Evaluation of
Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice

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Report to the Australian Learning and Teaching Council

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September 2011

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Description of program

Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice is an Australian Learning and Teaching (ALTC) Fellowship which was conducted by Dr Christine Asmar from The University of Melbourne, over 18 months from April 2009 to September 2010

The Fellowship aimed to provide both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers with research-based, practical exemplars for teaching Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula effectively. The overall aim of the Fellowship was to improve Indigenous teaching and thereby contribute to improving Indigenous student learning experiences and academic success rates.

More specifically four key objectives (or outcomes) were identified, namely to:
1. Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived;
2. Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities;
3. Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a University of Melbourne Forum; and
4. Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination.

To meet these objectives the following activities were implemented over an 18 month period:
- A literature review was conducted;
- An external advisory structure for the Fellowship was established consisting of,
- an Advisory Group to provide advice regarding the conduct of the Fellowship;
- a Critical Friends Group to act as a sounding board for the Fellowship's activities and findings;
- An evaluator was engaged to conduct the formative and summative evaluation;
- Additional feedback was collected through:
    - A meeting with the Advisory Group at the Forum;
    - A Forum evaluation conducted at the Forum;
    - Informal oral or written feedback collected throughout the Fellowship, including unsolicited feedback;
    - Review of de-identified material by the evaluator prior to its being uploaded to the web, to make sure it was appropriate for public dissemination.
- Qualitative data from Indigenous educators for the good practice case studies was collected reviewed and analysed;
- A forum on Indigenous teaching and learning was held to bring together a community of Indigenous teachers and to showcase and discuss case studies; and
- Research-based guidelines for national use were produced and disseminated on the Fellowship website.

Evaluation Design and Methods

This report provides an evaluation of the Fellowship. The evaluation has been guided by the evaluation tool developed by Chesterton and Cummings (2007) for the evaluation of projects under the ALTC Grants Scheme.

The evaluation of *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice* has involved the evaluator in the following processes:

- Negotiating an evaluation plan with the ALTC Fellow, Dr Christine Asmar;
- Contributing to the formative evaluation over the period of the Fellowship's implementation
- Identifying, collecting and analysing new evidence to produce the findings contained in this report;
- Utilising existing Fellowship documentation including the Forum evaluation administered in Melbourne in 2009.
- Describing and making judgements about the effectiveness of the Fellowship.
- Disseminating drafts of the report for consultation with advisors
- Producing a final report for dissemination on a public website

The focus of the evaluation has been on both its outcomes in meeting its short and longer term objectives, as well as on the processes, or how the Fellowship was implemented. The evaluation, therefore, is intended to usefully describe and summarize the Fellowship in a way which would both document the work accomplished by the Fellowship and be a useful tool for others wishing to replicate the activities as well as meeting the formal requirement of the ALTC Fellowships Scheme for a report which includes both formative and summative evaluation components.

The evaluation sought answers to the following questions:
1. Was the Fellowship implemented as planned?
   - What processes were planned and what were actually put in place for the Fellowship?
   - Were there any variations from the processes that were initially proposed, and if so, why?
   - How might the Fellowship be improved?
   - How successful was the Fellowship in reaching its desired audiences?

2. Did the Fellowship achieve what it set out achieve?
   - How and to what extent did the Fellowship meet its desired objectives?
   - What were the observable short-term outcomes?
   - What were they key outputs?
   - What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?
   - Were there any unintended outcomes?

3. What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote sustainability of the Fellowship's focus and outcomes?

4. What lessons have been learned from this Fellowship and how might these be of assistance to other institutions?

To answer these questions the evaluation drew upon five main sources of information:
1. Selected review of relevant literature
2. Analysis of Fellowship documentation including
3. Assessment of the effectiveness of Fellowship website
4. Evaluation of the Forum
5. Interviews with key stakeholders

Summary of the key findings
The first key finding of the evaluation is that the Fellowship achieved its four key goals, namely to:

1. Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived

2. Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities
3. Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a University of Melbourne Forum
4. Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination.

To investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived Asmar undertook short semi-structured face-to-face qualitative interviews with 26 Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers in NSW and Victorian universities. The analysis of the qualitative data resulted in the key outputs of the research: the development of the 15 suggested *Approaches to Indigenous teaching*. In selecting the Approaches, Asmar ensured that a diverse range of disciplines and teaching contexts were included. The use of the direct voice of research participants was a key strategy used by Asmar to describe the Approaches. Each Approach was exemplified by short verbatim interview extracts. As the direct quotes were to be placed very publically on the website, they were selected very carefully, with the permission of participants, and after consultation with the Evaluator regarding their appropriateness.

The Approaches were showcased through presentations from 14 Indigenous and 6 non-Indigenous invited speakers at a highly successful *National Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching* held at the University of Melbourne in November 2009. The Forum was attended by 100 participants, 30 of whom completed a Forum evaluation. Responses to questions about the Forum were overwhelmingly positive. One hundred percent of respondents rated the overall quality of the Forum as either 'very good' or 'good'. One common response was that the information and discussion presented at the Forum was not necessarily 'new' to respondents; however they appreciated what they knew being re-affirmed by the presenters. Respondents were most positive about the networking opportunities afforded by the Forum, the deep level engagement and sharing of information. The responses of stakeholders interviewed mirrored those of respondents on the day. They found the Forum an extremely effective way of bringing together a diverse range of people, some of whom are often working in relative isolation within institutions.

The findings of the research as well as the Forum outcomes were subsequently disseminated on the Fellowship website located at www.indigenousteaching.com. The website itself is a repository of a range of highly useful material, including the 15 suggested Approaches with accompanying exemplars drawing on quotes from the qualitative interviews; voice files and power point presentations from the Forum; details of the advisory structure and other useful resources. The website provides a particularly important mechanism for the ongoing sustainability of the Fellowship but needs to be supported to remain current. Stakeholders expressed the strong view that both the Forum and the website should be supported to be sustained in an ongoing way in order to keep up the momentum generated by the Fellowship.

Stakeholders identified a range of potential audiences who would benefit from the resources produced by the Fellowship. They included:
- Pre-service teachers
- Teachers out in the field in education
- Anybody who is interested in their professional development as academic teachers
- Experienced Non-indigenous teachers looking to cover Indigenous topics in their courses
- Students and teachers of University teaching courses
- People relatively new to the field

- Casual teachers
- Honours and post graduate students
- Directors of Indigenous Higher Education Centres at universities
- Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) members

A second key finding of the evaluation is that one of the keys to the Fellowship's success was its consultative processes. The choice of participants, the clever use of two groups of advisors, the inclusion of high profile Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic experts, the 'informal' though by no means casual way in which communications were conducted all contributed to the creation of a highly useful formative evaluation mechanism. Stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation praised Asmar for the respectful way in which she conducted the Fellowship including the way she took advice. A high level of sensitivity and high ethical standards are evident throughout the Fellowship. Asmar's ability to adapt to the change of environment early in the life of the Fellowship and enlist high level institutional support as well as the support of leading Indigenous and non- Indigenous academics to advise her also contributed to the success of the Fellowship.

A high level of sensitivity, attention to protocol and high ethical standards are evident throughout the Fellowship. A key ethical values underlying Indigenous research is that of reciprocity (NHMRC 2003). However researchers often struggle with the application of these values. Asmar's practical suggestions for reciprocating research participants for their time are in themselves useful suggestions for engaging in Indigenous research.

Lessons Learnt

A number of important lessons were learned in this Fellowship which could be usefully applied to projects in other institutions. The first area where important and transferable lessons were learned from this Fellowship was in the processes involved in implementing a research project in Indigenous learning and teaching. By carefully following ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous Australians (NHMRC 2001) as well as adopting an Indigenist perspective advocated by Rigney (1997) the Fellowship was successfully able to prioritise Indigenous voices throughout its implementation. A second area where lessons can be learned was in the setting up of the consultative structure with a predominantly indigenous membership, and using the two groups as a mechanism for formative evaluation proved to be a very successful strategy. Thirdly is the importance of developing a set of protocols early in the Fellowship which are consistently applied throughout. The values of respect and reciprocity were central to the way in which the Fellowship was conducted. A fourth area for learning is the importance of acknowledging the diversity of the participants in Indigenous research. The fifth lesson is the three pronged model developed. This model could usefully be applied in many other contexts. Essentially it involved obtaining data from interviews with participants; showcasing and discussing the data at a public forum; and then refining the information on a website which provides an ongoing mechanism for dissemination of the Fellowship's findings. Finally, the development of the 15 suggested Approaches indicates that newly developing areas, such as Indigenous teaching in a higher education context, can benefit enormously from practical solutions and resources which teachers and pick up and use.

Conclusion

The results of the evaluation highlight the newness of this field of research into Indigenous learning and teaching. Dr Asmar has created an important foundation which can be built on in the future. The model developed through the identification of key Approaches, the initial establishment of network of practitioners through the Forum and the public dissemination through

the website provides a strong mechanism for future growth and development of the field. Her careful attention to protocol, to effective consultative processes, to the dissemination of her work and through that advocacy of Indigenous teaching has been extremely effective, The addition of resources such as approaches to assessment exemplifies the way this work can proceed in the future.

These issues all warrant further exploration and should be the topics of future research. Further work in this area is necessary to build on what has been achieved in this Fellowship. A true assessment of the impact of the Fellowship will require a longer timeframe as it is likely that this Fellowship will continue to have an ongoing effect on the work of others. This is already evident in the response of key stakeholders to what has already been produced.

The results of the evaluation clearly indicate that importance of sustaining the key outcomes, on the resources produced being updated in an ongoing way and in the Fellowship continuing to grow.

An important message underlying Asmar's research is the inequitable distribution of the Indigenous teaching workload. With Indigenous academics constituting less than 1% of the workforce, and with increasing pressures to 'Indigenise' the curricula, Asmar's argument is that for effective Indigenous teaching to occur it is important that non-Indigenous academics increasingly take on this role. In the often fraught and sensitive field of Indigenous teaching, Asmar's finding that senor Indigenous colleagues were more than willing to name non-Indigenous people as having a reputation for exemplary Indigenous teaching, is an important one.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the evaluation a number of key recommendations are made:

1. The ALTC (or similar body) actively promote the uptake of the 15 Approaches by the range of potential audiences identified in the evaluation report.

2. The ALTC (or similar body) continue to support Dr Asmar to disseminate the findings of the research to a wide range of mainstream academic and Indigenous fora.

3. The ALTC (or similar body) continue to support the website and its expansion.

4. Relevant government funding bodies support an ongoing Forum on Indigenous teaching to encompass a national perspective.

5. The ALTC (or similar body) support Dr Asmar's continued growth and expansion of research into Indigenous teaching and learning, including a national perspective, which encompasses student perspectives and outcomes.

6. Dr Asmar be supported by funding bodies to develop guidelines for best practice assessment.

7. Ongoing evaluation of the Fellowship be undertaken including for example: data from the number of 'hits' on the Fellowship website and the longer term impact of the Fellowship on participants through a follow up study.

Terminology

The following terms and/or abbreviations are used in this report:

Aboriginal – the terms Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous are used interchangeably in this report and refer to the original inhabitants of Australia.

Advisory Committee members – members of the Fellowship Advisory Committee.

ALTC - Australian Learning and Teaching Council

Critical Friends – individuals chose by the Fellow to provide high level advice and critique.

Stakeholders – individuals or organisations with a direct interest in the outcomes of the Fellowship.

Impacts – cumulative effects of the Fellowship over time, e.g. fundamental changes in the ways that staff undertake a particular set of responsibilities, which are often not observable or directly measurable within the timeframe or influence of a single Fellowship.

Inputs – the resources put into the Fellowship to enable it to occur.

Processes – the Fellowship's procedures and activities, e.g. workshop activities, planning sessions, individual and group tasks, analysis of data, project management.

Outcomes – effects of the Fellowship on target groups, e.g. changes in knowledge and skill levels of staff or students, may be short-term or longer-term

Outputs – products of the Fellowship, e.g. number of workshops conducted, number of staff trained, number of students achieving intended results.

The Fellowship – *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice*.

Section 1 The Fellowship

1.1   Introduction to the Fellowship

In 2008 Dr Christine Asmar was awarded an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Fellowship to undertake a Fellowship entitled *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice* Fellowship (the 'Fellowship'). The Fellowship involved the development of research-based, practical exemplars for teaching Indigenous students and curricula. It targeted both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers involved in teaching both Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula in the context of Australian Higher Education and was developed in consultation with experienced Indigenous and non-Indigenous advisors.

The underlying rationale for the Fellowship was the need to improve the university learning experiences and outcomes of Indigenous Australians, as evidenced by the comparatively low levels of Indigenous completion and retention rates for Bachelor and Higher Degrees (Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council 2007). The results of Asmar's previous research on Indigenous teachers led her to argue that '*cultural difference strongly influences Indigenous teaching and learning, and that there is a need for a deeper level of academic engagement with the relevant issues, and more effective communication among the academic communities involved* (Asmar 2009). The Fellowship set out to address this deficiency by undertaking research which would identify exemplary Indigenous teaching practice across and result in a set of research-based guidelines based for publication and wide dissemination for use by academics in Australian universities.

In devising the Fellowship, Asmar drew on her considerable previous experience in working with Indigenous and non-indigenous academics in learning and teaching development units within Universities in NSW, Victoria and New Zealand. The conceptual framework for the Fellowship drew from the Indigenist literature which has emerged over the past two decades and is exemplified by the work of Rigney (1997) in Australia and Tuihwai-Smith (2006) in New Zealand.

The immediate context in which the Fellowship took shape was the changing higher education context following the release of the Bradley Review of Higher Education (Australian Government 2008) which included a number of proposals relevant to Indigenous higher education. Specifically the Review called on universities to:

> *Ensure that the institutional culture, the cultural competence of staff and the nature of the curriculum recognizes and supports the participation of Indigenous students*

And

> *Embed Indigenous knowledge into the curriculum to ensure that all students have an understanding of Indigenous culture.*

Research by Dr Asmar and her colleague Associate Professor Susan Page at Macquarie University had recognised that the small workforce of Indigenous academics, just 278 across Australia, only 12% of whom have doctorates (IHEAC 2006), was unlikely to meet the growing

needs for Indigenous teaching in Australian universities (Asmar & Page 2011, Page & Asmar 2008, Asmar & Page 2007). A key assumption of the Fellowship therefore, was that non-Indigenous academics would play an increasingly important role in Indigenous teaching.

'Indigenous Teaching' is broadly defined in the Fellowship as:

> '*Teaching Indigenous, or 'Indigenised', curriculum to any students; and/or teaching any curriculum to Indigenous students'.*

Similarly the term 'Indigenous Studies' in the Fellowship is used inclusively to encompass the diverse ways in which the term is currently being used by practitioners in the field:

> *Many of the teachers interviewed refer to 'Indigenous Studies' as a discipline. This term is debated, partly because it is seen by many as a separate discipline area in the academy – yet is in itself multi-disciplinary. An Indigenous Studies course might draw on anthropology, history, politics, law, health, environmental science, or education (to name just a few) in order to teach students about Indigenous Australia as a whole.*

> (http://www.indigenousteaching.com/html/exemplars_index.html)

The research base for the Fellowship consisted of case studies collected from the NSW and Victorian Universities over an 18 month period from April 2009-September 2010. Although the key research activities primarily involved Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic staff of Universities from these two States the Fellowship drew on a wider range of expert advice through its advisory structure. The Fellowship´s broader application is also evident through national dissemination of the Fellowship outputs including the Fellowship website.

1.1.1 Fellowship aims and objectives

The overall aim of the Fellowship as stated in the Revised Fellowship Program (Asmar 2009) was to improve Indigenous teaching and thereby contribute to improving Indigenous student learning experiences and academic success rates.

More specifically four key objectives (or outcomes) were identified, namely to:
1. Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived;
2. Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities;
3. Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a University of Melbourne Forum; and
4. Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination.

To meet these objectives the following activities were implemented over an 18 month period:

- A literature review was conducted;
- An external advisory structure for the Fellowship was established consisting of,
    - an Advisory Group to provide advice regarding the conduct of the Fellowship;
    - a Critical Friends Group to act as a sounding board for the Fellowship's activities and findings;

- An evaluator was engaged to conduct the formative and summative evaluation;
- Additional feedback was collected through:
  o A meeting with the Advisory Group at the Forum;
  o A Forum evaluation conducted at the Forum;
  o Informal oral or written feedback collected throughout the Fellowship, including unsolicited feedback;
  o Review of de-identified material by the evaluator prior to its being uploaded to the web, to make sure it was appropriate for public dissemination.
- Qualitative data from Indigenous educators for the good practice case studies was collected reviewed and analysed;
- A forum on Indigenous teaching and learning was held to bring together a community of Indigenous teachers and to showcase and discuss case studies; and
- Research-based guidelines for national use were produced and disseminated on the Fellowship website.

1.1.2 Expected outcomes

The Fellowship set out to achieve both short and long term outcomes.

The short term outcomes which could be achieved over the life of the Fellowship (Asmar 2009) were stated as follows:

- Establishment of an effective and productive Working Group (and subsequent networks) involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics
- Active and productive engagement by staff attending the Forum, plus positive evaluations of e.g. likelihood of changes to teaching
- Publishing a set of research-based Guidelines for Good Practice in Indigenous Teaching
- Positive responses to subsequent evaluation of the Fellowship and of the Guidelines

The Revised Program (Asmar 2009) also sets out a number of long term outcomes for two key target groups – staff and students of NSW and Victorian universities – and involve both quantitative and qualitative measures. Desired outcomes for students and staff were stated as follows:

For students:
- higher enrolments of Indigenous undergraduate and (coursework) graduate students across NSW and Victorian universities, plus improved retention and completion rates (for students within Indigenous centres/units and within 'mainstream' disciplines)
- improved levels of Indigenous student course satisfaction as measured by the CEQ
- Improved ratings by Indigenous students of 'Good Teaching' in surveys such as the University of Sydney's Student Course Experience Questionnaire (SCEQ) and the University of Melbourne's Quality of Teaching Survey.
- higher enrolments of Indigenous students in research degrees
- recognising that the small number of Indigenous students in any one course limits the validity of CEQ-type data and risks identifying students, it was suggested that qualitative measures obtained through alternative evaluation methods such as focus groups. Here one would look for high levels of satisfaction and academic confidence, perceptions of quality learning relevant to their futures, and intentions to proceed to higher degrees.

For staff:

- more non-Indigenous academics beginning, and/or continuing to teach effectively in Indigenous fields
- satisfactory retention rates for Indigenous students enrolling and continuing in such courses
- more Indigenous content in mainstream curricula, appropriately introduced and managed
- increased teaching and research (including pedagogical research) collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics
- more reciprocal teaching between Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics - for example, guest lectures to each other's classes - and positive student responses to both
- more Indigenous attendance at 'mainstream' conferences on teaching and learning such as Higher Education Research & Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), and more non-Indigenous attendance at conferences such as Indigenous Studies & Indigenous Knowledges (ISIK).

While no specific timeframe had been established for these outcomes, they are clearly beyond the scope of the timeframe set for the Fellowship and the degree to which the Fellowship may contribute to these outcomes would be quite difficult to ascertain. The focus of the evaluation is primarily on the assessing the effectiveness of the model and its implementation and the degree to which the Fellowship has achieved its short term objectives.

It is important to draw attention to a number of key values and principles which underlie the Fellowship. The importance placed on the values of social justice and equity for Indigenous and non- Indigenous students in the higher education arena are quite evident in all aspects of the Fellowship – from its aims and objectives, through to the operationalisation of the Fellowship, the governance arrangements and the implementation of the key activities.

1.2   Background and context to the Fellowship Scheme

The Australian Learning and Teaching Council's (ALTC) Fellowships Scheme supports leading Australian educators to undertake a Project of strategic, high profile fellowship activities in areas that support the mission of the ALTC. Through their fellowship program, Fellows are expected to explore and address a significant educational issue, develop their personal skills and profile and become ongoing advocates for excellence in learning and teaching. Fellowships involve collaborative activities and the building of national and international partnerships. Fellows are regarded as having the educational expertise and leadership skills to:

- identify educational issues across the higher education system and to facilitate approaches to address these issues
- devise and undertake a significant program of activities that will advance learning and teaching in Australian higher education
- stimulate strategic change in higher education institutions
- raise the profile of learning and teaching in higher education and the prestige associated with the pursuit of excellence in teaching
- show leadership in promoting and enhancing learning and teaching in higher education and exploring new possibilities

- establish and build on national and international partnerships in learning and teaching in higher education
- foster national and international collaboration and collegial networking for sharing research, innovation and good practice in learning and teaching contribute to the growing community of scholars in higher education learning and teaching (ALTC 2010).

In being awarded one of the 52 Fellowships awarded nationally since 2006, Dr Asmar was recognized as a prominent scholar in her disciplinary field who has the capacity to make significant contributions to the educational leadership into the future.

Asmar was awarded a total of $95,000 for the Fellowship which was conducted over an 18 month period. The funding covered personnel costs, notably the Fellowship stipend as well as research assistance, institutional support, expenses associated with the Forum, travel and associated costs, costs for expert advice and the evaluation component. Asmar drew on her own expertise and networks built up over the course of her career, to conduct the Fellowship and bring together a community of scholars physically for the one-day Forum, intellectually in the data collection and development of the Exemplars of Indigenous teaching and virtually through the development of the website.

1.3   Purpose of the evaluation, its objectives and deliverables

Evaluation has been defined as 'a generic process defined at its most general level as the systematic investigation of the worth or merit of an object which can be applied at the level of policy, program and project' (Project Evaluation Standards, 1994 cited in Chesterton and Cummings, 2007). It is also expected that an evaluation will inform the ongoing Fellowship improvement as well as inform policy on Projects in the field of Indigenous higher education teaching. Guidelines for the conduct of evaluation of ALTC Projects and Fellowships are provided by the ALTC and the key deliverable is a final evaluation report includes, amongst other things, 'an analysis of the factors that were critical to the success of the approach and of factors that impeded its success' and 'an analysis of the extent to which the approach is amenable to implementation in a variety of institutions' (Chesterton and Cummings, 2007).

With these broad purposes in mind, this evaluation was undertaken with two key objectives in mind:

- Firstly, to find out what worked or didn't work in *Indigenous Teaching And Learning At Australian Universities: Developing Research-Based Exemplars For Good Practice*; why and in what context the Fellowship, and components of the Fellowship worked or didn't; and
- Secondly, to establish the effectiveness of the model used in the implementation of the Fellowship and contribute to the evidence base for this model.

The evaluation is centred on the four key Fellowship objectives:
- The investigation of how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described;
- The Identification of exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities;

- The effectiveness of the Forum; and
- The production and dissemination of the research-based exemplars.

A description of how the evaluation was carried out and the methods used is contained in the following section.

The key stakeholders identified for the evaluation were:
- The ALTC Fellow (Dr Christine Asmar)
- Members of the Advisory Group
- Members of the group of ´Critical friends´ established for the Fellowship.

A much broader group of individuals were identified as potential audiences for the evaluation report. Apart from ALTC as the funder of the Fellowship, the primary audiences include University teachers (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in higher education or students. A secondary audience for the evaluation report are policy makers and funding bodies, including: division heads within universities, relevant government departments (such as the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, DEEWR), the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC), and members of the National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN).

The evaluation report has been written with these audiences in mind and all parts of the report are considered to be relevant to each of these audiences. Apart from sharing key findings and experiences from the Fellowship one of the key functions of reporting evaluation findings are to encourage the use of the findings by stakeholders. It is hoped that this report will contribute to disseminating the findings of the research.

1.4   Structure of the Report

The evaluation report has been structured to meet the needs of key stakeholders and audiences. It is divided into 6 main sections. Section 1 introduces and provides a brief overview of the Fellowship and some contextual background information about the ALTC Fellowship Scheme. This section has been kept intentionally brief as it draws from information available in sources referenced. Section 2 describes the methods used to undertake the evaluation, including evaluation approach, evaluation questions, the evaluation framework, information sources, and methods of data collection and analysis. The results of the evaluation can be found in Section 3 which is includes both details of the implementation of the Fellowship as well as a description of its outputs, outcomes and impacts. Section 4 brings together a discussion of the implications of the findings of the evaluation, together with some concluding remarks and a number of recommendations arising from the evaluation. The report also includes a short list of references used for the preparation of the evaluation and a series of appendices. References and appendices have intentionally been kept brief as the report has sought not to duplicate resources which have been collated by Asmar and are readily available on the Fellowship website.

Section 2 Evaluation Methods

2.1   Purpose and scope of the evaluation

ALTC Teaching Fellows are required to carry out an evaluation of their Fellowship that encompasses both the activities carried out during the course of the Fellowship and the outcomes of the Fellowship. In June 2010 Professor Kathleen Clapham was approached by Asmar and asked to undertake an evaluation of the Fellowship. The principal purpose of the evaluation is to meet the formal requirements of the ALTC Fellowship scheme for a summative evaluation of the Fellowship which would become available as a public document. As a member of the Advisory Group for the Fellowship, the evaluator also provided formative evaluation to the Fellow throughout the planning and implementation stages of the Fellowship. The evaluation was conducted between June 2010 and July 2011.

The evaluation of *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice* is a Fellowship evaluation has involved the evaluator in the following processes:

- Negotiating an evaluation plan with the ALTC Fellow, Dr Christine Asmar;
- Contributing to the formative evaluation over the period of the Fellowship's implementation
- Identifying, collecting and analysing new evidence to produce the findings contained in this report;
- Utilising existing Fellowship documentation including the Forum evaluation administered in Melbourne in 2009.
- Describing and making judgements about the effectiveness of the Fellowship.
- Disseminating drafts of the report for consultation with advisors
- Producing a final report for dissemination on a public website

The focus of the evaluation has been on both its outcomes in meeting its short and longer term objectives, as well as on the processes, or how the Fellowship was implemented. The evaluation, therefore, is intended to usefully describe and summarize the Fellowship in a way which would both document the work accomplished by the Fellowship and be a useful tool for others wishing to replicate the activities as well as meeting the formal requirement of the ALTC Fellowship Scheme for a report which includes both formative and summative evaluation components.

The rationale for the Fellowship was the need to improve the university learning experiences and outcomes of Indigenous Australians, as evidenced by the low levels of Indigenous completion and retention rates for Bachelor and Higher Degrees. In addressing this need, the original proposal for the Fellowship also lists a number of longer-term desired outcomes for staff and students (see page 9 of this Report for details). To establish whether the Fellowship achieved what it set out to achieve in terms of these longer term outcomes would not only require a longer timeframe to be realised, but would also need to take into consideration the considerable difficulties of attributing the specified changes to any single Fellowship. While it may be possible to assess the contribution of the Fellowship to an overall improvement in the

longer term, but this would be the subject of a separate piece of work conducted sometime in the future.

2.2 Evaluation Approach

This Evaluation Report is the culmination of a process which has occurred over a two year period during which the Fellowship has been carried out. In the early stages of the ALTC Fellowship, Asmar established a Fellowship Advisory Group as well as drawing together a group of 'Critical Friends', who could advise on the overall development of the Fellowship, act as a sounding board in relation to the development of specific components, and provide a source of feedback in the monitoring of the Fellowship's progress in meeting its objectives. Mid-way during the implementation of the Fellowship Asmar requested that one of the members of the Advisory Group also undertake the formal Fellowship evaluation.

As a member of the Fellowship Advisory Group since its inception, Professor Clapham, although located externally, was essentially an 'external insider' evaluator[1]. As an Indigenous educator she had a detailed understanding of the context in which the Fellowship operated. Additionally she was involved in the Fellowship Project as a member of the Advisory Group, a participant in the interview and workshops, and an observer of a number of its key activities such as the 2009 Forum (while not actually a presenter at the Forum). She was therefore also a stakeholder in the evaluation's outcomes. Professor Clapham is also an employee of an organization providing professional evaluation services[2] and is experienced in undertaking project evaluation in public health and education. The ALTC, consulted as to the appropriateness of appointing Professor Clapham as the Evaluator, were favourably disposed.

Potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest have been managed in this evaluation by drawing on two sources of expert advice for the evaluation:

- Firstly, adopting the same negotiated process set up by Asmar for the design and implementation of the Fellowship, the evaluator drew on the experience of a the Advisory and Critical Friends groups, and used a number of these individuals as a 'sounding board' to check the accuracy of details and information, provide additional perspectives on assessment and judgements about activities and their impact, and to provide feedback on drafts of the evaluation report.
- Secondly, drawing on the professional advice of colleagues in the drafting and re drafting of the Evaluation Report.

This evaluation was guided by the recommended resource for the evaluation of ALTC projects which is available on the ALTC website: http://www.altc.edu.au/extras/altc-gsep/index.html.

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[1] Using the terminology of Chesterton P, Cummings R. Evaluating Projects: Resources. The Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education; 2007.P.15

[2] Australian Health Services Research Institute (AHSRI)

The ALTC recommends the use of guidelines developed by Chesterton and Cummings (3) for evaluation of projects funded under the ALTC Grants Scheme. A number of useful checklists were also used to ensure that the full range of evaluation design issues were considered, including: the 'Evaluation Design Checklist' (2), which is a generic guide to planning and conducting small and large evaluations.

Specific evaluation questions related to these two purposes were developed collaboratively with Asmar and the evaluator and used to guide the methods for the evaluation. The focus of the evaluation questions was on the implementation processes, its outcomes (short-term and/or longer-term) and its impact.

2.3 Developing the evaluation framework and key performance measures

2.3.1 Evaluation Questions

The key questions for the evaluation are as follows:

1. **Was the Fellowship implemented as planned?**
   - What processes were planned and what were actually put in place for the Fellowship?
   - Were there any variations from the processes that were initially proposed, and if so, why?
   - How might the Fellowship be improved?
   - How successful was the Fellowship in reaching its desired audiences?

2. **Did the Fellowship achieve what it set out achieve?**
   - How and to what extent did the Fellowship meet its desired objectives?
   - What were the observable short-term outcomes?
   - What were they key outputs?
   - What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?
   - Were there any unintended outcomes?

3. **What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote sustainability of the Fellowship's focus and outcomes?**

4. **What lessons have been learned from this Fellowship and how might these be of assistance to other institutions?**

2.3.2 Information sources and techniques for the evaluation

The evaluation drew upon five main sources of information:

1. Selected review of relevant literature from:
   - Published peer review, non-peer review and 'grey' literature, including websites, on Indigenous education and evaluation methods.(2, 3)
   - Evaluation literature

2. Analysis of Fellowship documentation including:
    o Fellowship Proposal submitted to the ALTC (See Appendix A)
    o Final Fellowship Report to the ALTC (See Appendix A)
    o Notes from Advisory Committee meetings
    o Documentation of activities including the Workshop
    o Material found on Fellowship website
    o Correspondence including letters of invitation to present findings at conferences and workshops

3. Assessment of the effectiveness of Fellowship website

4. Evaluation of the Forum incorporating data collected from:
    o Qualitative survey of workshop participants
    o Participant observation of workshop

5. Interviews with key stakeholders including:
    o Members of the Fellowship Advisory Group
    o Critical friends

2.3.3   Evaluation Framework

Drawing on the framework proposed by Chesterton and Cummings (2007) the following table indicates the key Fellowship elements to be evaluated and data sources:

Table 1: Evaluation Framework

Overall goal			
Fellowship goals and objectives	**Evaluation Question**	**Indicator**	**Data sources**
▪ Build an evidence base of good practice for teaching Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula	**Did the Fellowship achieve its goal?**		Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website Interviews with: ▪ ALTC Fellow

Intended outcomes			
▪ Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described	**Did the Fellowship achieve its intended outcomes?**	Qualitative research outcomes	Fellowship documentation: • Final report • website
▪ Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities		Examples of good practice identified	Fellowship documentation: • Final report • Website
▪ Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a Forum at The University of Melbourne		Forum evaluations Likelihood of changes to teaching	Fellowship documentation: • Final report • Website • Forum evaluation
▪ Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination		Publication of research-based Exemplars	Fellowship documentation: • Website

Process	What did the Fellowship do?		
FELLOWSHIP DELIVERY	1. What processes were planned and what were actually put in place for the Fellowship?	• Appropriateness and effectiveness of Advisory processes • Active and productive engagement by staff attending the Forum	Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • notes from meetings • website Results of Forum Evaluation Interviews with: ▪ ALTC Fellow
	2. Were there any variations from the processes that were initially proposed, and if so, why?	• Variations are Accounted for.	Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website Interviews with: ▪ ALTC Fellow
	3. How successful was the Fellowship in reaching its desired audiences?	• Recruitment of research participants • Forum participation and feedback • Website hits • Dissemination of results	Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
	4. How might the Fellowship be improved?	• Stakeholder suggestions • Recommendations for future directions	Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend

Impact –short and intermediate term	Did the Fellowship achieve what it set out achieve?		
FELLOWSHIP IMPACT	5. What were the observable short-term outcomes?	Fellowship Outcomes	Fellowship documentation: Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
	6. To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved?	Fellowship Outcomes: Forum, Exemplars, Website	Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
	7. What were the key outputs?		Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website • Invited presentations
	8. What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?		Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
	9. Were there any unintended outcomes?		Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • AC/CF
FELLOWSHIP SUSTAINABILITY	10. What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote sustainability of the Fellowship's focus and outcomes?		Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
LESSONS LEARNED	11. What lessons have been learned from this Fellowship?		Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website • Invited presentations Interviews with: • ALTC Fellow • Advisory Group member • Critical Friend
	12. How might lessons learnt be of assistance to Indigenous educationalists and/or institutions?		• Invited and other Presentations • Website

Outputs			
PRODUCTS	13. What was produced by the Fellowship	• Number of workshops and participants • Knowledge produced • Materials and online resources produced	Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website • Invited presentations
DISSEMINATION	14. How have the results of the Fellowship been disseminated?		Fellowship documentation: • Fellowship application • Final report • Notes from meetings • Website • Invited presentations

2.3.4   Data Collection methods and analysis

A range of different types of data was sourced for the data collection and analysis. They included the following:

1. Internal documentation:
    *   Revised Program (Asmar 2009)
    *   Final report (Asmar 2011)
    *   Website
    *   Email correspondence with Dr Asmar
    *   Meeting notes
    *   Other unsolicited email correspondence and feedback

2. Key Stakeholder interviews conducted by phone and Email
    *   A request to conduct a brief phone interview was sent by email to 14 stakeholders:
        o   6 members of the Advisory Committee
        o   8 of the Critical Friends
    *   7 Interviews were completed
        o   6 phone interviews
        o   1 written email response
    *   Of the remaining 7 stakeholders
        o   3 responded positively to the request for interview but were unable to be interviewed within the timeframe
        o   1 was on leave and unable to be contacted
        o   3 did not respond

3. Previously processed workshop data
    o   Workshop survey
    o   Observation of workshop

The Internal Fellowship documentation was used both descriptively to provide information about the Fellowship background and processes and to fill gaps in knowledge and critically analysed in response to the evaluation questions. The Final Report (Asmar 2011) contained useful information which had already been synthesised by Asmar. Some of this has been reproduced (and acknowledged) in this evaluation report. The stakeholder interviews were quite brief and asked specific questions relevant to the evaluation. This data was then entered into an excel spreadsheet and analysed in response to the evaluation questions. Any additional emerging themes were reported. The workshop survey data used for the evaluation included both demographic and evaluation data from the workshop participants which had already been processed by Asmar and reproduced in her Final report, as well as the full transcript of answers to open ended questions which were provided to all members of the Advisory Group for their comment.

It is considered that a sufficient range of data collected has been collected and analysed to undertake the evaluation. A variety of different methods and different data sources was used

to establish validity, however there are some limitations. The stakeholder interviews, though qualitative, were quite brief to elicit responses to specific questions. Some of the answers provided insights to the theoretical issues underlying the Fellowship but these were not explored in great depth.

Section 3 Results

This chapter presents the key findings with respect to the each of the evaluation questions posed. The chapter draws primarily upon the quantitative data collected and includes a discussion of emerging theme areas.

3.1   Fellowship Implementation and processes

Evaluation Question 1: Was the Fellowship implemented as planned?
- What processes were planned and what were actually put in place for the Fellowship?
- Were there any variations from the processes that were initially proposed, and why?
- How might the Fellowship be improved?
- How successful was the Fellowship in reaching its desired audiences?

3.1.1   Establishment and implementation of the Fellowship

The ALTC Fellowship was awarded to Dr Asmar in 2008. The Fellowship was originally planned to be based at the University of Sydney, where Dr Asmar was employed in the Institute for Teaching & Learning in 2008 and was to involve a number of NSW universities. The actual implementation of the Fellowship in its early stages involved some variation from this original plan. The implementation of the program was postponed until 2009 due to Dr Asmar taking a sabbatical from July 2008 – January 2009.

Then, in January 2009 Dr Asmar took up a new position at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of Melbourne. The University of Melbourne agreed to provide the same level of Institutional support for the Fellowship that had been previously committed by the University of Sydney, but the move to the state of Victoria had some important implications for the way the Fellowship was implemented.

The Fellowship as originally planned involved only NSW universities; it was subsequently expanded to include universities in Victoria. These variations and their impact on the establishment of the Fellowship in its early stages are clearly described in Asmar's Revised Program (Asmar 2009). They resulted in a number of minor budgetary and organisational changes, but more importantly, the change of location resulted in an expansion of the Fellowship as originally planned. The original proposal had a solid base in Asmar's work over many years at the University of Sydney and collegial relations with academics in other NSW universities. The move to Victoria meant that Asmar had to quickly establish new networks with Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics there, gain Institutional support for her
Fellowship and plan for the key Fellowship event – the Forum – in new territory, at the same time as having to adapt to a new work and living environment.

The fact that the Forum went ahead as originally planned in November 2009, with considerable institutional support from the University of Melbourne, attests to the careful

planning and organisation which underlay all aspects of the Fellowship as well as the negotiation skills of the Fellow.

Another change to the Fellowship as originally proposed were a result of early advice from senior Indigenous colleagues and led to a redefinition of the scope of the Fellowship. As stated in Asmar's final report (Asmar 2011), the fellowship originally set out to develop a set of
'Research-based Guidelines for Good Practice in Indigenous teaching'. However, due to other Indigenous research being done on in this area, the Fellowship was 'scaled back' and subsequently focused on the practical aspects of teaching rather than the theoretical.

An important variation from the original proposal, and original objectives, was the decision to focus almost entirely on Indigenous teaching rather than students. Ethical approval was gained to run a focus group with students but this was not carried out. The reason cited was lack of time (Asmar 2009). While it is highly unlikely that it would be possible to attribute the desired student outcomes to the Fellowship, it is possible that the Fellowship could contribute in some way to these outcomes, but this would need to be evaluated within a longer timeframe. Students were eventually involved in the Fellowship by means of two student presentations included in the Forum.

With the expanded geographical base and a somewhat refocused Fellowship, Asmar successfully completed the following key tasks over the 18 months between April 2009 and September 2010:
- A completed literature review
- Ethical approval for the Fellowship
- Establishment of consultative processes through the Advisory Group and the Critical Friends Group
- Completed interviews with 26 Indigenous and non-Indigenous university teachers, in New South Wales and Victoria.
- Disseminated information about the Fellowship
- Organised and hosted the Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching at The University of Melbourne, in December 2009.
- Established an external Fellowship website
- Produced a Final Report

3.1.2 Consultative and formative evaluation processes

A central component of the Fellowship from its outset, and was the establishment of a consultative structure which could provide ongoing advice as to how the Fellowship should proceed at key points and critical feedback on activities as they were implemented, hence operating as a formative evaluation mechanism. Two groups were established - an *Advisory Group* and the *Critical Friends*. They were distinguished in the following way:

- The Advisory Group was made up of eight, including six of Indigenous background. This group provided ongoing advice regarding the conduct of the Fellowship throughout its implementation.

- The Critical Friends group was made up of eight high profile academics, seven of whom were Indigenous. This group acted as a sounding board for the Fellowship's activities and findings and provided less regular input;

Selection for membership of each group was determined by Asmar who describes the process as 'shoulder tapping'. Asmar drew on her existing networks of academics working in the field of Indigenous teaching as well as identifying experts of national standing. She selected both Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, but prioritised Indigenous academics. The two groups set up to guide the Fellowship included high profile Indigenous and non-Indigenous who were very well placed to provide expert advice, as well as practical assistance. Over 80% of the 16 advisors were Indigenous.

The views of stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation indicate that Asmar had made good choices both in terms of individual membership of both groups, the range of discipline areas covered an in choosing both Indigenous and non-Indigenous members, though giving overall priority to having Indigenous membership. The following views from stakeholders reveal that many issues were taken into account in designing the consultative structures:

> *Well constructed. Indigenous and non-indigenous. A range of people. People working across many areas. Critical friends were high powered – critical in lots of ways – critical to her success but also critical friends. Between the advisory group and the critical friends she had a lot of people involved in giving feedback. That was very wise.* (Advisory Group member)

> *The only thing she could have talked to more non-indigenous people – but there were plenty amongst the exemplars.* (Advisory Group Member)

> *I am sure that Christine having various people she could draw upon for a sounding board and advice was very helpful.* (Advisory Group member)

Unlike many Fellowship Advisory Committees which hold formal quarterly or monthly meetings often bringing members from interstate, there was considerably more informality in the way advice was sought from members of the groups. Communications were mainly by email, sending out drafts for comment, and phone conversations with individual advisors rather than teleconferences. Partly to curb costs, and partly in recognition of the heavy workload of the academics involved, the Advisory Group only held one face to face meeting as a group, at the Forum held in Melbourne in November 2009. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Forum, and the whole Fellowship, and to suggest future directions.

Similarly, meetings with Critical Friends tended to be opportunistic. Two of the Critical Friends were also ALTC Fellows and met informally at ALTC meetings. Apart from these opportunistic group meetings, advice was given through individual one on one meetings and email communication.

> *All ideas for forums and projects plus evaluations were shared among the group and comments were elicited. Advice was given via email. Most members commented.* (Advisory Group Member)

Views of Advisory Group members were sought on issues such as: the selection of interviewees; deciding on the wording of questions; the choice of speakers for the Forum, evaluating how the Fellowship was progressing; and suggesting ways forward.

When asked about the appropriateness of the consultative process, without exception stakeholders replied positively. The following responses were typical:

> *This is a useful way of working with a group of people in many different locations.* (Advisory Group Member)

Members of both group felt that they were listened to and their advice taken on board, thus helping to shape the Fellowship:

> *She took advice on board; networked; committed to getting indigenous people involved.* (Advisory Group Member)

> *Reflecting on the fact that we only met once – would have been really expensive to do more – the important thing is that we all knew who was involved – with more funding we could have met up more but I'm not sure that that would have been better. The advisory process Chris didn't shut anyone down. It was easy to say this is not working for me. There was a whole discussion about 'are we talking about ATSI teachers or are we talking about indigenous teaching across the disciplines. Some got teased out in the process but Chris always listened.* (Critical Friend)

> *My advice really well received – I tried to be as open and transparent as possible – advisory not necessarily about what I felt – part of it was Christine really did think she'd gone into this with an idea of what she was going to find and she did find things she was surprised by… The same true when I said –'have you thought about this'; Problem of people telling you what you want to hear.* (Critical Friend)

In addition to these comments about the processes itself stakeholders also provided unsolicited comments (mostly in response the question – Is there anything else you'd like to add?) about Dr Asmar's personal qualities and her meticulous attention to detail, particularly in organising the Forum and implementing the Fellowship. The following comments represent the general consensus,

> *This is one of the things Christine does well. Diligent. Good at putting information out.* (Advisory Group Member)

> *The other thing that is professional about Christine is the way she works as a non-indigenous person in an Indigenous arena. She is a non-indigenous person checking all the time. Strives to make sure that her personal ways of working are culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive so that the indigenous voices come to the fore. She is a facilitator.* (Advisory Group Member)

> *I thought that Christine Asmar led the project well and was extremely inclusive in managing the outcomes.* (Advisory Group Member)

I think Christine has done a great job, (Critical Friend)

In addition to the advice and information received through the advisory structures, other feedback received by Asmar about the progress of the Fellowship throughout the Fellowship was an additional source of useful formative information. Examples of such unsolicited feedback include requests from Indigenous academic colleagues for advice as to how to run similar forums. Asmar also received a number of unsolicited emails about aspects of the Fellowship which attest to its impact:

Regarding the Forum

> *Thank you for an excellent workshop yesterday. I received some excellent feedback following the workshop from a number of people across the school. There was a definite call that this was only the beginning and people wanted more teaching professional development. I will raise it at School Exec next time we meet.*
> (Senior academic)

Regarding the resources on the website:
> *When I did my Aboriginal Ed unit in my pre-service teaching qualification…I was struck by how practical the ideas were. Furthermore I can't understand why any teacher would not use the same principles in any class with any student. And as I read through the 15 indigenous teaching principles I find myself nodding – we should all be doing this…. I teach at a Christian school and I find the principles very relevant to my situation. Especially the ideas that help us modify our individualistic Western world view towards collaboration and building stronger connections with the community – especially parents …but also the wider community.*
> *(Teacher)*

3.1.3 Protocols

In her Final Report, Asmar notes that 'working in Indigenous areas is very sensitive. Taking extra time and care is always justified in terms of getting it right – but can be at odds with regular timelines and the expectations of funding bodies' (Asmar 2009).

The importance which Asmar places on correct protocols or 'getting it right' is evident throughout all aspects of the Fellowship. Her considerable sensitivity towards potentially conflictual issues was also noted on by stakeholders.

> *Christine herself is a very exceptional person- quite refined – respectful way – pretty unusual – I have a lot of admiration about the way she did this – the field often quite fraught – she sometimes realises and sails rights through – committed to doing it properly. The amount of good will was impressive – partly to do with Christine's good will. Sometimes those types of things are a real rage fest.* (Critical Friend)

Similarly, the processes by which data was obtained through the interviews involved the development of a set of protocols or way of working: Asmar initially sought a meeting with

Indigenous leaders, whom she refers to as 'Indigenous academic elders' on each campus, to inform them about the Fellowship; she did not ask directly about their Indigeneity; she interviewed in groups where people were more comfortable with that process; she offered participants the opportunity to have their identity and that of their institution concealed; she reciprocated whenever possible for the time given in the interview process. The reciprocity took a number of forms. In the case of some elders a fee was paid. It also included offers to read drafts of publications, while for others a place in the Forum with expenses paid was offered.

Other protocols implemented in the data collection phase were for interview transcripts, even final coded transcripts, to be checked with the interviewee. Quotes used for the exemplars were not only cited with permission from those interviewed, but also circulated for approval by the Indigenous evaluator.

For the Forum, Asmar drew on a respected local Elder to do a formal 'Welcome to Country'; 'Aunty Di' (Kerr) was invited to remain and participate in the Forum discussions. Again this aspect of Indigenous protocol became an important component of the Fellowship as Asmar developed Guidelines on how to manage Welcomes and Acknowledgements for dissemination on the website Asmar also took considerable care to source and properly acknowledge both beautiful and meaningful artwork for the Fellowship website..

Drawing on the Indigenist research of Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1997), Asmar sought to prioritise Indigenous voices and perspectives throughout the Fellowship. Thirteen of the 19 presenters at the Forum were Indigenous, and her own presentation was co-presented with a longstanding Indigenous colleague and collaborator, Associate Professor Susan Page.

3.1.4   Fellowship Reach

The expansion of the Fellowship across two States greatly increased the reach of the project. As Asmar points out in her final report, together NSW and Victoria contain:

- 46% of all Australian universities
- 41% of all Indigenous Australian academics, and
- 41% of all Indigenous Australian students
(DEEWR 2009, cited in Asmar 2010)

Twenty-six (26) academics from NSW and Victorian universities were interviewed for the Fellowship. While Victoria and NSW remained the main focus of the Fellowship's major activities, broader input from other Australian states and territories was achieved through a number of means. Membership of the two consultative bodies included representation from eleven different universities located across the two states as well as the Northern Territory. A total of one hundred Forum attendees were drawn from several states as well as the Northern Territory.

3.1.5 Dissemination

A variety of formats were used for dissemination of materials and information about the program prior to, during and following the completion of the Fellowship. In keeping with the predominantly academic audience for the Fellowship, formats for dissemination were primarily those typically targeting academics, including formal letters to University divisions and departments to advertise the Forum, presentations at academic seminars and conferences, refereed journal articles.

The Fellowship website is perhaps the major media for ongoing dissemination of the Fellowship and its findings. A list of presentations resulting from the Fellowship can be found both on the
website and in the Final Report (Asmar 2011). An updated list can be found in Appendix C.

All ALTC reports and publications will be placed on the DEEWR website after its closure in September 2011.

3.2   Fellowship Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts

> Evaluation Question 2: Did the Fellowship achieve what it set out achieve?
> - How and to what extent did the Fellowship meet its desired objectives?
> - What were the observable short-term outcomes?
> - What were they key outputs?
> - What factors helped and hindered in the achievement of the outcomes?
> - Where there any unintended outcomes?

3.2.1   Did the Fellowship meet its desired objectives?

The four goals (which can be considered objectives for the purpose of the evaluation) submitted in the original application to the ALTC were to:

1. Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived;
2. Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities;
3. Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a The University of Melbourne Forum; and
4. Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination.

To answer the question as to how and to what extent the Fellowship met its desired objectives the evaluation has drawn from the range of available data sources collected for the evaluation, including the various forms of Fellowship documentation, key stakeholder interviews, unsolicited feedback and the Forum evaluation.

The key stakeholders responses to the question as to whether the Fellowship achieved what it set out to achieved were overwhelmingly positive. There was variation in the aspect of the Fellowship on which individual stakeholders focused when answering this question.

All stakeholders acknowledged that overall Asmar had successfully completed all of the activities she set out to achieve and that the outcomes/activities have been disseminated publically through the Forum and the website. The following response is typical:

> *I do… I think it's a terrific outcome; She's done all of those; the Forum and the website; and the clever thing is to have its own website* (Advisory Group Member)

Another identified the way she answered the key research question as the main achievement that is the identification of diverse approaches to Indigenous teaching:

> *Yeah I think it does. Obviously the central aim of it is really important that it's really trying to find to show that there are various approaches. These were flashed up at the session Christine did (Feb this year) at an ALTC session in Brisbane. One of the questions we talked about a lot around the room and afterwards was 'good practice' indigenous teaching. This was a really tricky term – Is it: teaching from an indigenous perspective; Teaching indigenous curricula? This can be added to. But this is good about the website resource – can be added. It is there in the Project* (Critical Friend)

Other stakeholders focused on particular aspects of her achievement, for example on the way she linked the diverse range of participants involved in the Fellowship

> *I think she did a very good job linking up with a whole lot of different people and working with them.* (Advisory Group Member)

Others still gave a sense of the enormous challenges involved in such a Fellowship given the newness of the field of study, and emphasised that there is still work to be done. For example,

> *I think it achieved the best possible that it could have achieved, given that there is isn't a lot of evidence. That was difficult. The next best thing is what she achieved.* (Advisory Group Member)

Each of the key outputs of the Fellowship has been described in further detail below. Overall, the combined analysis of stakeholder and other feedback, Fellowship documentation and Forum evaluation provide quite clear evidence that the Fellowship did indeed achieve what it set out to achieved and that it did so in a meticulous and careful fashion.

3.2.2 Key outputs

Over the course of 18 months the Fellowship produced various types of outputs. The most important of these were the *Approaches to Indigenous Teaching*, the *National Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching*, and the *Indigenous Teaching* Website.

The 15 Approaches
The principal aim of the Fellowship was

> *To provide both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers with research-based
> practical exemplars for teaching Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula
> effectively*
> (Asmar 2011)

Asmar achieved this aim by undertaking short semi-structured face-to-face qualitative
interviews with 26 Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers in NSW and Victorian
universities. Of those interviewed, 62% were female; 54% worked in an Indigenous Centre
within a university as opposed to 46% working in mainstream faculties or disciplines; around
50% had 10 or more years of experience in teaching; and 54% were Indigenous.

Ethical approval for the research component was obtained through the Universities of
Sydney and Melbourne (Ethics ID # 0931480 – University of Melbourne). Recruitment of
participants for the Fellowship was by way of a third party, namely Indigenous leaders on
each university campus who were asked to recommend colleagues who were exemplary
teachers, after a personal meeting with Asmar to meet with to inform them of the
Fellowship.

With the permission of participants, interviews were recorded and transcripts returned to
interviewees for checking if requested. The data was then coded using NVivo 8 software
package. The analysis of the interviews resulted in the identification of the 15 suggested
Approaches to Indigenous Teaching (See Appendix D). In selecting the Approaches, Asmar
ensured that a diverse range of disciplines and teaching contexts were included. The use of
the direct voice of research participants was a key strategy used by Asmar to describe the
Approaches. Each Approach was exemplified by short verbatim interview extracts. As the
direct quotes were to be placed very publically on the website, they were selected very
carefully, with the permission of participants, and after consultation with the Evaluator
regarding their appropriateness.

In addition to the Approaches themselves, an important finding of the research is the
significant present and future role played by non-Indigenous academics in what is defined in
the Fellowship as effective 'Indigenous teaching'. This is based not only on the fact that
Indigenous academics constitute fewer than 1% of all academics in Australian universities
(IHEAC 2008), but also on the strong support which Asmar found of non-Indigenous
colleagues by Indigenous academic leaders.

Some of those interviewed were subsequently invited to present their work at the 2009
Melbourne Forum, discussed in further detail below. Finally, the key product of the research,
the 15 suggested Approaches to Indigenous Teaching were uploaded to the Fellowship
website. In addition to the dissemination on the website the 15 Approaches are also available
in pamphlet form.

Stakeholders, who were asked to comment generally on the 15 Approaches, provided the
following responses:

> *Yes fantastic, the exemplars are fantastic. The fact that those exemplars – were
> research based – they actually came out of best practice – arose organically from
> people's real experience.* (Advisory Group Member)

If you just look at the exemplars they are fairly general – many would make sense in a number of other contexts. But in a sense that's actually very useful. That is how it is. If you're teaching Indigenous studies then you do need to do that stuff of connecting with the community. It actually shows that it's actually not that hard to do. (Advisory Group Member)

There is a lot of data that could look further at the themes that come out (e.g. pedagogical issues/partnerships); really accessible. (Advisory Group Member)

I think what's important about the material up there – there is no question that the material that is up there is materials that is going to be really useful really helpful. We would use a whole lot of this material in our research. (Advisory Group Member)

The use of direct quotes, while carefully selected by the researcher, provides a very direct, unmediated access to the research participants, and relies less on the researcher's interpretations. Stakeholders were asked to comment on the effectiveness of the direct quotes. They provided the following types of comments:

Christine was very careful about the appropriateness of the use of quotes. Her research skills and project management skills were respectful and professional. (Advisory Group member)

*I like it. I think that in this particular environment of having indigenous voices that's important. Not that all these voices are indigenous. If you're a teacher it's good to hear these voices in the way people are thinking. Gives richness. (*Advisory Group member)

*Adds to the authenticity of the work. (*Advisory Group member)

*Very clever – I liked the idea of multiple ideas and comments – worked well; …wouldn't have hurt to have more people named. (*Advisory Group member)

*Often what we don't have is a lot of direct quotes – being able to tease out both ways learning – we also have to deal with government and get them to understand some of the issues – it has already been a helpful resource for a submission. (*Critical Friend)

*I think it's really good that they're varied. They don't just provide a solution. They provide multiple solutions. It's much more simplistic to say that there is one solution. There is a tendency in teaching and learning to do this – especially for new people – providing them with answers is incredibly dangerous because they don't explore further. I think it's good that voices are included that talk about opening up dialogue – about making safe spaces and sometimes not making spaces safe. Obviously with individuals we have to come up with solutions but it does worry me. It goes back to what I think good teaching is – has to do with flexibility and that that's what this does. (*Critical Friend)

interesting practical resource – the best example of that there really were people who had quite different approaches e.g. students understanding their own ontological

*framework (e.g. discussion about blue eyes brown eyes) and the other one 'walking in their shoes'; Really good that just one strategy not being promoted as truth – other strong complexities –; Capacity of the Project to reflect the research findings – there were a lot of varied responses. (*Critical Friend)

I'm interested in the ways academics and anyone involved in knowledge can learn from Indigenous knowledge practices. There is something that is importantly distinctive about indigenous knowledge which makes it startling distinctive about ordinary knowledge. The way in which knowledge is related to place. The way in which language produces new possibility. The way in which knowledge is owned. The way in which knowledge is something you have rather than something you do. There are a lot of pieces of Indigenous knowledge which important lessons are in the classroom – those lessons have been captured in the 15 exemplars without being clear about why those 15 are important (but maybe I'm being too theoretical). (Critical Friend)

I got really positive feedback when I sent around the link to the (named institutions) academic staff. I got 15 responses. It was really good – identified a whole lot of issues for people who have never taught in mainstream settings. We have a really different dynamic but it was really good for them all our students are indigenous. An early career academic that has just finished her PhD – never taught before – great researcher and good communicator – was floundering – she said it really helped. (Critical Friend)

Stakeholders were also asked if anything should have been done differently. The two Critical Friends who respond to that question did so in the following way,

The one think I would have liked to see more of is what do you do with students that cause a barney in the classroom – this is a great area but probably the lightest on – I think I brought it up before, negotiating emotions in the classroom – I like that – it's also not just turning that into the problem – to be honest I've been teaching since 1993 I don't have all the solutions but I do think that you develop some strategies and what this did is exactly – I certainly did out of some of the other areas – setting high standards in the classroom really good. (Critical Friend)

I think the exemplars might have been better to be case studies than as general abstractive theory of how things ought to be done. Christine and I talked about this a lot – there is an issue – how far can you go to generalise the experience of indigenous academics in when they find themselves. The outcomes may have been a little general…And is generally what good practice in uni teaching anyway is and not what is specific about Indigenous. The way that she talked about Indigenous teachers teaching Indigenous studies… things to do with Indigenous studies may have conflated a number of different problems and ended up with something quite general than if they had been teased out – separate out issues. (Critical Friend)

The Forum

The major public event during the implementation of the Fellowship was the one-day *National Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching* held at the University of Melbourne on Friday 11 December 2009. The purpose of the Forum, in the context of the recommendations of the Bradley Review (Australian Government 2008) and in line with the objectives of the Fellowship, was to bring together a community of scholars to showcase and discuss best practice Indigenous teaching to engage in discussion about such as: what characterises effective Indigenous teaching; what is the evidence base for such effectiveness; who might individual teachers further enhance their current practice; and how should universities support and manage Indigenous teaching and learning (Asmar 2011).

The Forum involved 20 presenters, all of whom were invited ('shoulder tapped') by the Fellow. Presenters were selected on the basis that they were personally known to Asmar, or that their work was known to her, or that they had been interviewed by her (having been identified as exemplary teachers by the Indigenous leaders at their institutions). The names of potential presenters were also discussed with Advisory Group members.

Of the 20 presenters 14 were Indigenous teachers (including the Keynote presenter), while the remaining 6 were non-Indigenous. All the plenary presenters were Indigenous, while both Indigenous and non-Indigenous presenters were included in the shorter showcases of teaching practice. Speakers included one Indigenous and one non-Indigenous student presenter.

Detailed Information from the Forum, including audio files and PowerPoint slides of most of the sessions, and presenters' biographies were subsequently uploaded and have become publicly available on the Fellowship website, available at:
http://www.indigenousteaching.com/html/c-asmar.html

One hundred participants attended the forum after formal letters advertising the event were sent out to the heads of all Indigenous centres and schools and to the heads of academic development centres in all NSW and Victorian universities, all Pro-Vice-Chancellors Teaching and Learning, and any Deputy Vice-Chancellors with Indigenous responsibilities. No registration fee was charged, which meant that the number of people who could be invited had to be somewhat limited. All non-presenters paid for their own accommodation and travel. However, all travel expenses of speakers were paid (plus a small gift).

A short survey evaluation of the Forum was undertaken by Asmar on the day. The survey asked about the participant's teaching role, Indigenous status, and included four Likert scale type questions asking participants to rate the form in terms of its overall quality, lessons learnt, Indigenous perspectives and value of networking. Space was also provided for open ended comments.

The main purpose of the survey was to assess whether key outcomes had been met. The tool developed was also an efficient way of getting quick feedback about how the day went. The response rate of 30% was a reasonable response given that participants were asked to fill in their forms after a long and rather intense day of listening and discussing. A large number of participants opted to provide additional open ended comments.

Of the 100 attendees who received an evaluation form in their Forum folder, 30 completed the form, N=30) giving a response rate of around 30%. The evaluation form itself is available on the Fellowship website. The results of the evaluation were written up in Asmar's final report (Asmar 2011) and are summarised below.

Sixty-six percent of the 30 participants who completed the evaluation (n=20) stated that they had a teaching role. Fifty percent of the respondents (n=15) answered 'No' to the question 'Are you Indigenous? Of the remainder 40 percent answered 'Yes' and 2 declined to respond. It should be noted that the no response may possibly be a response to the way the question was asked. This can be a sensitive area and despite the fact that the term 'Indigenous' is the 'official' term in Commonwealth and other government areas, many people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin do not refer to themselves as 'Indigenous'. Many prefer 'Aboriginal; or even 'Koori', 'Noongar' etc depending on their place of birth.

Recently a standard way of asking about Indigenous status has emerged (in an effort to improve the identification of Indigenous people across a range of datasets) and National Best Practice Guidelines have been developed[3]. Such an approach could have been usefully applied in other data collection exercises, such as the evaluation form.

The responses to questions about the Forum itself were overwhelmingly positive. One hundred percent of respondents rated the overall quality of the Forum as either 'very good' or 'good'. Eighty three percent of respondents answered either 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' to the question 'How much did you learn from participating in the Forum (given that it was only one day)?' Ninety percent of respondents thought that the representation of Indigenous perspectives were either 'very appropriate' or 'appropriate'. Ninety-three percent of participants found the opportunities for networking as either 'very valuable' or 'quite valuable'.

As with any short evaluation exercise, the qualitative answers provide much more insight into how participants experienced the event. Some positive responses commented on:

- Very well organised event
- The value of getting a snapshot of what's happening in Indigenous teaching around the country

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[3] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2010) 'National best practice guidelines for collecting Indigenous status in health data sets, Cat. no. IHW 29,' AIHW: Canberra. Available at: http://www.aihw.gov.au/publication-detail/?id=6442468342&tab=2 Accessed 15 March 2011

According to the best practice guidelines developed, the following question should be asked (of all clients to) ascertain their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or non-Indigenous status:

'Are you [is the person] of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?'

Three standard response options should be provided to clients to answer the question (either verbally or on a written form):
- No
- Yes, Aboriginal
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander

For clients of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, both 'Yes' boxes should be marked. Alternatively, a fourth response category may also be included if this better suits the dat100a collection practices of the agency or establishment concerned:
- Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

(AIHW 2010, p.9)

- the enjoyment gained from sharing information in a positive and friendly environment

One common response was that the information and discussion presented at the Forum was not necessarily 'new' to respondents; however they appreciated what they knew being re-affirmed by the presenters.

The networking opportunities afforded by the Forum for discussion, deep level engagement and sharing of information, overwhelmingly invoked the most positive responses. As a participant in in the forum, the evaluator can attest to the enthusiasm with which participants engaged in networking and exchange, meeting face to face with scholars they had read or heard about, promising to continue the contact. This experience clearly indicated that many teachers work in relative isolation and that there is a strongly felt need for some ongoing forum or gathering for those in the Indigenous teaching field to meet, share and learn from each other. One comment articulated this need very well:

> '*This is a new field and it is difficult to find a suitable forum to discuss the range of topics that bring together Indigenous teaching, student support in the context of a changing higher education environment. It is imperative that this sort of discussion continue and continue to be supported by groups such as ALTC'*.

A number of the suggestions for follow-up nominated by respondents – for instance copy of information/slides of the presentation/models of good teaching practice/details of those presenting / to develop a community of practice – have been precisely the ones which have been taken up by Asmar through the Fellowship's web resources.

A small number of negative or rather ambiguous comments reveal the variety of perspectives among those participating in the Forum. Once respondent said:

> '*I think I have a problem with the idea of Indigenous 'perspective'*',

Another commented,

> '*It appeared government ideology (perhaps funding) had a huge impact on how data was gathered/reported'*

Comments from key stakeholders interviewed strongly supported the positive tone of the vast majority of respondents. In answer to the question – 'In your view how effective was the Forum in achieving its main purpose?' they answered:

> *Yes it was well received by participants. This was an extremely effective way of bringing people together to hear from a diverse range of people working in the field'.* (Advisory Group member)

> *I think it brought together a diverse range of people – from those at the coalface, junior, to prominent people.* (Advisory Group member)

The forum was excellent in my opinion - sharing my experience as a teacher and course coordinator and hearing from other colleagues about their practice was very helpful. I believe the forum was successful. (Advisory Group member)

Because of that what you get is a kind of synergy that you wouldn't otherwise get. It was really good that it was tied to NSW and Victoria even thought it was financial – you could have included more states – but because of that the competition wasn't really apparent – just a chance for people who hadn't met one another to meet up. From me, I made some connections with people that have been enduring that have a benefit that go beyond the scope of the work but also within it. (Critical Friend)

The seminar in Melbourne was extremely useful. I was very touched by what people said. Even the woman who came along (refers to the Welcome to Country). The way Melbourne Uni got behind it. The speakers were inspiring – most wonderful, intelligent, doing difficult jobs. (Critical Friend)

For me personally it was great to be involved in something where my knowledge had legitimacy. Whereas mostly in the university I am trying to fit; And better than a conference. Most positive – enabling us to have high level conversations with people who know what they're talking about rather than with government. (Advisory Group member)

The forum was brilliant for me for it was a fantastic way to connect with people – a networking opportunity that didn't exist in any other space – what you were getting because of no discipline focus was people from a range of disciplines. What I did think was it was not only a really good networking opportunity and it was pretty brief – getting people to turn up to something that hasn't got a sense of history in it. I went to the AIATSIS conference – it was like that – we don't' really know what it is – wow. There was some current things that were being discussed there was a whole discussion about that that kept popping up. The whole term cultural competency was the one that kept coming up. (Critical Friend)

Stakeholders and participants alike commented positively on aspects such as: being extremely well organised; being friendly and engaging; the venue itself; and the involvement of the local Indigenous community.

The Website

The website is the second major output arising from the Fellowship. The Fellowship website 'Indigenous Teaching at Australian Universities' is hosted on an external server and continues to be available at http://www.indigenousteaching.com. It contains numerous resources. The cornerstone of the site is the outcome of the research with academics – the 15 suggested *Approaches to Indigenous Teaching* with numerous practical exemplars provided by the expert practitioners. Each Approach is exemplified by direct quotes from the interviews and together represents a range of different disciplines and teaching contexts.

In addition to the exemplars the website contains:
- selected presentations (including audio) from the 2009 Forum;

- annotated references and web links
- a list of Indigenous Centres' websites and contact details

Other material is planned for the website, including approaches to assessment.

The website features beautiful artwork by Aboriginal artist Tex Skuthorpe from Goodooga in north western NSW. The story of Skuthorpe's painting 'Learning to Communicate', as well as its interpretation, are found on the website. The painting represents different ways of communicating, which young people had to learn in order to show respect.

Stakeholders when asked to comment on the website used words such as 'wonderful repository', 'really good', 'brilliant, 'really useful' to describe the website. The overall presentation, artwork and layout were all regarded very positively. All found the site easy to navigate and easy to locate on the web:

> *Easy to find within web. Don't have to dig – you get key message up front without having to dig through – easy to navigate.* (Advisory Group Member)

> *I think it's a very easy site to navigate. Navigation stuff is really solid – very easy to find – coming up 2,3,4 in Google – only after the federal government – that kind of thing matters – in terms of navigating around it I think it's important that in navigating the space there are very clear directions around it….* (Critical Friend)

A question about who they regarded as the major audiences for the site uncovered quite a diverse range of responses from stakeholders. Suggested audience included:
- Pre-service teachers
- Teachers out in the field in education
- Anybody who is interested in their professional development as academic teachers
- Experienced Non-Indigenous teachers looking to cover Indigenous topics in their courses
- Students and teachers of University teaching courses
- People relatively new to the field
- Casual teachers
- Honours and post graduate students
- Directors of Indigenous Higher Education Centres at universities
- Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) members

The following responses were given to the question of how relevant the site is in meeting the needs of these audiences:

> *It will be useful for pre-service teachers and I will be suggesting to my honours student to visit this site. This is also a site that lecturers and teachers can guide their students to.* (Advisory Group member)

> *For pre-services teachers it's a terrific site it's great for knowledge of engaging with indigenous students.* (Advisory Group member)

Wonderful resource. Teaching exemplars are fantastic. I really like the way she has done the 15 approaches to Indigenous – get the quotes from the research participants – about how they did that – not just what they did – but how to do it in the class –'This sort of material could get incorporated into teacher education programs'. (Advisory Group member)

Not simply about teaching at uni level also about how we set up the engagement with the community at the school level; There's a cascading effect; Because of its capacity to be linked to other websites – would be relevant to practicing teachers in the field; Also with university level people to engage - academics - not really for policy people – not really in the language of strategic planning. (Critical Friend)

One of the things that was really useful was the list of Indigenous centres at Australian universities – again it's not exhaustive – doesn't include everything – may include one centre when there is more – also doesn't include us – and some other spaces. For example (name of university) has two different spaces – good but not exhaustive. (Critical Friend)

I have used it for a paper I'm writing … – used for a chapter in a book – for new tertiary teachers – for overseas students… (Critical Friend)

It was very clear that the two main audiences are: New teachers Indigenous or non-Indigenous – just starting to thinking about this area of teaching – it will be interesting to see how that is managed - or teachers who really have a problem that they need to solve (in a rut). It provides some really good strategies (this group is tricky). (Critical Friend)

Stakeholders made the following suggestions for improvement of the site:
- More links.
- More case studies.
- More resources
- The use of pseudonyms
- A few links not working
- Links will need to be kept up to date

While information regarding the number of 'hits' on the website was not made available for the evaluation, such information is a straightforward way of evaluating the popularity of the website in the longer term.

Since completion of the Fellowship, Asmar was invited to co-author (with Professor Michael Christie of Charles Darwin University) a book chapter on 'Indigenous Knowers and Knowledge in University Teaching'. The book, edited by Professors Lynne Hunt and Denise Chalmers and currently in press, is a text - designed for an international audience - for academics new to university teaching.

3.2.3   Factors that helped and hindered in the achievement of outcomes

Reflecting on the responses of stakeholders together with information contained in the Fellowship documentation, a number of factors can be identified which helped in the achievement of Fellowship outcomes they include:

- A number of personal qualities exemplified by the Fellow's approach include: excellent interpersonal, communication, negotiating and organisational skills
- A flexible approach in dealing with new and unexpected events
- A well-chosen group of expert advisors
- Excellent institutional support
- Timeliness of the Fellowship in terms of the post-Bradley higher education changes

Factors which were less than helpful include:

- A slight delay in setting up the Fellowship due to the change of institution
- Lack of time prohibiting collection of student data

3.2.4   Unexpected outcomes

In her final report (Asmar 2011) Asmar lists her personal career achievements as direct (and unexpected) outcomes of the Fellowship, including her being offered a offered a position at Murrup Barak -Melbourne Institute for Indigenous Development, under the leadership of a leading Indigenous academic.

The successful completion of the Fellowship has also resulted in continued support from the ALTC which has provided Asmar with further funds for travel to other universities in order to offer interactive seminar/workshops on my findings in relation to Indigenous Teaching.

In addition to the career opportunities afforded to the Fellow as a result of having implemented the Fellowship, other participants in the Fellowship also benefitted. One example provided by an Advisory Group member is of a promising junior staff member for whom the invitation to speak at the Forum was an important professional development opportunity:

> *I think (the Forum) brought together a diverse range of people – from those at the coalface, junior, to prominent people. There were a range of outcomes that weren't expected, for example my staff member hasn't got a teaching award – (she's) junior- that was terrific for her. It was great to go to the forum and mix with people Good opportunity for my staff to go down and participate as an example of good practice – She could put that on CV*
> (Advisory Group Member)

Section 4 Fellowship Sustainability and Lessons Learned

4.1   Sustainability

> **Evaluation Question 3: What measures, if any, have been put in place to promote sustainability of the Fellowship's focus and outcomes?**

To provide some context for the evaluation question of the measures put in place to promote the sustainability of the Fellowship's focus and outcomes, stakeholders were asked where they thought the Fellowship should go from here. Stakeholders expressed the strong view that both the Forum and the website should be supported to be sustained in an ongoing way in order to keep up the momentum generated by the Fellowship.

A Book? Disseminate widely? For use as a model of how to identify exemplars of best practice other sectors of education? (Advisory Group Member)

It could be a more national project although I don't know if she'd find anything terribly different. In terms of a resource how does it get updated? It would be nice with minimal funding to keep it refreshed and growing. (Advisory Group Member)

I would hate to see this site not continue to grow – not sure if there will be the opportunity to apply for further grant – as ALTC moves to DEEWR next year, but it does need to be maintained and to grow. (Advisory Group Member)

I think the project should continue to engage with teachers across Australia in all disciplines - and keep bringing people together to share their practice. (Advisory Group Member)

I would have argued for continuing to fund the opportunity for practitioners to come together in this way; maybe it should be a permanent section in AARE for this conversation to continue; Maybe Christine in her new position pulls together something that is part of another conference. There is a growing body of knowledge that may end up in Australian studies – I don't necessarily want it to be ghettoised in Indigenous Education - maybe AARE? Maybe the higher education conference – some sub group – national as well. For example as TASA. That was the power of this –we all came from different disciplines – I suppose it's a growing field within the higher education field – this is a good beginning – the research base hasn't been developed. Not so it just disappears under social inclusion. (Advisory Group Member)

I think the managing to sustain it is really important. I hope that someone has a commitment to sustaining it because I think it's an excellent resource. From wanting to look at that list to see some of this as data. I think it's difficult to do this without the support of an organisation either a uni or what the ALTC is becoming. In order to not be uni specific it would be great to see this as an ongoing commitment. I think it's a

better resource that my own stuff – mine has a specific focus – mine is about technology –and would need a lot to make it contemporary over time – say in ten years' time – the questions could be the same – it would be interesting. I think that it's important that it is not just the website – people need to think about this as resources- the forum is an important part of this – getting people to feel a bit invested in this. (Critical Friend)

I think the way –there is a lot of interesting work being done by indigenous academic but not much collaborative by indigenous tertiary educators – research more glamorous. A lot of indigenous teachers do a terrific job. It would be good if they could link up – a conference - to nut out the problems. Trying to find some sort of coordinated way rather than battling their own way. (Critical Friend)

These responses clearly indicate that the key advisors unanimously place a high value not only on sustaining the key outcomes but on being updated in an ongoing way and continuing to grow.

4.2   Lessons learnt

Evaluation Question 4: What lessons have been learned from this Fellowship and how might these be of assistance to other institutions?

The analysis of Fellowship documentation and stakeholder responses indicate clearly that some important lessons have been learned as a result of this Fellowship which could usefully used in projects and in other institutions.

The first area where important and transferable lessons were learned from this Fellowship was in the processes involved in implementing a research project in Indigenous teaching. This was previously discussed in section *4.1 Fellowship Implementation and processes,* but a number of key points can usefully be reiterated here.

Firstly, in conducting Indigenous research it is crucially important to acknowledge and understand the implications of the historical context of Western research on Indigenous peoples (see for instance Tuhiwai-Smith, 2006). By carefully following ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous Australians (NHMRC 2001) as well as adopting an Indigenist perspective advocated by Rigney (1997) the Fellowship was successfully able to prioritise Indigenous voices throughout its implementation.

Secondly, the setting up of the consultative structure with a predominantly indigenous membership, and using the two groups as a mechanism for formative evaluation proved to be a very successful strategy. Importantly, in using the expert advisors as a sounding board, advice was both sought and then flexibly taken into consideration in moving forward with the Fellowship. In this way key decisions were made iteratively as the Fellowship developed, while remaining with the objectives originally set.

In any research project, but particularly in qualitative research, establishing and maintaining good relationships are extremely important. A third lesson learnt is the importance of developing a set of protocols early in the Fellowship which are consistently applied throughout. The values of respect and reciprocity were central to the way in which the Fellowship was conducted. Careful checking of facts, seeking permission and approvals, finding out the most appropriate people to assist with the research, establishing good communication and particularly respectful relationships, are as much hallmarks of successful community based research as of research conducted in an academic setting. In addition to this excellent project management, careful planning and meticulous attention to detail, all contributed to the overwhelming success of the Melbourne University Forum.

A fourth area where lessons can be learned is the importance of acknowledging the diversity of the participants in Indigenous teaching. Differences in practice were not glossed over but added strength to a model which sought to provide useful resources to teachers working in very different contexts.

A fifth lesson relates to the need for willingness to revise initial assumptions in the light of later realisations. Conceptualising 'Indigenous teaching' as involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, for example, required moving beyond the early focus on only Indigenous students, towards an articulation of how to enhance learning in diverse teaching contexts. These more inclusive conceptualisations and strategies will usefully inform teaching across the field.

A sixth lesson resides in the three-pronged model developed. This model could usefully be applied in many other contexts. Essentially it involved obtaining data from interviews with participants; showcasing and discussing the data at a public forum; and then analysing and refining the information on a website which provides an ongoing mechanism for dissemination of the Fellowship's findings.

Finally, the development of the 15 Suggested Approaches indicates that newly developing areas, such as Indigenous teaching in a higher education context, can benefit enormously from practical solutions, resources which teachers can pick up and use. This, in addition to the growth of a community of scholars who can share successful strategies, has the potential to greatly enhance the professional development of the field.

Section 5 Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Discussion

In developing the Fellowship *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice*, Asmar aimed to improve Indigenous teaching and thereby contribute to improving Indigenous student learning experiences and academic success rates.

The overall aim of the Fellowship as stated in the Revised Fellowship Program (Asmar 2009) was to improve Indigenous teaching and thereby contribute to improving Indigenous student learning experiences and academic success rates.

More specifically four key objectives (or outcomes) were identified, namely to:
1. Investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived;
2. Identify exemplars of evidence-based good practice at NSW and Victorian universities;
3. Showcase/discuss the exemplars at a University of Melbourne Forum; and
4. Produce research-based exemplars for publication and dissemination.

Using the evaluation approach recommended by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) (Chesterton and Cummings 2007) an evaluation was undertaken of - *Indigenous teaching and learning at Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice* taking into account formative and summative aspects. The evaluation drew on a five main sources of available information including: Selected review of relevant literature website; a separate evaluation of the Forum; and Interviews with key stakeholders. Analysis of Fellowship documentation; an assessment of the effectiveness of Fellowship.

The findings of the evaluation indicate that overall, the Fellowship did indeed achieve each of its key objectives. To achieve the principal aim of the Fellowship

> *To provide both Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers with research-based practical exemplars for teaching Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula effectively* (Asmar 2011)

To investigate how good practice in Indigenous teaching is currently described and perceived Asmar undertook short semi-structured face-to-face qualitative interviews with 26 Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers in NSW and Victorian universities. The analysis of the qualitative data resulted in the key outputs of the research: the development of the 15 suggested Approaches to Indigenous teaching. These were showcased at a highly successful *National Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching* held at the University of Melbourne in November 2009, involving 14 Indigenous and 6 non-Indigenous presenters including 2 students. The responses to questions about the Forum itself were overwhelmingly positive. One hundred percent of respondents rated the overall quality of the

Forum as either 'very good' or 'good'. One common response was that the information and discussion presented at the Forum was not necessarily 'new' to respondents; however they appreciated what they knew being re-affirmed the presenters. Respondents were most positive about the networking opportunities afforded by the Forum, the deep level engagement and sharing of information. Stakeholder responses mirrored those of respondents on the day. They found the Forum an extremely effective way of bringing people together a diverse range of people, some of whom are often working in relative isolation within institutions. Importantly those participating in the Forum were asked to reflect on their own practice and to consider making changes. As these responses were not collected as part of the forum evaluation, and in any event would have been hypothetical, a potential focus for future research may be to explore the impact on practitioners involved in the Fellowship.

Asmar had made clear from the outset that the Forum, was intended to be a highly visible activity, but did not constitute the Fellowship itself (Asmar 2009). The Forum was intended to be a public outcome of the Fellowship activity and an important part of its dissemination strategy. However, what is clear from the stakeholder interviews and document analysis is that this event had a very considerable impact on Stakeholders and participants alike. The positive and enthusiastic comments provided in the previous section give a sense that the event occurred at a crucial point in time, that it met a previously unmet need for Indigenous teachers to come together and as a community work through issues many have been struggling with in isolation.

The findings of the research as well as the Forum outcomes were subsequently analysed and disseminated on the Fellowship website. The website itself has developed into a repository of a range of highly useful material, including the 15 suggested Approaches with accompanying exemplars drawing on quotes from the qualitative interviews; voice files and power point presentations from the Forum; details of the advisory structure and other useful resources. The website provides a particularly important mechanism for the ongoing sustainability of the Fellowship but needs support to be remain current. Stakeholders expressed the strong view that both the Forum and the website should be supported to be sustained in an ongoing way in order to keep up the momentum generated by the Fellowship.

Stakeholders identified a range of potential audiences who would benefit from the resources produced by the Fellowship. They included:
- Pre-service teachers
- Teachers out in the field in education
- Anybody who is interested in their professional development as academic teachers
- Experienced Non-indigenous teachers looking to cover Indigenous topics in their courses
- Students and teachers of University teaching courses
- People relatively new to the field
- Casual teachers
- Honours and post graduate students
- Directors of Indigenous Higher Education Centres at universities
- Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council (IHEAC) members

The evaluation also found that one of the keys to the Fellowship's success was its consultative processes. The choice of participants, the clever use of two groups of advisors, the inclusion of high profile Indigenous and non-Indigenous academic experts, the 'informal' though by no means casual way in which communications were conducted all contributed to the creation of a highly useful formative evaluation mechanism. Stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation praised Asmar for the respectful way in which she conducted the Fellowship including the way she took advice. Asmar's ability to adapt to the change of environment early in the life of the Fellowship and enlist high level institutional support as well as the support of leading Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics to advise her also contributed to the success of the Fellowship.

A high level of sensitivity, attention to protocol and high ethical standards are evident throughout the Fellowship. A key ethical values underlying Indigenous research is that of reciprocity (NHMRC 2003). However researchers often struggle with the application of these values. Additionally, Asmar's practical suggestions for reciprocating research participants for their time, such as offers to read manuscripts or to write a reference, in addition to the payment in cash or in kind, are in themselves useful suggestions for engaging in Indigenous research.

One of Asmar's future goals is to hold a truly national forum, pointing to the lack of such a forum at present. A number of the stakeholders interviewed also agreed that it was important to maintain the momentum. On the basis of the reach of the Fellowship through the interviews; advisory processes and Forum, Asmar rightly lays claim to providing insight through the present Fellowship into Indigenous teaching at a national level.

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the research is the definition of the key terms. The broad definition of 'Indigenous teaching' to include Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers as well as Indigenous students and Indigenous curricula, necessarily led to an equally broad set of Approaches to Indigenous teaching. As some of the stakeholders interviewed queried, what then is specific about Indigenous teaching? What about Indigenous teaching within specific disciplines? Does the Fellowship conflate the specifics of these contexts by failing to tease out the subtle differences? Does the fact that the Approaches identified could equally apply to best practice teaching in higher education generally reduce the effectiveness of what has been produced? What is the significance of Indigenous knowledge in all of this?

These are all valid and interesting questions and merit further investigation. But what Asmar set out to do was to develop a set of exemplary approaches that could be used by a variety of people working in a very diverse field in the context of an absence of such practical guidelines for practitioners. What she achieved exceeds expectations. The highly successful Forum in Melbourne set a standard for future collegial gatherings of academics who, despite the fact that they are working across a very broad range of academic areas, including student support, strongly identify with the term 'Indigenous teaching' as broadly defined by Asmar.

> 'Indigenous teaching' in this Fellowship is defined quite broadly – it embraces both the teaching of Indigenous students; and the teaching of Indigenous (or 'Indigenised') curriculum or courses to 'mainstream' non-Indigenous students.

5.2   Conclusion

The results of the evaluation highlight the newness of this field of research into Indigenous learning and teaching. Dr Asmar has created an important foundation which can be built on in the future. The model developed through the identification of key Approaches, the initial establishment of network of practitioners through the Forum and the public dissemination through the website provides a strong mechanism for future growth and development of the field. Her careful attention to protocol, to effective consultative processes, to the dissemination of her work and through that advocacy of Indigenous teaching has been extremely effective, The addition of resources such as approaches to assessment exemplifies the way this work can proceed in the future.

Further work in this area is necessary to build on what has been achieved in this Fellowship. A true assessment of the impact of the Fellowship will require a longer timeframe as it is likely that this Fellowship will continue to have an ongoing effect on the work of others. This is already evident in the response of key stakeholders to what has already been produced.

The results of the evaluation clearly indicate that importance of sustaining the key outcomes, on the resources produced being updated in an ongoing way and in the Fellowship continuing to grow.

An important message underlying Asmar's research is the inequitable distribution of the Indigenous teaching workload. With Indigenous academics constituting less fewer 1% of the workforce, and with increasing pressures to 'Indigenise' the curricula, Asmar's argument is that for effective Indigenous teaching to occur it is important that non-Indigenous academics increasingly take on this role. In the often fraught and sensitive field of Indigenous teaching, Asmar's finding that senor Indigenous colleagues were more than willing to name non-Indigenous people as having a reputation for exemplary Indigenous teaching, is an important one.

A number of important lessons were learned in this Fellowship which could be usefully applied to projects in other institutions. The first area where important and transferable lessons were learned from this Fellowship was in the processes involved in implementing a research project in Indigenous learning and teaching. By carefully following ethical guidelines for research with Indigenous Australians (NHMRC 2001) as well as adopting an Indigenist perspective advocated by Rigney (1997) the Fellowship was successfully able to prioritise Indigenous voices throughout its implementation. A second area where lessons can be learned was in the setting up of the consultative structure with a predominantly Indigenous membership, and using the two groups as a mechanism for formative evaluation proved to be a very successful strategy. Thirdly is the importance of developing a set of protocols early in the Fellowship which are consistently applied throughout. The values of respect and reciprocity were central to the way in which the Fellowship was conducted. A fourth area for learning is the importance of acknowledging the diversity of the participants in Indigenous research. The fifth lesson is the three pronged model developed. This model could usefully be applied in many other contexts. Essentially it involved obtaining data from interviews with participants; showcasing and discussing the data at a public forum; and then refining the information on a website (Indigenous Teaching at Australian Universities) which provides an ongoing mechanism for dissemination of the Fellowship's findings. Finally, the

development of the 15 suggested Approaches indicates that newly developing areas, such as Indigenous teaching in a higher education context, can benefit from enormously from practical solutions, resources which teachers can pick up and use.

5.3   Recommendations

The key recommendations arising from the evaluation are that:

1. The ALTC (or similar body) actively promote the uptake of the 15 Approaches by the range of potential audiences identified in the evaluation report

2. The ALTC (or similar body) continue to support Dr Asmar to disseminate the findings of the research to a wide range of mainstream academic and Indigenous fora.

3. The ALTC (or similar body) continue to support the website and its expansion.

4. Relevant government funding bodies support an ongoing Forum on Indigenous teaching to encompass a national perspective.

5. The ALTC (or similar body) support Dr Asmar's continued growth and expansion of research into Indigenous teaching and learning, including a national perspective, which encompasses student perspectives and outcomes.

6. Dr Asmar be supported by funding bodies to develop guidelines for best practice assessment.

7. Ongoing evaluation of the Fellowship be undertaken including for example: data from the number of 'hits' on the Fellowship website and the longer term impact of the Fellowship on participants through a follow up study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Internal Documentation

The following internal documentation was utilised in the preparation of this report:

Fellowship Proposal:
Asmar, C. 2009, Revised ALTC Teaching Fellowship Fellowship (Dr Christine Asmar) as at 4 February.

Fellowship Final Report:
Asmar, C. 2011, *Final Report. Indigenous teaching and learning in Australian universities: developing research-based exemplars for good practice*. The University of Melbourne, Available online at: http://www,indigenousteaching,com. Accessed 1 July 2011.

Website:
Indigenous Teaching at Australian Universities http://www.indigenousteaching.com/. Accessed 29 July 2011.

Appendix B: Advisory Group and Critical Friends[4]

Advisory Group Members
Dr Sandy O'Sullivan
Manager, Online Presence/Strategic Services Division
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education

Mr Gary Thomas
Executive Director, Equity & Student Support Services
Office of PVC (Equity & Student Services)
La Trobe University

Associate Professor Susan Page
Director, Warawara Department of Indigenous Studies
Macquarie University

Dr Zane Ma Rhea
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education
Monash University

Mr Chris Heelan
Director, Centre for Indigenous Education
The University of Melbourne

Ms Sally Farrington
Acting Director, Yooroang Garang Indigenous Student Support Unit,
Faculty of Health Sciences
The University of Sydney

Ms Janet Mooney
Director, Koori Centre
The University of Sydney

Professor Kathleen Clapham
Director, Woolyungah Indigenous Centre
University of Wollongong

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[4] NOTE: These details were correct at the commencement of the Fellowship. A number of the individuals mentioned have since taken up positions in other institutions and/or been promoted to more senior positions.

Critical Friends Group:

Professor Michael Christie
School of Education
Charles Darwin University

Professor Lynette Russell
Chair, Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies
Monash University

Professor Ian Anderson
Director, Onemda VicHealth Koori Health Unit.
Melbourne School of Population Health
The University of Melbourne

Professor Marcia Langton
Chair of Australian Indigenous Studies, Melbourne School of Population Health
The University of Melbourne

Associate Professor Susan Green
School of Social Sciences and International Studies
The University of New South Wales

Professor Martin Nakata
Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning
University of Technology, Sydney

Professor Henry Atkinson
Faculty of Education
Monash University

Ms Michelle Evans
Head, Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development
Victorian College of the Arts & Music
The University of Melbourne

Appendix C: Dissemination of Fellowship Findings

Book Chapter

Christie, M. & Asmar, C. Indigenous Knowers and Knowledge in University Teaching, in a book on university teaching (title TBC) Edited by Lynne Hunt & Denise Chalmers. McGraw Hill. In press.

Research Report

Asmar, C. & Page, S., 2011, *Dispelling the myths: An exploration of factors influencing Indigenous students' engagement with university.* Research Briefing for Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Vol 10 (April). Available at http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/aussereports/AUSSE_Research_Briefing_Vol10.pdf

Invited Presentation

(Forthcoming) Invited Keynote Speaker for the 2012 Teaching and Learning Forum - Creating an inclusive learning environment - Engagement, equity, and retention, to be held at Murdoch University, Western Australia 2nd - 3rd   February 2012.

Conference Presentations

Asmar C, & Page S., 2010, International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (ISSOTL) Conference in Liverpool UK. 'The New Wave: Theoretical, social justice and practical imperatives for global scholars'. Featured Paper (20 October)

Asmar C, & Page S., 2009, Higher Education Research & Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) Conference presentation, Darwin NT (with Susan Page): 'Student academics or academic students? Indigenous academics and higher degree research' (3 July)

Seminars and Workshops

Seminar/workshop for Macquarie University's Warawara Department of Indigenous Studies. 'Teaching Indigenous Students: Sharing research-based exemplars for good practice, Ryde NSW (5 September 2011)

Seminar/workshop for University of Western Australia's Centre for the Advancement of Teaching & Learning. 'Indigenous Teaching: Sharing research-based exemplars for good practice'. See: http://www.catl.uwa.edu.au/programmes/teaching_and_learning/indigenous_teaching Perth, WA (30 June 2011)

Seminar in the Centre for the Study of Higher Education's 'Issues and Ideas' series convened by Professor Simon Marginson: Indigenous perspectives in higher education: Implications for global citizenship' Melbourne, VIC (6 December 2010)

Seminar in ALTC-Connect Seminar Series: Sharing Success In Teaching And Learning, Centre for the Study of Higher Education. 'Achieving Success in Indigenous Teaching: Outcomes of an ALTC Fellowship'. University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC (19 August 2010) Available at http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/recop/ALTC_seminars/2010/docs/SemFlyer19August2010.pdf

ALTC Fellows' Forum in Brisbane, PowerPoint presentation showing fellowship progress (23 March 2010)

Presentation (with Susan Page) at Forum on Indigenous Learning and Teaching, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC . 'The Power and the Passion: Can Indigenous teachers change the world?' (11 December 2009)

Seminar for Woolyungah Indigenous Centre, University of Wollongong: 'Identifying Effective and Evidence-based Indigenous Teaching and Learning' (30 October 2009)

ALTC Fellows' Forum in Brisbane, Poster showing fellowship progress (16 October 2009)

Guest Lectures

Guest lectures on issues in Indigenous teaching and learning in higher education to classes in:

- Graduate Certificate in University Teaching, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC (7 September 2011 and 7 September 2010)

- Masters of Education, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC 16 May 2011

- Masters in Tertiary Education Management, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC (13 August 2009).

- Graduate Certificate in University Management, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC (10 August 2009)

Other published material

Melbourne University Staff/Student E-news (MUSSE), 25 November 2009: Exploring Indigenous teaching and learning' http://blogs.unimelb.edu.au/musse/?p=3306

Appendix D: Fifteen approaches to Indigenous teaching

1. **Make the classroom a safe environment for learning**

2. **Show confidence in your own expertise, credibility and authority**

3. **Set high academic and personal standards (and model them yourself)**

4. **Provide scaffolding and support when needed**

5. **Negotiate emotions in the classroom**

6. **Model dialogue by teaching in pairs/collaboratively**

7. **Locate local Indigenous issues in global contexts**

8. **Get students to question established assumptions and 'facts'**

9. **Build relationships with, and connect students to community**

10. **Teach students to 'walk in the shoes of others**

11. **Utilise personal experience**

12. **Encourage student self awareness**

13. **Show students the relevance of learning for future jobs/careers**

14. **Be open to reflecting, learning and changing as a teacher**

15. **Be enthusiastic, enjoy your teaching, and have fun!**

Available online at: http://www.indigenousteaching.com/html/exemplars_index.html