New models for learning flexibility: Negotiated choices for both academics and students

Judy Nagy
Deakin Business School
Deakin University

Jacquelin McDonald
Learning and Teaching Support Unit
University of Southern Queensland

'Flexible learning' represents a need associated with 'lifelong learning' and the equipping of graduates to actively engage in a 'knowledge society'. While the precise meaning of each of these terms is not easy to discern, notions of flexible learning have progressed an evolutionary path that concentrates on students as though they are the only stakeholder group in the higher education environment that would benefit from choice. Academic discourse also presumes that all cultural groups making up the increasingly diverse student population aspire to engage in student-centred learning as a precursor to involvement in a knowledge economy. In this environment academics have been encouraged to embrace on-line teaching and promote a more student-centred learning approach when the natural inclination and talent of many academics may make this style of pedagogy so challenging that learning outcomes are compromised. We question this 'one size fits all' mentality and suggest a model that empowers both the students and academics by allowing them the ability to choose the approach that suits their educational philosophy and preferred learning/teaching approach. The model represents an innovation in flexibility that recognises initial embedded learning foundation abilities and reaches both teachers and learners by utilising their own frames of reference.

Keywords: student-centred learning, academic-centred learning, learning styles, teaching styles, higher education

Introduction and context

Australian higher education is operating within an environment of significant change with the needs of students featuring as a priority in a highly competitive environment. Notions of lifelong learning and a knowledge society coupled with the revolution in digital technologies have enabled education and education processes in ways previously unimagined. The harnessing of information and communication technologies (ICT) for learning has fostered greater transparency in education processes in accord with the 'market' perspective supporting a standardised (Marginson, 2006, Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 177), non-discriminatory approach to education that is offered to all qualifying students on the same basis (Parker 2005). Students are able to access learning in a manner that accords with their own mix of worklife needs and constraints and often without the need to physically attend a campus. For the purposes of this paper flexibility is defined in terms of flexible access to education with students able to select on or off campus learning with technologies providing bridges to facilitate the choices made (University of Southern Queensland draft policy document, 2007).

There are global pressures to allow for qualifications to become portable worldwide that are resulting in increasing commonalities in degree and postgraduate programs and also greater competition between suppliers of higher education. The most recent significant moves in Europe to increase standardisation in higher education have emerged as a consequence of the European Bologna Process, a plan to integrate the higher education frameworks of 45 European countries by 2010. The Australian Minister for Education, Science and Training, Julie Bishop, (Bologna National Seminar, 2006) suggests that the Bologna Process:

> is about mobility for students and graduates – about bringing together a disparate array of systems and working towards a consensus model that enables students, and institutions and employers to more readily understand and translate qualifications across national borders … to improve Europe's international position in higher education. (p. 2)

Education is thus becoming increasing borderless with universities competing for students in the same market, the global market. Student choice and flexibility is not limited to curriculum, with changing student cohorts also demanding greater flexibility in the way they access programs and services (Laurillard, 2002). How universities have individually embraced this phenomenon have implications for their ability to attract certain segments of the education market. Blass (2005) suggests that the "public university sector needs to change to a more needs driven, customer focus if it is to survive in its current form and market" (p. 59). However, the path forward is littered with the debris of trying to please a multitude of stakeholders.[1] Dunderstadt (2001) suggests that stakeholders have expanded in number and interests without adequate means to communicate and reach agreement on priorities. Indeed, the demands of external stakeholders, pressure on staff to do more for students, and changing academics roles, within a more corporate environment, are creating tensions within universities.

The education needs of a 'knowledge-based economy' are as elusive as a clear enunciation of what constitutes a 'knowledge-based economy'. Numerous government discussion papers (DEST 2005:14, DEST 2006) and OECD reports (OECD 1996a, OECD 1996b) have grappled with what a knowledge worker is, what types of activities can be classified as highly skilled and what skills need to be developed by educating institutions. Watson (2003, p. 3) points out that "lifelong learning literature emphasises self-motivation in the context of both formal and informal learning. Lifelong learners must have the *motivation* and *capacity* to learn" (italics in original). The role of academics in developing the motivation and capacity is significantly constrained by pedagogical imperatives that privilege student-centred learning as the method most likely to equip graduates with the skills needed in a knowledge economy.

This paper is concerned with the nexus between a number of internal and external forces in the Australian higher education market. Specifically, the need for students to have 'choice' as part of the commodification of education, the expectation that universities will equip students to become lifelong learners, the role of progressive pedagogies in student learning, and the role of academics within this evolving landscape. Pedagogies are discussed in more detail below however, for this paper pedagogies are loosely clustered into 'student-centred' or 'teacher-centred', with social constructivist, and/or situative perspective clustered as 'student-centred learning' and associative and/or individual constructivist clustered as 'teacher-centred learning'. We do not debate the merits of student-centred or teacher-centred learning but wish to highlight anomalies in current educational discourse that concern two of the most significant stakeholder groups in the higher education sector; students and academic staff. The first anomaly relates to a presumed student desire to learn using a student-centred learning experience. The growth in the Australian international student market over the last 10 years has benefited from the quality and equity policies common to large public universities in Australia. Equity policies ensure that all student groups receive the same learning experience with a standardised framework for pedagogies employed. These are founded upon presumptions concerning generic skills held on entry to higher education and expectations of skills that graduates will develop during their studies. To differentiate between student cohorts in Australia is met with condemnation on the grounds of equity and culturally defined best practice pedagogy. Discriminatory practices and processes are unacceptable, including a 'one size fits all' approach that results in learning environments treating students as if they were a homogenous group. We question this approach and suggest that there is scope within 'flexible' education models to offer students more than one pedagogically sound approach by allowing students to choose their preferred learning experience.

The second anomaly relates to issues of choice for academic staff. Market philosophies endow the notion of 'choice' and the exercising of 'choice' with power. Historically universities had the power to dictate what and how students could learn. There is much literature to suggest that as part of competitive pressures universities are increasingly attuned to the needs of their 'customers' (Blass, 2005, Churchman, 2002, Tilling, 2002). However, as student choice has increased so academic choice has diminished resulting in academic alienation (Poon 2006) and disempowerment. The need to embrace new technologies, increasing numbers of performance indicators, diversity in students and the need to be more flexible and responsive to students as a consequence of managerialism in academe, has damaged academic autonomy. It is interesting to note that as early as 1994 an Australian Senate committee was suggesting that open learning would increase flexible options for students and change the role of the teacher. The report (Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1994) stated:

[1] The disbanding of Melbourne University Private, continuing losses incurred by Monash University's campus in South Africa, Deakin University's partnership with a number of Chinese universities being discontinued and, in the UK, the demise of the E-University.

> The term 'open learning' implies a freedom and diversity of learning options for the student. …. Professor Richard Johnson describes open learning as 'an approach rather than a system or technique; it is based on the needs of individual learners, not the interests of the teacher or the institution; it gives students as much control as possible over what and when and where and how they learn; it commonly uses the delivery methods of distance education and the facilities of educational technology; it changes the role of teacher from a source of knowledge to a manager of learning and a facilitator. (pp. 7-8)

Academics have little choice in embracing the new student-centred learning paradigms regardless of any natural ability or preferences they may have, again perpetuating a 'one size fits all' paradigm. In recognition of the shared responsibility for student outcomes, we believe that it is possible to provide choice for academics at the same time as providing real choice for students.

The flexible learning model we propose involves offering students and teachers the choice between two pedagogical approaches; either a student-centred learning approach or a more traditional teacher approach. We acknowledge that this demarcation may suggest that 'two sizes fit all' which is not our intention. For the purposes of discussion, we commence with what may be described as opposites within a complex range of pedagogical approaches that could be blended and mixed. Each of the two approaches would utilise best practice pedagogies for the particular learning paradigm and be staffed by teachers who also have the same style preference. We argue that the teaching role is central in each approach, however, a different style of teaching, or way of promoting learning, is practiced. We suggest that the current initiatives such as choices "designed to provide people with individualised learning pathways that are subject to the control of the learners themselves" (Poon 2006, p. 99) and choices to promote the 'personalisation' of learning (Hartley, 2007), have a greater opportunity of success if academics are simultaneously offered choice in using their favoured pedagogical approach to promote student learning. The empowerment of choice has appeal to both students and staff, with the potential for shared objectives to be realised.

Responding to change and subsequent impact on academic autonomy

Mangerialism has invoked a continuing stream of change for academics. Anderson, Johnson and Saha (2002) point out that "(f)irst new tasks, new technologies, and new accountability and bureaucratic procedures have added to traditional academic responsibilities. Nothing has been taken away" (Anderson, Johnson, & Saha, 2002, p. 8). They also claim that for academics "the overall picture is of frustration and disillusionment" (Anderson et al, 2002, p. ii). There is a presumption that academics will all engage with technology (to a greater or lesser degree) and that because contemporary pedagogies are somehow 'better' that academics will align themselves with these new approaches.

Many higher education institutions have used ICT as a way of providing educational access to new kinds of students, such as mature aged, and/or external national and international students. However, the idea that advanced learning technology could provide both more effective pedagogy and lower costs has been largely dispelled through the last few years in which on-line learning has been conceptualised as the delivery of a product. It is now widely accepted that a sound pedagogical underpinning has been largely missing in these developments (McDonald & Mayes, 2005). In their study of the failed uptake of e-learning in America, Zemsky and Massy (2004) suggest that "the hard fact is that e-learning took off before people really knew how to use it" (p. iii). Many academics are still working through the pedagogy of flexible learning, and the changes this mode has made to their professional practice.

Author discussion with academics regarding the implementation of on-line learning, and/or constructivist pedagogy reveals that many academics feel that the focus on a student-centred learning paradigm negates their central teaching role. The traditional teaching role is further challenged by the institutional push for choices for learners and learning, and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in higher education. Garrison and Anderson (2003, p. 106) suggest that "on-line learning is a disruptive technology in traditional institutions of higher education because it threatens the sustaining technology – the lecture". Many academics have engaging oratory skills and when required to embrace on-line approaches to learning struggle to adapt. The ability to project a social presence using text involves skills that are very different from that of a lecture environment. On-line learning provides a context to fundamentally change the traditional transmissive approach to education, so its adoption creates a complex set of challenges for practitioners as they embrace new pedagogies, develop new technical skills and adjust to changes in their teaching role (McDonald, 2007). Caplan (2004, p. 182) goes so far as to suggest that "many of the skills faculty had honed in face-to-face setting no longer apply on-line; and some teachers must 'unlearn' certain teaching methods as much as they need to learn new ones".

Other impacts of ICT have been to change teaching from what was traditionally a private, or 'behind closed doors' activity to provision of all materials on-line, thereby opening up courses to scrutiny in terms of content and processes. The on-line course is in the public domain, open to scrutiny by peers, a process that is quite different from the more transient and relatively private nature of on-campus lectures. In an on-campus context academics organise their own preparation timelines for lectures and tutorials. In contrast, on-line teaching materials are often developed using across institutional teams, so timelines are outside the control of the academic course leader. This imposed structure for development and preparation can add to the sense of disempowerment and loss of academic autonomy. The use of copyright and student material and ownership of intellectual property produced for the on-line course can also be an issue. The implementation of flexible learning creates both opportunities for innovative learning and teaching practice, and provides challenges as academics seek to adapt to changing educational environments.

Choosing appropriate pedagogy: all academics are not the same

Within the new management paradigm the use of technologies has also greatly facilitated bureaucratic control and standardisation in universities in terms of both process and content. Blackmore and Sachs (2003) provide a concise viewpoint on the choices that academics have in the new managerialist regime.

> The paradox of the neo-corporate organisation was that the tendency of performance-based management to focus upon competencies and outcomes, dollars rather than people, reduces, rather than enhances, professional autonomy and the capacity of individuals to exercise professional judgement although it provides new opportunities to upskill in technology and multi-skill in management work. (p. 493)

However, academics may feel more comfortable, and indeed excel at, teaching with minimal technology and the imposition of technologies onto pedagogical domains can be a source of tension. In the context of pre-tertiary education Watkins (2007) found that teachers are constrained by what they feel is 'appropriate pedagogy'. She argues that "the desire to teach is often thwarted within contemporary pedagogical practice by a set of discursive constraints that draws heavily on both the progressivist notions of teaching and learning and neo-liberal forms of governance" (Watkins, 2007, p. 301).

Despite often contradictory pressures to adopt 'appropriate pedagogy', teachers continue to draw on their preferred approach, based on their perspective on the nature of the learning and teaching. A number of these educational perspectives, together with underlying assumptions and associated pedagogy are presented in Table 1. The associative perspective reflects aspects of behavioral and cognitive theory. An individual and social constructive perspective is presented, along with the situated perspective, which emphasises learners developing their identity in a social context.

Preferred educational theory and assumptions about the nature of learning directly influence how academics choose to design and implement their learning and teaching environments. For example, underpinning traditional teaching is a broad theoretical stance on learning called associationism. In this approach, knowledge is an organised accumulation of associations and skill components and learning is the process of connecting the elementary mental or behavioural units, through sequences of activity. Thus sequences of instruction are designed for students to be able to learn in small and logically-ordered steps. Other perspectives embrace individual constructivism, and social constructivism - which is based on the idea of learning as a social rather than individual activity (Jonassen, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). In flexible learning there is a tension between possibilities for interactive and collaborative nature of learning supported by communication technology, and the flexibility and independence offered by the on-line learning environment. Constructivism recognises the dual nature of learning based on the learner constructing knowledge through individual reflection and social interaction. This approach challenges the traditional teacher centred, transmissive pedagogy. However, we argue that choice in applying different perspectives and pedagogies to meet the needs of different contexts and cohorts will provide flexibility and choice for both academics and students.

ICT can provide opportunities to provide this flexibility and choice, such as the three models of student on-line learning - the independent learner, the interactive learner and the collaborative model initiated at the University of Southern Queensland (McDonald & Reushle, 2000). The independent learner model is similar to what some refer to as content-learner interaction (Miller & Miller 1999) or Paulsen's (1995) one alone category in his pedagogical framework. The interactive learner model is similar to Paulsen's (1995) one to one and one to many pedagogical frameworks. Gunawardena and Zittle (1997) identify it as teacher/learner interactions that are the property of learning events and contribute immensely to a learner-

centred view of learning. This model maintains the interaction with the learning materials with the added feature of interactivity with peers, teachers and other experts. The collaborative learner model acknowledges the importance of co-construction of knowledge through collective learning and peer exchange. Paulsen (1995) refers to this as a many to many on-line experience with less of a focus on instructor contribution. When designing and implementing courses teachers can draw upon one model (e.g. the collaborative model when teaching skills of teamwork) or components of each model; as deemed suitable for the learning and teaching context. While academics are under pressure to address market imperatives by adopting a more student-centred approach and using ICT, this may not provide the ideal environment for either students or teachers.

Table 1: Defining approaches to learning – perspectives, assumptions and pedagogy

Perspective	Assumptions	Associated pedagogy
Associative perspective	***Learning as acquiring competence*** Learners acquire knowledge by building associations between different concepts. Learners gain skills by building progressively complex actions from component skills.	• Focus on competencies • Routines of organised activity • Progressive difficulty • Clear goals and feedback • Individualised pathways matched to the individual's prior performance
Constructive perspective (individual focus)	***Learning as achieving understanding*** Learners actively construct new ideas by building and testing hypotheses.	• Interactive environments for knowledge building • Activities that encourage collaboration and shared expression of ideas • Support for reflection, peer review and evaluation
The constructive perspective (social focus)	***Learning as achieving understanding*** Learners actively construct new ideas through collaborative activities and/or through dialogue.	• Interactive environments for knowledge building • Activities that encourage experimentation and discovery of principles • Support for reflection and evaluation
The situative perspective	***Learning as social practice*** Learners develop their identity through participation in specific communities and practices.	• Participation in social practices of inquiry and learning • Support for development of learning skills • Dialogue to facilitate the development of learning relationships

Source: Joint Information Systems Committee, (2004). *Effective Practice with e-Learning*, p. 13.

All students are not same

Although the knowledge economy has forced change in higher education structures and practices, the movement from the old to new learning paradigms has not been without creative, financial and cultural tensions. Culture is defined as "a set of learned moved, values, attitudes, and meaning that are shared by the members of a group" (Duarte & Snyder (1999, p. 54). Entrants to higher education in any country bring with them embedded learning foundations and abilities based on various culturally defined paradigms. These learners may struggle to adapt to the student-centred focus common in many western centric higher education institutions (Zobel & Hamilton, 2002; Hinton, 2004). Kawachi (2000, p. 42) notes that "Western conceptions and approaches are not transferable across cultures and that global distance education providers need to become more culturally sensitised to individual differences". Montgomery and Canaan (2004) confirm a need for:

> the development of ethnographies of higher education that consider how local, national and global structures interpenetrate and interact to shape and stratify student's educational choices and experiences … as a consequence of the ways in which informal and formal curricula and student learning during primary and secondary school has been structured … yet few have considered how these forces operate in higher education. (p. 739)

Increasing diversity of student cohorts in higher education raises questions regarding whether a university should impose a learning approach upon learners as though only one particular approach is capable of generating required outcomes. When considering learning approaches McLoughlin and Oliver (2000, p. 8) note that "by recognising that learning is culturally and socially contextualised, the design process becomes grounded and located within communities and individual for whom the learning materials were intended". Barrie also points out that there are precursor perceptions of attributes upon entry to academe. These are "undifferentiated foundation skills (like English proficiency or basic numeracy" (Barrie, 2004, p. 265) that students are expected to have upon entry to higher education. The Australian Council for Educational Research (2001, p. 1) suggests that it may be useful to identify a set of generic skills for students which could be assessed upon entry and exit from higher education. In this way university curriculum achievements in meeting stated objectives for generic graduate attributes can be assessed. This would also mean data concerning variations in entry level skills could be available so that universities may better understand the level of student preparedness for higher education. The discourse regarding learning styles, graduate attributes and skill development is outside the scope of this paper and can be pursued in the relevant literature. Suffice to say that this extensive discourse has significant impact on learning and teaching as higher education responds to the increasing value placed on its role in developing generic skills by government, industry and institutions (Bath, Smith, Stein, & Swann, 2004). However, as the need for universities to generate income rises, so do student numbers. Student cohorts are thus become increasingly diverse with cultural groups bringing a variety of learning approaches from prior learning environments. Market pressure often means course credit is granted to students who have study or professional experience, resulting in many students entering second year undergraduate or post graduate courses, without completing foundation first year courses that teach Western academic skills. These realities mean that any presumption of generic undifferentiated foundation skills is naive.

It is the explicit recognition of the possibility that students (international students in particular), may choose to utilise a learning style with which they are more accustomed, that we argue for the provison of a choice of learning approaches. Duarte and Snyder (1999) suggest consideration of student diversity within the global framework of individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, long-term and short-tem and context in a culture (Reushle & McDonald, 2000, p 354). Hamilton, Hinton, and Hawkins, (2003, p. 55) suggest that the rising volume of international students seeking an Australian education requires that the needs of this group of students be addressed. China has become Australia's largest source country of international students, with 2006 higher education enrolments growing 14.6% over 2005. In 2005, Chinese students paid AUD914.8 million in tuition fees and contributed AUD1.8 billion to Australia's national income (Australia Education International, 2007). The learning styles of these Chinese students, who come from a high 'power-distance' country where there is great respect for superiors and the questioning of teachers is not appropriate behaviour (Duarte & Snyder, 1999), may be challenged by the expectations of Western academics that all students will embrace a student-centred approach. Institutions have responded to the needs of growing numbers of international students by establishing specific international centres and researching student learning styles (Higgins & Li, 2005; Park, 2000; Watkins, 2000). In particular, research confirms that international students are not a homogenous group with the individual student having to "come to terms with not only the teaching style of an Australian academic but also a diversity of learning approaches among classmates". Nagy (2006) demonstrated how adapting assessments to the specific challenges associated with a predominance of international students produced improved student outcomes.

Our paper seeks to acknowledge diversity within the student population as the basis for a new model of choice. To allow students to learn using approaches that commence with recognition of diverse foundations, provides an environment where students are given greater opportunity for academic success. The view that all students can be blended into one learning environment as though one pedagogical approach would be suitable for all students in a mixed cohort, presumes that a standardised approach to learning is indeed appropriate. The concept of 'one size fits all' education may have been traditionally valid when the presumption of a common entry level skill set had some validity. However, where students do not fit this form of stereotyping it makes sense to approach the task of designing an appropriate learning environment which suits the diversity in learners. Eisner (2003) also claims that:

> (c)ommunication and multiple intelligence literature suggest that effective teaching involves reaching students, and that reaching students involves taking their frames of reference into account. Knowing where our students are coming from and meeting them there may increase the chance that students will absorb the information we seek to teach. (p. 34-5)

It would be premature to suggest that offering students a choice between a variety of pedagogical learning approaches would in some way damage the potential for students to engage in the knowledge economy.

While the needs of employer groups have been given significant voice in the articulation of graduate attributes the diversity of skills that may be relevant across a range of industries makes it difficult to articulate a common set of skills without a discipline focus. Graduate attributes and outcomes are not mutually exclusive nor are they well understood. Barrie (2004, p. 261) claims that "(i)t is apparent that Australian university teachers charged with the responsibility for developing students' generic attributes do not share a common understanding of either the nature of these outcomes, or the teaching and learning processes that might facilitate the development of these outcomes". Leggett, Kinnear, Boyce, and Bennett, (2004) provide evidence that student and staff perceptions of the importance of generic attributes are not shared across years of study. "For example, higher order skills such as critical thinking are rated more important at third year than at first year" (Leggett et al, p. 295). It may be reasonable to suggest that certain graduate attributes are more aligned with lifelong learning skills and that such skills are more likely to be derived in a student-centred learning experience. The need to take part in the learning experience by critically engaging, active involvement and collaborative learning are features of student-centred learning. However, planned curriculum development that encompasses strategies to inculcate such graduate attributes does not necessitate embedding all skills into every unit of study. There is room for a flexible approach that allows variable pedagogical approaches in perhaps first year studies, thus allowing a smoother transition from prior learning foundations, with latter units of study building and further developing skills. Recognising this principle, it may thus be opportune to trial a new model that allows for diversity of skills upon entry to university rather than perceptions of generic capabilities.

The conceptual model – one style does not fit all

Eisner (2003) claims that it is appropriate to take into account a learner's frame of reference. The strategy we suggest would do so by using a proactive application of market based strategies. The provision of choice for both students and academics, and the empowerment associated with choice underlies our conceptualisation. While it may be appropriate to offer a range of learning approaches to accord with the notion that 'one size does not fit all', we recognise that fiscal pressures would preclude multiple choices in a form of personalised learning. Taking a pragmatic approach, we suggest for the purposes of this initial discussion paper, offering students and staff selection between only two pedagogical approaches in institutions with large enough cohorts, would mean that economies of scale may permit offering one subject in two streams. One stream would utilise a student-centred learning approach and the other a more teacher-centred learning approach. Each of the alternatives may then employ the best practice pedagogies appropriate to the identified style of learning, and utilise different assessment strategies to achieve desired outcomes. Students are then free to choose between alternative learning environment best suited to their learning foundations and preferences, at the commencement of the subject. This approach has the potential to promote a more confident attitude to learning, less alienation from the learning environment, and greater student self esteem with improved learning outcomes.

While, the educational value of using a social constructivist approach is supported in educational literature (Jonassen, 1998; Garrison & Anderson, 2003), individual constructivism and self-directed learning (Merriam & Cafarella, 1999) are also valid educational strategies. Achieving an educationally appropriate balance between individual and social constructivism as applied in practice, i.e. requiring participant interactions, or allowing independent learning, or a mixture of both approaches, is an important area for future research. The flexible model proposed in this paper would allow informed choice by both students and academics, thereby resolving equity considerations and providing choices for academics, learners and learning.

For academic staff, suspicious of the continuous incursions into academic autonomy, the opportunity to choose a pedagogical style of preference may provide a positive move in re-establishing a sense of connectedness with teaching. Poon (2006) describes how academic work has become vertically disaggregated with academics being just one part of the value chain. "Successful transformation of the learning materials into on-line resources presupposes the standardisation of the 'learning objects' which enables more extensive division of labour to take place even within the confines of academic work" (Poon, 2006, p. 98). Rather than lamenting this view, the possibility of seeing an opportunity in such processes by a further division of labour between a number of pedagogical approaches represents a extension of the now pervasive managerialist themes in higher education. The ability for academics to teach a group of students comfortable with pedagogies employed is likely to make the task of teaching less burdensome. The management of divergent student expectations and unfamiliarity with learning approaches undoubtedly has impacts upon the learning environment and the satisfaction associated with the processes of learning. Consequently academics may also have a more confident approach to teaching with less alienation from the learning environment.

Conclusion

The model we propose gives due recognition to academics as a stakeholder group that is a key player in any current and further developments in flexible learning. Academics have been profoundly affected by the market paradigm in both their knowledge work practices and in the way they teach. The new paradigm promoted the virtues of choice for students as a way of bringing in more students and providing them with alternative ways of achieving their objectives. Such a philosophy applied to academics may also provide a fruitful way of allowing academics to achieve their teaching objectives.

It is not intended that the proposed model be a mechanism for privileging one style of teaching and learning over another. Both would continue to utilise technologies to assist with the learning process and both would be informed by 'scholarship in teaching'. However, the model does recognise that the 'one size fits all' approach is inappropriate for both academics and students. We believe that the notion of market diversity can be used positively to provide choices and that associated empowerment can be particularly beneficial as a means of encouraging academics to re-engage with teaching by utilising their preferred terms of reference.

We believe that it is unlikely that the costs of offering two streams would be significantly prohibitive and consider this initiative a proactive measure that could be utilised by institutions as a marketing initiative. We invite further discussion of the model by academics and students and administrators, with a view to proposing a trial in a major core unit of study at an Australian university.

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Judy Nagy, Deakin Business School, Deakin University 221 Burwood Highway Burwood VIC 3125, Australia. Email: jnagy@deakin.edu.au
Jacquelin (Jacquie) McDonald, University of Southern Queensland, West Street, Toowoomba, QLD 4350, Australia. Email: mcdonalj@usq.edu.au.

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