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Monday 27th June 2005

Ms Janet Holmes
Inquiry Secretary
Inquiry into Teacher Education
Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training
Parliament House
Canberra 2600

Email: evt.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Holmes

At the public hearing of the Committee held at Deakin University on June 8th, a question was asked by Mr David Fawcett, MP, relating to stakeholder input into our teacher education courses. There was not time during the hearing for us to provide a full answer to his question and we were invited to make a further submission relating to this question.

I am pleased to attach some information regarding the multiple ways that we at Deakin University are able to gain input from key stakeholders into our course evaluation and development.

Thank you for this opportunity to make this further submission.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shirley Grundy'.

Professor Shirley Grundy

Stakeholder consultation and input into Teacher Education Courses at Deakin University.

Additional submission made by Professor Shirley Grundy on behalf of the Faculty of Education.

At the public hearing of the Committee held at Deakin University on June 8th Mr David Fawcett, MP, asked a question relating to stakeholder input into the evaluation and development of Deakin University teacher education courses. There was insufficient time for a comprehensive answer to the question to be given and we were invited to provide additional information through a supplementary submission. We are pleased to provide the following information relating to this important aspect of our courses. There are two aspects to report: the input that non-school people have into our courses, and the links that staff and students have with this broader community (including parents and employers).

The wider community's input into course programs

Each group of courses has an Academic Advisory Board that meets at least twice per year. Members of these boards include representatives of professional associations, Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT), Department of Education and Training (DET) (including the Liaison Principal), and bodies like the Victorian Educational Leadership Consortium (VELC). The Advisory Boards have input into the structure of programs as well as making suggestions about potential content and practical experiences. They also discuss strengths and gaps and issues related to program development, delivery and evaluation.

A few individual members of Advisory Committees also make significant contributions to the conceptualisation and development of specific units of study. For example, Ross Dean, manager of Victorian Educational Leadership Consortium helped design the final-year seminar and community-based program where students hear and talk with speakers from the wider community (parent associations, parents, the AEU, regional offices, community groups) and also participate in authentic professional experiences (e.g. first observing and then conducting parent-teacher-student interviews).

The recent course conceptualisation and construction for the Graduate Diploma (Applied Learning) was heavily influenced by the Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN), registered training providers, Victorian Learning and Skills Commission (VLESC), the Lifelong Learning Pillar of the Geelong Regional Alliance (G21), The Gordon TAFE, and VIT. The LLEN and G21, as well as training authorities and local secondary schools continue to be involved in the delivery and on-going evaluation of this course as well as providing opportunities for industry experience for the trainee teachers.

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. worked co-operatively with the Faculty of Education to conceive and establish the Koorie Teacher Education Program (now Institute of Koorie Education). While the student study the same content and undertake the same assessment

tasks as mainstream students, the Advisory Board continues to influence decisions about modes of delivery, practicum and other practical experiences, and student support.

Other bodies have less on-going, but also important, impacts on teaching and learning opportunities open to Deakin Education students. These include State government departments (e.g., Northern Territory teaching experience) and the AEU and parent bodies (e.g., final year conference). The professional experience committee at Geelong has a strong contingent of principals who attend regular meetings. Representatives of principals', school councils' and professional associations contribute to Education Studies units guest lecture programs, and the BEd fourth year has a program of public seminars. The final year conference is a full day (2003, 2004) or two-day residential (2005) program is an annual event that is jointly planned by students, staff, and representatives of external bodies.

There are many examples where parents, unions and other relevant people assist students with assessed tasks. For example, fifty members of the AEU are working with students outside of the lecture program as interviewees and mentors.

Links that staff and students have with this broader community

Faculty of Education staff have made really significant contributions to the development of curriculum documents and frameworks (e.g. Curriculum Standards Framework II, Victorian Essential Learning Standards), special projects (Commonwealth Games, DETYA Numeracy research mapping), and teacher education initiatives (e.g. the Victorian Government's Rural Re-training Program).

One staff member, Julia Walsh, is a member of the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and others have made contributions to VIT initiatives. The University keeps a register of staff who hold executive positions on professional bodies, and Deakin's on-going contributions to curriculum-based, pedagogy-based and other professional associations at State, national and international levels are very significant. Such contributions are not restricted to education but include umbrella bodies such as the Federation of Australian Science and Technological Societies (FASTS).

Further, it is important to note that students work not only in schools but in a range of educational settings (e.g. zoos, museums, environmental parks, art galleries, community festivals, industry placements), and that planning for their experiential learning in such settings is undertaken in conjunction with relevant managers, education officers, and specialists.