

Participation and Community Engagement at Macquarie University: Research and Evaluation Strategy 2013-2016

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Participation and Community Engagement (PACE) at Macquarie University is a University-wide Initiative designed to provide undergraduate students with a distinctive educational experience involving community-based experiential learning opportunities with an array of partners in jointly conceived projects that seek at once to strengthen graduate capabilities and develop informed, socially responsible and engaged global citizens; and to contribute to positive social change locally, regionally and internationally. An integral part of the PACE Initiative is PACE International. Jointly managed by Macquarie University and Australian Volunteers International, PACE International establishes an international platform for learning by providing students experiential learning opportunities to work in a range of countries on community development projects of mutual benefit to participants and partners alike. This showcase presentation will discuss the PACE Research and Evaluation Strategy 2013-2016 and thus address the third theme of the Conference: Research and Policy. The Research and Evaluation Strategy provides a coherent and strategic framework for research and evaluation of the impact on, and experience of, PACE in respect to various stakeholder communities i.e. students, partners, staff, Australian Volunteers International, Macquarie University as an institution and the wider community. The showcase presentation will discuss the background which gave rise to the Research and Evaluation Strategy and outline its conceptual framework. It will then set out the parameters of PACE-related research and evaluation and the methodology adopted. Particular attention will be given to the impact of the Research and Evaluation Strategy on (a) PACE pedagogy and (b) ensuring operational and organisational effectiveness and efficiency.