

Building capacity for inclusive teaching: a survey of Australian university practice

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In the context of widening participation in higher education, growing student diversity has generated increasing awareness and discussion of the need for inclusive teaching and learning practice (Gale 2010; Kift 2010). Inclusive teaching and learning practice encompasses harnessing pedagogy, curriculum and assessment design to engage diverse students in learning that is meaningful, relevant and accessible to all (Hockings 2011). Research suggests that professional development can promote inclusive teaching and learning, by building staff capacity to develop good teaching practices to meet the needs of all students (May and Bridger, 2010). Against this background it is of interest to establish the extent and ways in which inclusive teaching practice is included within professional development in Australian universities. This presentation will outline the results of a survey of professional development for inclusive teaching at Australian universities. The survey targeted equity practitioners, staff in teaching and learning centres and Faculty Teaching and Learning leaders. Responses revealed the varying extents to which professional development for inclusive teaching is implemented in Australian universities, along with a range of approaches. Only 20% of respondents indicated inclusive teaching and learning professional development was embedded institution wide. The presentation will consider the implications of findings for future directions in building capacity for inclusive university teaching and learning in response to increasingly diverse student needs.