

HIGHER EDUCATION EXTENDED CAMPUS OPERATIONS AT SUNRAYSIA COLLEGE OF TAFE

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Introduction

The Sunraysia College of TAFE, in conjunction with a number of other tertiary colleges, offers a range of degree programs. Some of these are conducted full-time and part-time in normal face to face situations during the day and evening whilst others have utilised visiting lecturers on a block release basis, weekend lecturers and tutorials, interactive television and videoconferencing on a formal ongoing basis.

Background

In April 1984, the Ministerial Review of Postcompulsory Schooling chaired by Ms Jean Blackburn examined the current educational and training provision for 15-19 year olds in the State of Victoria. The ramifications of the recommendations impacted significantly on the provision of Tertiary Orientation programs offered by Sunraysia College of TAFE.

Specifically, Recommendation 3 of the Report (Volume 1, p.19) produced by the Review stated:

"That within the public sector the Education Department be responsible for all schooling at Year 11 and 12 and that the allocation of resources between the Education Department and TAFE reflect this responsibility."

For Sunraysia College of TAFE this meant a major change in its program profile in that the Tertiary Orientation Program offered would only be for mature age students returning to education, i.e. not for continuing students. The College had been offering TOP Programs since it commenced in 1980 and had developed a very successful program reaching a peak in 1985 with an enrolment of 224 students.

Faced with such a fundamental change, the College commenced a series of sessions called "Life After TOP" enabling staff and management to examine new directions. The major initiative that arose from these sessions was the need in our community to provide tertiary education courses. Improved access to Higher Education, the rising costs of relocating to the city to study and the support mechanisms of home and friends were all factors in the College deciding to conduct Tertiary Programs at Sunraysia College of TAFE.

Thus commenced a staged reduction in the TOP programs offered to continuing students by Sunraysia College of TAFE to a level now where the College only offers one program for mature age students in the Victorian Certificate of Education coupled with a concerted effort to introduce higher education into the region.

Initial discussions were conducted with Ballarat University College (formerly Ballarat College of Advanced Education) to offer the first year of the Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts) at Sunraysia, with students continuing on to Ballarat to complete the second and third year of their studies. In 1987, the College enrolled 19 students into the first tertiary course offered at Sunraysia College of TAFE.

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The next stage of development came through discussions with La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria (formerly Bendigo College of Advanced Education) to offer tertiary courses. In 1988, the College became an Extended Campus of LTUCNV offering the first year of the Bachelor of Business with 14 students enrolling and the Bachelor of Applied Science with our students.

From these small beginnings, a significant extended campus operation has developed.

Institutions with whom the Sunraysia College of TAFE have had or currently have contractual arrangements are:

La Trobe University
Ballarat University College ¹
La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria²
Hawthorn Institute of Education
Victoria College
Warrnambool Institute of Education

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF CONTRACTUAL AND PROGRAM DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS

Contractual arrangements vary from institution to institution as do delivery methods. Variation in delivery methods also occur within institution dependent largely upon faculty or school preferences.

Features are discussed as follows.

La Trobe University

Following a concern expressed at a local industry level regarding a shortage of trained Social Workers in North West Victoria, practising Social Workers contacted the Social Work School of La Trobe University at Bundoora requesting an examination of the potential to offer a Bachelor of Social Work in Mildura. As a result of this request, the B. Soc. Wk. began in 1989.

Contractual arrangements covered the course structural arrangements, delivery times, practical requirements and costs.

It was agreed the program would be offered over a three year period with two intakes. 1989 saw the first of two intakes. The program ceased operation at the end of 1991 with approximately sixteen graduates.

Lectures and tutorials were conducted fortnightly on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Lecturers flew from Melbourne to Mildura to conduct the program³.

¹ Ballarat University College was formerly known as the Ballarat College of Advanced Education

² La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria was formerly known as the Bendigo College of Advanced Education

³ Although technologically enhanced delivery methods were available, La Trobe staff opted to undertake face to face lectures and tutorials

Ballarat University College

Contractual arrangements with Ballarat no longer exist.

The first program offered in 1987 was the Bachelor of Art (Visual Arts). It operated successfully for several years, however differences between staff coupled with a natural "gravitation" of successful students towards Bendigo (due to road and regional services) forced the College to consider alternatives. A change of principalship at the then Bendigo CAE paved the way for positive discussion and successful outcomes.

1989 saw the introduction of the first year of the Diploma of Tertiary Studies from Ballarat University College and the expiry of the Agreement for the Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts).

La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria

Extended campus arrangements with LTUCNV were of mutual benefit to both institutions. The operations at Sunraysia, and also those at Shepparton and Wangaratta, enabled LTUCNV to continue to develop a regional profile whilst those at Sunraysia have enhanced access and participation of a wide group of people who would otherwise not have been able to undertake higher education.

Teaching methods involve lectures and tutorials delivered by appropriately qualified and experienced Sunraysia College of TAFE staff⁴. Additionally, delivery may be enhanced through videoconferencing, teleconferencing, visits from LTUCNV staff and visits of staff and students to Bendigo. Moderation of students' examinations and practical work components ensure ongoing student comparability and indeed success.

After first offering the B. Bus. (Accounting), 1st. Year, in 1988, 1989 saw increased enrolments in the Bachelor of Business. A part-time delivery mode, enabling persons employed in industry the opportunity to commence tertiary level studies, was introduced. This was a major step as such persons previously only had access to tertiary courses through of campus (correspondence) modes which many found too difficult.

Consequent to continued growth in 1990, the following new courses from La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria was offered: Bachelor of Arts (Fine Arts), (Graphics), (Ceramics); Bachelor of Arts (Social Science); Diploma of Teaching primary); and the second year of the Bachelor of Business. In 1991, the new programs of Bachelor of Arts (Humanities); Associate Diploma of Administration (part time); Bachelor of Education (part time); and the Diploma of Tertiary Studies completed the range of programs being offered by the College through the extended campus arrangement with La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria.

The offering of post graduate courses by LTUCNV at this extended campus commenced with the Graduate Diploma in Health Science, thus according those working in the health industry the opportunity to upgrade their qualifications. This course is delivered by weekend workshops with LTUCNV lecturers and supplemented by video conference services.

⁴ Sunraysia College of TAFE staff submit curricula vitae to the Dean of School of LTUCNV for approval prior to teaching in degree programs. Staff at Sunraysia generally welcome this and see it as a measure of quality control.

One of the important factors contributing to the ongoing success of these arrangements is the appointment by LTUCNV of an Extended Campus Co-ordinator.

Hawthorn Institute of Education

To enable TAFE Teaching Service staff at the College to gain their formal teacher training qualification, the college entered into an arrangement with Hawthorn Institute of Education to provide the Diploma of Teaching (TAFE) and the Graduate Diploma of Education. These programs were delivered by Block Release, with 16 one week blocks delivered over two years. Hawthorn Institute lecturers travelled to Sunraysia to deliver the course. The first program was offered in 1986/87 with subsequent programs in 1988/89 and 1990/91. Each program graduated approximately 16 students. Approximately half of the students in these programs were employed in other educational institutions (Secondary and Private) throughout the region.

A fourth program of the Diploma of Teaching (TAFE) will be delivered in 1993/94.

No formal contract exists and there is no financial consideration between Hawthorn and Sunraysia College of TAFE.

Victoria College

Arrangements with Victoria College have been ongoing for a number of years, however recent interest in courses offered by them has not warranted contractual arrangements. Past students have undertaken courses largely by correspondence and have either attended residentials at SCOTT or have had to attend Melbourne.

Deakin University (Warrnambool Campus)

In 1989 the College entered an arrangement with Deakin University (formerly Warrnambool Institute of Education) to conduct tutorial support and provide access to the Learning Resource Centre and computer facilities for their external students in the Bachelor of Social Science course. This arrangement is ongoing with students using the College as a study centre.

Other

Sunraysia College of TAFE's Learning Resource Centre provides services to community borrowers. Approximately 90% of these borrowers are persons studying externally through other institutions, for example, Deakin University, Monash, Gippsland and Phillip.

COURSE / INSTITUTION	YEAR						
	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993*
La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria							
Bachelor of Business	-	14	47	64	72	68	70
Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art)	-	-	-	8	9	9	6
Bachelor of Arts (Graphics)	-	-	-	4	8	6	6
Bachelor of Arts (Ceramics)	-	-	-	3	-	5	-
Bachelor of Applied Science	-	4	-	-	10	10	10
Bachelor of Arts (Social Science)	-	-	-	17	18	17	18
Bachelor of Arts (Humanities)	-	-	-	-	10	13	13
Bachelor of Social Work	-	-	13	24	9	-	-
Diploma of Teaching (Primary)	-	-	-	17	25	15	-
Bachelor of Teaching	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Diploma of Tertiary Studies	-	-	-	-	21	-	-
Associate Diploma of Administration	-	-	-	-	11	5	5
Bachelor of Education	-	-	-	-	12	15	-
Graduate Diploma of Health Science	-	-	-	-	-	17	26
Single Subjects	-	-	-	-	-	3	5
Ballarat University College							
Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts)	19	14	10	-	-	-	-
Diploma of Tertiary Studies	-	-	9	19	-	-	-
Hawthorn Institute of Education							
Graduate Diploma of Education/Diploma of Teaching (TAFE) 1986-16)	16	20	20	16	16	-	23
Victoria College (Toorak)							
Graduate Diploma in Educational Technology	-	5	3	-	-	-	-
Charles Sturt University							
Graduate Certificate in Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Total Yearly Enrolments	35	57	102	172	221	183	213

*Projected Enrolments only

G. Byrne et al of La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria, in a paper titled "Evaluation of Remote Site Teaching: A Comparative Study" published in *Education in Rural Australia* (Vol. 1 (2), p.45) aimed "... to determine the effect (if any) that a student's location has on his/her performance in the Bachelor of Business degree". The study considered four campuses at which students undertook the Bachelor of Business program for the years 1987, 1988 and 1989. Campuses were Bendigo,

Mildura, Shepparton and Wangaratta. Using a one-way analysis of variance, the hypothesis tested was that there was "... no campus effect on performance".

The outcome of the research was "... that student performance is unaffected by location". Byrne et al claim that this study supports those of Pirrong and Lathen (Idaho Study, Boise State University, 1990) and Wong in her University of Saskatchewan evaluations (1988).

CONCLUSION

Given the experience of those involved in extended campus operations over the last five or six years, coupled with the research findings of Byrne et al and others, albeit that they are far from extensive, it can be concluded that extended campus operations at Mildura, and one would suspect elsewhere, do not disadvantage students in terms of performance and outcomes.

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