three months, commencing on 1st March and be completed and ready for delivery by 31st May 2013.

1.2 Consortium partners

The Project will be led by Professor Peter Buckskin, Dean: Indigenous Engagement, Scholarship and Research in partnership with the following education leaders:

- Dr Kaye Price, Associate Director, Centre for Indigenous Australian Knowledges, University of Southern Queensland
- Professor Mark Rose, Chair for Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Deakin University
- Professor Toni Downes, Executive Dean, Faculty of Education, Charles Sturt University – ACDE nominee

The project leadership team will be supported by a Steering Committee of Indigenous education and teacher education leaders. A project management and writing team will work closely with the leadership group and stakeholders to ensure timely delivery of project deliverables.

The University of South Australia will be the lead agency, and will subcontract the three partner agencies to undertake designated tasks within the project.

1.3 Project deliverables

Proposed deliverables for completion of the unit and project will include:

- Initial teacher education unit design development project plan
- National face-to-face and electronic consultation process with educators
- Draft unit design and content specification
- At least three focus groups in three locations to validate unit assumptions
- Two one-day national workshop forums to validate unit design
- Completed unit with associated learning resources
- Draft implementation plan and recommendations
- Progress report and final report.

2 Proposed approach

The project consortia team proposes the following methodology to ensure a dynamic and flexible unit that will retain cultural integrity, learning quality and ownership by those responsible for delivering and/or supporting the unit in their university after completion.

The project team recognises the need to compress the timeframe to consult and complete the work, through an intensive series of concurrent tasks, and utilising established electronic networks for rapid iterative consultation and development of the unit.

2.1 Proposal overview

The following proposal outlines the design, development and implementation stages of the project against the criteria specified in section 8.6.2 of the AITSL Request for Proposal.

2.1.1 Underpinning research

There are few examples of significant recent research or policy associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education research and policy that consortium members have not led or to which they have had significant input. Empirical evidence from this theory, research and practice over recent decades will fundamentally underpin the design, development and implementation of the unit.

The team will draw extensively on 2012 QUT research[1] and consultation on pre-service preparation for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. This research addressing both standards provides a substantive body of work to validate the cultural and learning assumptions underpinning the unit and align the unit content with its findings.

The 3R leadership group is well-positioned to synthesise these findings with evidence arising from programs such as *What Works*, *Close the Gap*, *Dare to Lead* and the *Stronger Smarter Institute*.

Three project team members are represented on the First Peoples Education Advisory Group reporting to Minister Garrett with a Steering Committee member as Chair of this Group.

Professor Buckskin led the development of the National 2010-2014 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan and Professor Rose is currently engaged with its evaluation.

The leadership team will ensure alignment of the unit development and implementation with current evidence and policy in teacher education, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and the quality teacher agenda.

2.1.2 Unit outline and content development

The project team will build upon the QUT desktop audit above and conduct an environmental scan of current teacher education units to identify quality learning content and common elements suitable for a generic unit and adaptation to varying situations.

ACDE proposes to canvas its membership base of 39 universities to gain rich data and exemplars of undergraduate study addressing standards 1.4 and 2.4. The universities themselves will be de-identified and the work is timely given that education faculties are implementing action plans to improve the retention and completion of Indigenous students as part of a joint ACDE-MATSITI initiative[2].

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander project team members will identify institutions and content that have greatest community credibility and will be able to assess, scope and write the content outline through an Indigenous lens.

The unit outline and content development will be divided into three phases:

1. Project planning and governance
2. Unit design and specification
3. Unit content development and implementation.

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[1] Moreton-Robinson et al, 2012 *Learning the Lessons* Queensland University of Technology
[2] www.matsiti.edu.au/tag/acde/

Principles for the unit design specification will include:

- Student engagement and motivation to further develop intercultural understanding, and skills and knowledge of learning and teaching strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

- Foundation skills to be built upon through career development and in-service support

- Cultural integrity of unit content, learning resources, support and implementation

- Explicit linkages between the two standards, to other standards related to curriculum content, assessment and teaching strategies, and with elaboration of the requirements for the outcomes of initial teacher education

- A review of literature on anti-racism strategies and incorporate evidence from key researchers, including current trials of undergraduate anti-racism pedagogy units, and be

- Dynamic, flexible and accessible to be easily and successfully adapted and extended for use in a variety of situations including location, course structures, year levels, teaching disciplines, and modes of delivery (including online learning management systems).

2.1.3 Focus Areas 1.4 and 2.4

The unit will further elaborate upon the broad principles above and the interconnected nature of the two standards. Indicative topics to be included will be tested through the project consultative process.

Focus Area 1.4: Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

Content addressing Standard 1.4 will provide a critical understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and languages, and enable (teacher education) students to engage effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners in a diverse range of cultural, linguistic and geographical contexts.

Indicative content in a unit addressing Standard 1.4 may include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, social systems and cultures, languages, knowledges and communication

- History of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education

- Critical theories of education and pedagogy

- Strategies of student and community engagement

- Teaching students from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds

- Rural and remote education

- Racism and anti-racist education

- International perspectives in Indigenous education

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural studies (with links to Standard 2.4).

Focus Area 2.4: Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to

promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Content addressing Standard 2.4 will also provide a critical understanding of Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages.

Indicative content in a unit addressing Standard 2.4 may include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, social systems and cultures, languages, knowledges and communication and spirituality (including common elements from 1.4)

- Government policies and practices such as assimilation (stolen generations), integration, self-determination, self-management and reconciliation

- Indigenous human rights, access and participation

- Ethnocentrism and media representation

- Community consultation, engagement and exchange, and cultural protocols

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

- Indigenous Australians and the law

- Land rights and Native Title

- Curriculum development and evaluation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies resources.

2.1.4 Key stakeholders

The project team possesses extensive experience, influence and political savvy to navigate a complex stakeholder environment of Indigenous community representatives, educators, academics, and education administrators and officials.

Despite numerous groups and agencies to consult, the project team are cognisant that the unit must be a rich and engaging learning experience for teacher education students leading to more effective teachers with *respect, relationships and reciprocity* as per the 3R proposal title.

The project sponsor is the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

Indigenous education consultative networks include:

- IECBs, represented on the project leadership group and Steering Committee

- First Peoples Education Advisory Group to Schools Minister Hon Peter Garrett – the project leadership team includes three members and a Steering Committee member as Chair of this Group

- Indigenous Centre staff, Including staff teaching into education programs and Indigenous student support staff – several representatives on Project Steering Committee

- National Congress of Australia's First Peoples (close ties), Reconciliation Australia (Professor Buckskin is a state co-chair), NATSIPA (represented on Steering Committee and close working relationship with MATSITI), SONNIE (on Steering Committee), AIATSIS (membership), National Centre for Indigenous Studies, National Sorry Day Committee (represented by MATSITI staff)

- Indigenous teachers and teacher education students – 200 plus network through MATSITI, and further engagement through Australian Education Union and professional associations

- Consortium team international connections such as WINHEC and UNESCO Chair for Teacher Education (represented by Steering Committee member Professor Konai Thaman).

Teacher education networks include:

- Deans, Associate Deans and teaching and professional staff in education faculties

- Indigenous and non-Indigenous students enrolled in initial teacher education.

School sector networks include:

- Australian teaching profession – Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers, principals, support staff and (indirectly) school students

- Human resources directors of all school authorities (primarily through MATSITI initiative in their capacity as employers of graduate teachers)

- Government and non-government school authorities

- Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (formerly MCEECDYA), including the SCSEEC *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group*.

A range of other key agencies and influencers include:

- Australian government, particularly through *Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations* and *Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education*

- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

- Teacher Registration authorities

- Australian Education Union (represented on Project Steering Committee).

2.1.5 Consultation processes

The 3R consortium team will draw on an unprecedented network of educators, leveraging existing groups associated with the MATSITI Initiative and direct connections to unit delivery through the ACDE.

A formal project Steering committee representing key stakeholder groups above will be drawn from the existing MATSITI Steering Committee (listed in Proposal attachments). An established working relationship and relevant expertise will form the primary formal group for an initial and mid-project face-to-face forum consultation, and reduce risks associated with the compressed time-frame.

A consecutive national face-to-face forum will be held with the National Network of Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching (NADLATE) facilitated by ACDE.

A multi-tiered consultation process will include:

- First communication to stakeholders about the project purpose, outcomes, development schedule and consultative approach – current mailing list exceeds 700 individuals and organisations

- An interactive *Moodle* website enabling interested parties to be regularly informed and opt in for more interactive engagement if they wish

- Focus groups to test underlying assumptions with those that will have most direct carriage and impact of the unit – student teachers, teacher educators and support staff

- Two national face-to-face national consultative forums with the Project Steering Committee and Australian Council of Deans of Education – to respond to the draft unit specification

- Opportunity for widespread formal and informal responses to the unit specification, draft content and content outline, and draft implementation plan.

2.1.6 Ongoing review and maintenance

The unit content and implementation arrangements will be developed to ensure maximum access, flexibility, ease of adoption and ability to be updated and extended to meet changing needs.

A key channel for eliciting these requirements will be through the Deans of Education and respective Indigenous Higher Education Centres through the ACDE-MATSITI initiative. A key element of this partnership is the collaborative development and support for institutional action plans that are underway to improve Indigenous education outcomes within education faculties.

Recommendations associated with the unit will include guidance for teacher education providers about selection and inclusion of local/contextual content, and adaptability to suit widely varying course structures and delivery arrangements.

A post-project piloting and review phase will be desirable to refine the unit content and implementation.

The project team includes staff members experienced in digital content and learning resources who will be able to scope ongoing hosting, review and updating of digital resources, and determine future costs, issues and risks.

Existing National online learning infrastructure such as *Scootle* and the *National Digital Learning Resources Network* will be utilised, especially for Standard 2.4. Apart from being readily accessible to faculties, these digital resources have undergone a separate quality assurance process and are aligned with AITSL standards and the Australian Curriculum.

The project final report will include recommendations on future evaluation and review arrangements, and supportive professional learning such as *Illustrations of Practice*.

2.1.7 Consortium structure

The University of South Australia will be the lead agency, and will subcontract the three partner agencies to undertake designated tasks within the project.

Professor Peter Buckskin will be the Project Director and primary contact for the initiative. Ms Annie Campbell, Senior Business Development Manager, University of South Australia will manage contractual arrangements and subcontracts with consortium partner agencies.

The chart on the following page represents a high level project plan of tasks and schedule.

2.2 Project planning and governance

Project Task	Mar	Apr	May
Finalise head agreement and subcontracts	■		
First meeting of 3R Project Team to finalise project plan and team roles	■		
Finalise 3R Steering Committee membership	■		
Establish weekly leadership and project team teleconference schedule	■	■	■
First communication about project to stakeholders regarding process and schedule	■		
Establish interactive web publishing and forum schedule to enable wide consultation during unit design and development		■	■

2.3 Unit design and specification

Project Task	Mar	Apr	May
Review current research and policy frameworks	■		
Conduct environmental scan of existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education content within initial teacher education units to identify successful approaches, common elements and exemplars	■		
Commence identification and annotation of learning and teaching resources, including digital learning content		■	
Conduct focus group in three locations to test unit assumptions with teacher education students, lecturers and early career teachers		■	
Develop and make available a draft unit specification that covers unit scope, pedagogical and cultural approaches, content outline, content and learning resource samples, assessment and formats of the unit		■	
Conduct two one-day national workshops with following stakeholders on unit design, content and implementation issues: • Project Steering Committee and identified Indigenous academic staff • Network of Associate Deans of Teaching and Learning (NADLATE)		■	
Conduct a national online feedback forum to canvas wide stakeholder, practitioner, student and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community feedback		■	
Prepare progress report to project sponsor, Steering Committee and stakeholders		■	

2.4 Unit development and implementation

Project Task	Mar	Apr	May
Refine the unit design specification in response to stakeholder feedback		■	■
Undertake intensive unit writing schedule with capacity for iterative development and feedback (through electronic channels)		■	
Develop an annotated resource list and digital learning repository with means for local adaptation and extension		■	■
Incorporate stakeholder feedback on penultimate draft of the unit			■
Prepare a draft implementation plan for the unit			■
Host completed unit, resources and guidelines on prototype website			■
Prepare final report to project sponsor and stakeholders			■