

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FLEXIBLE LEARNING AND TEACHING: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF *LEARNSCOPE*, 2001 - 2002

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Abstract

The experience of planning and implementing a professional development program, 'Learnscope', at RMIT is examined and evaluated through a comparison of different management approaches undertaken in 2001 and 2002. 'Learnscope' is a national professional development program for the Vocational & Educational Training (VET) sector which has a specific focus on exploring the application of technology to teaching and learning. Learnscope aims to develop teachers' understanding of flexible and online learning and to build capability, so that teachers may apply these to their own teaching practice. Teachers participate in Learnscope by choice, or in some cases because they are obliged to join a project team. Managers, who support staff participation in Learnscope, do so with the expectation that experience gained from Learnscope will translate into specific outcomes for the provision of high-quality learning programs. Specifically that teachers will be better able to make use of new technologies to provide flexible learning for RMIT's students and clients. There are tensions between this vision and the reality: the role of management, the commitment of teaching staff and the adaptability of the Learnscope format all impact on the effectiveness of the professional development. A suitable balance between all of these elements must be established if the resultant learning is to be successful.

Keywords

Professional Development, Staff Development, Learnscope, Project Scoping, Project Planning, Project Management, Action Learning, Flexible Learning

Introduction

Developing and implementing teaching and learning strategies in vocational and tertiary education is a process which is increasingly complex. Educational institutions are operating within a competitive, increasingly deregulated environment. Learning must now take place within circumstances where individuals require ongoing further education and training to keep up with the changing demands of work and life. There is an ever-increasing prominence of new technologies, a diversity of age, culture and social background within student groups, and learning environments may be located on-campus, in the workplace, overseas or in the home. Yet, more than ever, stakeholders – governments at the state and federal level, the management of universities and Vocational and Educational Training (VET) providers, and the students themselves – expect educational programs to be of a high-quality, flexible and responsive to the needs of students.

In an effort to address these requirements, state and federal governments have put flexible learning strategies in place (eg. ANTA, 2001; DEET, 2000) and many universities are undertaking strategic planning specific to “flexible, student-centred teaching and learning environments” (Lines, 2001, p.2). TAFE institutes are also formally recognising the role of flexible learning in vocational education in their strategic planning. Meeting the demand for increased flexibility in learning has, to a large extent, been

made possible by the growing prevalence of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) – it is evident that ICT has formed the basis for all the flexible learning strategies referred to in this paper.

At RMIT University, the 1998 'Education & Training IT Alignment Project' (ITAP) Report signified the start of a three-year program of major strategic investment and development in ICT and related business processes, aimed at increasing flexible teaching and learning. The report outlined a strategy for aligning existing technology infrastructure and funding into a university-wide framework, with the central objective that information technology should support the educational and teaching mission of the University. "...this means adding value for the learner to current quality programs through more choice in time, place, pace and mode for individual learning." (RMIT University 1998, p.1).

In Victoria, the State Government has linked the annual funding for TAFE institutes to a requirement that institutes undertake ICT strategic planning; a strategy which specifically aims to encourage VET providers to make use of online facilities for education and training, as well as associated services such as Library access and student administration.

The importance of providing staff with professional development is generally recognised in flexible learning strategies, however the degree to which professional development is funded and integrated with other strategic activities varies. This paper aims to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development for flexible and online teaching and learning at RMIT University by examining the management and implementation a professional development program for VET teachers.

Technology and the change to flexible learning

Because ICT features so strongly in the change towards increased flexibility in formal education, 'online learning' is often regarded as synonymous with flexible learning. However, online learning is a *means* of creating flexible learning. Flexible learning can more accurately be described by way of reference to *andragogy*, the theory of adult learning (Knowles, 1978). Knowles observes that adult learners have their own life experience to draw upon and are motivated to learn by their own needs and interests. Therefore, adults benefit from education which is based upon real life situations (rather than learning programs which are organised into 'subjects' or 'units'), and due to the variance of age amongst adult learners, education should provide for differences in style, time, place and pace of learning (Knowles, 1978, p.31). Flexible learning strives to cater for these same factors.

Online learning is seen to offer flexibility because it can provide the learner with a choice of time, place and pace. Other elements which provide flexibility to the learner can also be accommodated through online learning, including a choice in the style of learning, in content and assessment (Boud, Bridge & Willoughby cited in Jarvis, 1988) and the opportunity for increased dialogue (Vella, 1994) between the learner and the teacher.

However, creating flexibility in an online learning environment does not occur automatically. It requires careful planning, educational design and new teaching and facilitation skills. Unaccustomed to being able to provide the learner with greater freedom and control over their own learning, many teachers simply replicate the familiar 'transmission' approach in the online environment, and in doing so, lose the opportunity to embed flexibility in the learning experience.

Initial attempts by RMIT to implement its ITAP strategy for flexible learning are represented in the Teaching & Learning Strategy's 'Framework for Learning' (RMIT, 2000, p.14). This framework sought to bring about 'mixed mode' delivery (that is, a combination of face-to-face and online delivery) by setting a target that 100% of courses ('subjects' or 'units') would undergo a 'renewal' process by 2002. (A major ITAP project, to develop an online learning system called the Distributed Learning System (DLS), provided ICT infrastructure to support this plan.) This approach did not translate into an organisation-wide change to high-quality, online learning: although the *quantity* of courses with an online presence grew steadily, the overall quality was poor (Kenny, 2001, p.328). There are various underlying reasons why the RMIT approach was not entirely successful. The outcome, of quantity over quality in DLS usage, highlights the complexity of creating truly *flexible* learning through the use of ICT and online delivery.

Renewal of courses for flexible learning generally involves significant redesign, so that a course can be both developed for and taught in a multitude of settings – online, customised for specific student groups and overseas. At RMIT, the work of designing and developing a new course for online delivery is most likely to be undertaken as a discrete project, requiring teachers to work in project teams with project managers, educational designers and technical production staff. For many teachers, this is a new way of working (Kenny, 2001, p.329) and imposes significant change. The role of the ‘teacher’ is placed under scrutiny, requiring staff to critically examine their current teaching practice. Furthermore, these projects are often funded as strategic initiatives and are therefore closely monitored by management.

Further to the complexities of online course (re)design and development experienced by project teams, organisational management must also become more dynamic and responsive to change. The requirements of flexible learning and online student administration demand changes to business processes and funding structures to accommodate the ‘online’ student (ANTA, 2001, p.18). It is evident that a multi-dimensional change management approach is required, and that a successful shift to flexible learning requires significant staff and professional development for all involved. Teachers, administrators and managers alike must develop new ICT skills to enable them to understand and use the range of technologies that are available.

RMIT’s ITAP approach was comprehensive and did address the many change management factors involved, to varying degrees. IT infrastructure was upgraded and standardised. Student administration support was addressed through the development of a new ‘Academic Management System’. Staff development was available to teaching staff, to assist them in gaining the necessary skills to use the online tools which constitute the Distributed Learning System (eg. BlackBoard, WebBoard and QM Perception). However, the types of support required for facilitating a deep understanding about educational and instructional design for online learning, to create a broad change in teaching practice, to expose teachers to new methods and engender ‘the freedom to think freshly’ (Boyer, 1990, p.17) were not as readily available. Promoting and sustaining the change to flexible learning requires significant resourcing and *professional* development. What follows is a discussion and analysis of the “Learnscope” professional development program at RMIT, through a comparison of its management and implementation in 2001 and 2002.

Learnscope

Learnscope is a professional development program for the VET sector, which has a specific focus on exploring the application of technology to teaching and learning. It is funded by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and its main aim is to support Goal 1 of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework: to develop “creative, capable people” (ANTA, 2001, p.15) who will be able to sustain the change to flexible learning. The program was established in 1998 (*About Learnscope*, 2001). In 1999, to acknowledge of the importance of the need to professionally develop teachers throughout the VET sector, Learnscope was incorporated into the Australian Flexible Learning Framework (ANTA, 2000) as one of several strategies intended to “accelerate the application of flexible learning methodologies within the Australian VET system” by building a “critical mass of VET staff who are able to use flexible learning approaches...” (ANTA 2000, pp.13-15).

Learnscope is intended to be a team-based activity, where a group of staff work together towards a common aim. The project team consists of four main roles:

- the project leader, who manages the project logistics and budget, and leads the group;
- the project facilitator, who has expertise of relevance to the group’s common goal;
- the participants, who are those seeking a professional development opportunity;
- the sponsor, who champions the project within the organisation, ensuring that adequate resourcing and time release from teaching are available to the project team.

At each institute, a Learnscope coordinator or manager is responsible for the implementation of Learnscope at the organisational level and ensuring that ANTA reporting requirements are fulfilled. In addition, the inclusion of mentors and consultants in the project is encouraged, to provide specialist expertise as required.

In contrast to other states and territories, the Victorian funding model for Learnscope allocates funds to each TAFE institute on a *pro rata* basis. The Victorian State Learnscope Manager from Office for Training and Tertiary Education (OTTE) anticipates that this arrangement will remain in place for the duration of Australian Flexible Learning Framework (that is, until 2004). This presents TAFE institutes with the opportunity to establish Learnscope projects that have a timeframe of more than one year.

Learnscope at RMIT in 2001

At RMIT, the 2001 implementation of Learnscope primarily focussed on developing or revising implementations of nationally accredited ANTA Training Packages. Applicants were advised that Learnscope funding would be prioritised for course teams that had completed or were currently implementing Training Packages. The basis for this stems from RMIT's approach to Training Package implementation (Down & Stewart, 2001), which positions planning for the integration of technology into a course or program as a separate and subsequent stage, to be addressed *after* the educational design process is complete (Figure 1 in Down & Stewart, 2001, p.10). It was considered that groups who had completed a training package implementation would have already given considerable thought to educational issues and so would be ready to begin investigating the possibilities for use of ICT.

During the year, Learnscope project teams received project facilitation support from the Learnscope Manager (an external consultant), and mentoring in Training Package implementation from educational designers (RMIT staff). Some action learning was used to facilitate professional development, along with a general program of core (compulsory) workshops and other activities, which all teams were encouraged to participate in.

Evaluative work undertaken in relation to Learnscope 2001 consisted of final reports from each project team which reflected on learning and other project outcomes, a reflective report by the Learnscope Coordinator, and an end-of-year evaluation forum which involved Learnscope participants and Faculty/University management and the Learnscope Coordinator.

In the evaluation forum, participants made suggestions regarding how Learnscope could be more beneficial, including that "Teachers need to be supported in a variety of ways", and that "The most successful groups were those that were able to meet on a regular basis and had the time to do so.". Other comments suggested that Learnscope teams wanted greater control over their own projects: "Learnscope needs to be organic and timelines not imposed on the teams", "Professional development [needs] to be more geared towards program teams on specific issues, rather than large-scale seminars." and "large group workshops are not appropriate for everyone and every situation" (RMIT, 2001). This evaluation of Learnscope by the 2001 participants clearly indicated that the style of the professional development needed to be re-evaluated, to be more relevant to the specific issues being experienced by the project team.

The Learnscope 2001 evaluation also led university management to the conclusion that if Learnscope was to be of real strategic value to both participants and the University, it needed to be more explicitly aligned with other strategic teaching and learning initiatives within the University, and in particular those with a technology focus. "...how faculties prioritise programs and courses for support is a critical issue..." (RMIT, 2001).

A national evaluation of Learnscope reinforced the results of RMIT's 2001 Learnscope evaluation:

1. *Scope the project so that it is achievable, relevant and appropriate.*
2. *Provide a team environment that is positive and collaborative so that team members:*
 - *feel supported and sufficiently resourced;*
 - *have ownership of their task;*
 - *have sufficient flexibility to accommodate insights and learning. (Funnell & Larri 2001:6)*

In addition, the national evaluation highlighted other important considerations for Learnscope implementation:

3. *Ensure that team members learn about adult learning styles and ICT through learner-centred strategies. Recognise that technical skills are important but that learning needs associated with educational design and delivery should drive the acquisition of those skills.*
4. *Ensure that team members are exposed to examples of best practice and professional discussion about educational design using ICT from outside the team and outside the organisation. (Funnell & Larri, 200, pp.6-7)*

The 2002 RMIT model for Learnscope

In response to evaluation information from 2001, substantial changes were made to RMIT's organisational management and implementation of Learnscope in 2002. (A comparison of the two approaches is described in Table 1.)

Planning for Learnscope has been integrated into the strategic planning processes of faculties and the University, with funding distributed on a more-or-less equal basis between all faculties. In November 2001, University management advised Faculties that funding would be available for Learnscope in 2002. Faculties were asked to develop their own process for selecting Learnscope project(s), as a part of Faculty teaching and learning plans (in particular with regard to course and program renewal projects). It was envisioned that this approach would encourage the use of Learnscope as a key resource for renewal projects, as well as encouraging project scoping and planning to occur in November/December of 2001, so that projects could commence in January or February 2002.

The role and responsibility of the sponsor has been given greater prominence. A diverse range of RMIT's managers are engaged as sponsors for Learnscope, including VET Program Coordinators, Heads of Department and Faculty Directors of Teaching Quality, with overall institute sponsorship coming from the Pro Vice Chancellor (Learning & Scholarship). The importance of sponsorship was apparent during the process of establishing project teams – the task of getting the whole team together for regular meetings can often only be achieved with the assistance of a sponsor.

Project teams are supported by facilitators – professional development staff from Learning Technology Services. These facilitators have a great deal of experience with use of RMIT systems, in particular the DLS, designing online learning experiences and an in-depth knowledge of relevant organisational processes and networks. They assist the group to develop a year-long learning program which will support the goals and planned outcomes of both individuals and the project as a whole. This process provides facilitators with an opportunity to model flexible learning principles (andragogy), with the aim of encouraging teachers to shift their teaching practice to a more learner-centred approach also.

The role of action learning (McGill & Beaty, 2001) for Learnscope has been strengthened to become the core focus of ongoing interaction between the project facilitator and the project team. Work-based projects endeavour to achieve a balance between the professional development needs of Learnscope participants and the staff development requirements of the organisation. As in 2001, Learnscope continues to support Training Package implementation, as well as course renewal. However, there is a broader focus upon developing *capability* in teachers – particularly in ICT literacy and flexible and online teaching and learning. Teachers are encouraged to investigate ICT as a part of the educational design process for a course renewal or Training Package implementation, rather than isolating this as a subsequent stage. The intention is that teachers will use Learnscope an initial stage of 'discovery' (Boyer, 1990, p.17), for exploration and iterative testing of ideas. After the period of 'capability building' undertaken during a Learnscope project, it is envisioned that teachers will be prepared for the more challenging task of applying flexible learning principles when implementing Training Packages or to course design.

Finally, to ensure that projects will also comply with ANTA reporting requirements and the needs of faculty management (in relation to strategic teaching and learning planning), at the first team meeting, the project facilitator and/or sponsor provides participants with explicit criteria of what is expected of them. A key RMIT requirement is that participants use RMIT enterprise IT systems in the first instance (rather than 'reinventing the wheel' by using other systems which duplicate existing RMIT systems' functionality), and accordingly, that participants are expected to undertake skill-based training in the use of RMIT enterprise IT systems.

Once projects are underway, facilitators provide mentoring and leadership in project management to the project team leaders, with the aim of ensuring that participants continue to work towards the agreed goals of the project. This also provides project leaders and participants with an additional professional development opportunity: to develop a working knowledge of project management techniques – increasingly an important skill for today’s education practitioners (TAFE Frontiers, 2001, p.80).

Comparison of implementation approaches: 2001 - 2002

The implementation approaches of Learnscope over the past two years would seem to be fairly similar in many respects: both use action learning and aim to support training package implementation and program/course renewal. Two key differences are the degree to which Learnscope in 2002 has been integrated into University planning and the focus on thorough project planning and management. There are benefits and disadvantages within both approaches, and these will become more apparent as the 2002 program progresses. Table 1 is a comparison of the two approaches.

	2001	2002
Application Process	All VET staff are invited to apply, most project teams are self-selected.	Learnscope is officially linked into other professional development and strategic activities – eg. course renewal, Training Package implementation. Prospective project teams are identified by Faculties, as part of the strategic planning process for teaching and learning.
Selection Process	A reference group determines which applications are accepted, and the allocation funding made to each project team. Teams involved in training package implementation are prioritised for receiving funding.	Project teams, as nominated by Faculties, are endorsed by University Management. Funding is then allocated – divided more-or-less evenly between each Faculty.
Sponsorship	Most projects have support at the department level, but not necessarily at the Faculty level.	Projects must be clearly supported by a sponsor who can confirm that the project’s outcome will be of strategic value to the Faculty/University, as well as of professional development value of the project team. Also, the sponsor must have the authority to ensure adequate resourcing for the project team.
Learnscope Coordination & Project Facilitation	Overall Learnscope coordination and most project facilitation is provided by an external consultant (ie. not an RMIT staff member).	Learnscope is coordinated by an RMIT staff member and project facilitators are RMIT professional development staff from Learning Technology Services.
Project Scoping and Planning	It is left up to the project team to determine the purpose and outcomes of the project, and to decide how these are documented (if at all). A detailed project plan is not required. Not all teams have goals and planned outcomes – some use Learnscope as an open-ended, ad hoc process and just ‘wait to see what happens’.	The application process, of identifying staff involved in strategically important areas, initiates the scope and general direction for the project. Usually, defined by a longer-term aim to use online delivery within a course/program. The specific objectives of the project are decided by the project team, generally with direct support and guidance provided by the Faculty.
Educational Model for Participants’ Learning and Development	Action learning, combined with a ‘general’ program of workshops and activities that is arranged by the Learnscope manager (eg. workshops on using particular software, educational design and Internet-based research skills). Some activities are mandatory, others are optional. The timetable for these activities set by the Learnscope manager.	Action learning, focussed on a specific project. No compulsory workshops and activities – an action plan is determined by the group, based on individual and group professional development needs. A set of requirements (‘participant obligations’) is outlined. These must be incorporated into each project, however, the project team decides exactly how the requirements will be met.

Table 1. Comparison of Learnscope implementation approaches: 2001 – 2002

Critique of the 2002 implementation

Giving full responsibility to faculties for the application and selection of Learnscope teams in late 2001 has not resulted in projects commencing earlier. It has become apparent that many of the nominated projects were not properly scoped by the faculties prior to nominating them for Learnscope. This has subsequently meant that most projects were not ready to commence until late March, or even April. (In mid-May, one project was still yet to properly get underway.) In addition, the task of instigating project scoping has fallen to the Learnscope project facilitator. This has meant that when projects do finally commence, the first 3 - 6 weeks focus on project scoping and planning, rather than on the project implementation and development.

The failure of faculties to jointly scope projects with prospective project teams has also highlighted that, in some cases, there was a lack of consultation with the teaching staff. Staff who had been identified by the Faculty to participate in Learnscope were not clearly advised in advance of what would be expected of them. This has, in turn, caused difficulties for project team members to participate in Learnscope, as release from teaching duties had not been incorporated into work-planning. Project facilitators have found that initial attempts to meet with project teams are often characterised by confusion, lack of staff availability to meet as a team, lack of clarity about a team 'goal' and sometimes a lack of commitment to even be involved in Learnscope.

A key strength of the (national) Learnscope model is that it permits (and actively encourages) innovation. Because the 2002 RMIT implementation is so closely tied to course renewal, RMIT fails to take full advantage of this opportunity. This has meant that any staff development undertaken through Learnscope tends to focus on developing teachers' skills in using the DLS and other relatively-common software packages (for example, Microsoft Office, Macromedia Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop). The scope to explore emerging software and technologies (eg. weblogs, wireless devices), or even to develop new applications, is limited.

Benefits of the 2002 implementation

McGill & Beaty (2001, p.62) advise that to support action learning "Maintaining the set as a group is crucial to enabling the main purpose." This is reiterated in the observations of RMIT's 2001 Learnscope evaluation: "The most successful groups were those that were able to meet on a regular basis and had the time to do so." (RMIT, 2001). It has been the experience of the 2002 project facilitators, so far, that once the project teams start to meet regularly, the benefits of the action learning approach are apparent: reflection is fostered as part of the action learning cycle. In addition, the capability to work as part of a project team is developed. Learnscope participants will bring these skills to future online and multimedia resource development projects – essential for achieving cost effectiveness in technology-based teaching and learning (TAFE Frontiers, 2001, p.80).

Another significant element of the 2002 Learnscope model has been to cater for both *staff* development, through which staff achieve organisational objectives aimed at improving their work performance (TAFE Frontiers, 2001, p.74), and *professional* development. For example, the project-based, action learning approach means that staff development in RMIT systems (such as the DLS) can be tailored to participants' needs and interests, so that professional development is also encouraged. Examples of the foci of 2002 projects include:

- investigation and evaluation of third-party resources such as ANTA Flexible Learning Toolboxes (<http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/toolbox/>), in preparation for using these as learning resources in a Training Package implementation;
- development of sustainable protocols for online content management;
- trialling online discussion techniques with students and developing teachers' emoderation skills to support students in situations where face-to-face teaching time has been considerably reduced;
- redesigning assessment tasks to integrate the use of technology, for example assisting students to use technology to better illustrate concepts for portfolio presentations.

To motivate the participants who are being 'developed', the inherent value in the professional development must also be apparent. VET teachers do not always have a primary self-identity of being a teacher. This is particularly the case for those teachers, such as sessionals, who spend more time working in their industry area than as a 'teacher'. Teachers seem to be more willing to learn about flexible and online learning, and to adopt a learner-centred approach when it is relevant to their own personal *professional* development, and of course when it offers efficiencies, such as less time spent marking assessment or responding to student queries. The 2002 Learnscope model aims to contextualise staff development within the framework of flexible learning and the emerging professional requirements of VET teachers to create relevancy.

Although increasing the prominence of the role of sponsor did not result in projects commencing earlier for 2002, it has ultimately enhanced the overall status of Learnscope projects. In comparison, in 2001 the optional requirement for sponsorship meant that, in some instances, faculty management (eg. Directors of Teaching Quality and Directors of IT) were unaware of the project's existence until well into the year. This resulted in some situations of project teams replicating work that was already being developed in other parts of the University.

The project facilitator role has been extremely valuable in 2002. By leading the project scoping and planning process, facilitators have been able to lead project teams to ensure that project plans meet the strategic aims of the University, as well as catering for the professional development needs of the participants. It is apparent that the project facilitators – because they are RMIT staff members with a working knowledge of RMIT systems and strategic initiatives – have been able to bring about a project planning process which encompasses the requirements of all stakeholders. In contrast, the project facilitation for Learnscope in 2001 was provided by an external consultant who lacked knowledge of RMIT strategic initiatives (for example, the IT Alignment Project). The facilitator, therefore, was often unable to inform Learnscope teams of these initiatives and how they might relate to a project's aim.

Conclusion: Creating an environment for effective professional development

Learnscope, and similar action learning based programs, can lead to successful outcomes – both in terms of professional development for teachers and for specific flexible learning developments. However, it can be seen from the experience of Learnscope at RMIT, that for professional development to be successful, it must have the full support and commitment of both the individual and the organisation. To ensure that the professional development accomplishes its outcomes for both management and the teaching staff, thorough project planning is crucial. In addition, negotiation between managers and teachers, regarding the outcomes of a professional development project, is also essential. Teachers must acknowledge that it *is* necessary for managers to insist on staff development being appropriate to the organisation, and that the project must ultimately relate to a specific application of the learning, such as the 'production' of online components for a course. However, managers also need to allow teachers to engage in professional development: to determine how they can best contribute to the implementation of strategic change and apply their learning, for example in an online product development project. This means that professional development must put into practice the adult learning principle that learners are primarily motivated by their own needs and interests: that is, for teachers to realise the value in staff development, professional development must also be fostered.

Finally, it is important to recognise that ICT and online learning are important *initiators* of the change to flexible learning, and cannot be treated as an *adjunct* to Training Package implementation or course renewal. The development of skills in ICT and online learning provide a means to an end: to change the practice of teachers, so that flexible learning is always at the core of any learning experience.

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Appendix A: Recommendations for Learnscope at RMIT, 2003 – 2004

To ensure that maximum benefit is achieved from the Learnscope program – for both the teachers who participate and the University as a whole – the following suggestions are offered.

Management of the Learnscope program

A Learnscope Steering Committee or Reference Group should be established, with membership to include the RMIT Learnscope Coordinator, faculty representatives and staff who specialise in VET program or course renewal. This group should manage the application/selection process and overall implementation of Learnscope.

Project Scoping and Planning

- Teachers who are planning to participate in Learnscope and their sponsors should be provided with clear information of expectations and obligations at the outset, before they commit to being involved.

Faculties should provide Learnscope project facilitators with clear information about their own processes and expectations.

- Learnscope project facilitators should provide mentoring, internal consultancy (Lines 2000:7) and assistance with project scoping to prospective Learnscope teams.
- Staff should be encouraged to initiate their own project teams.
- Offer project teams the opportunity to plan projects over a period of up to two years.
- Establish minimum requirements for entry into the Learnscope program, including that:
 - participants have an appropriate level of ICT literacy,
 - projects are sponsored by the faculty *and* department,
 - project teams commit to regular group meetings and should be limited to a maximum of 10 staff (to facilitate action learning).
- Applicants should demonstrate that a thorough project scoping process has been undertaken. The project application must demonstrate that:
 - the project is relevant to current RMIT strategic directions and will comply with national Learnscope guidelines
 - investigation into has been done into the existence of similar work (other Learnscope projects, research, etc.) to avoid repetition, and
 - there is a vision of where the project is likely to lead.

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