MUSICUM20

50 SHADES of *GREG* - DARKER

Celebrating
50 books/creative works

VOLUME 6
AMPA PUBLICATIONS SERIES

Greg Whateley
With a foreword by Tom O'Connor

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ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS

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Contents

Foreword

Good institutions do not happen by accident. They are built, decision by decision, principle by principle, through the sustained effort of people who understand that leadership is not a title but a practice — one that demands clarity of purpose, integrity under pressure, and the courage to keep asking whether what is being done is truly what ought to be done. This collection of essays is a testament to that understanding.

The chapters gathered here range widely in their subject matter, yet they are unified by a single conviction: that the quality of any organisation ultimately reflects the quality of its thinking. Whether the question is what constitutes *a good admissions framework*, or how to sustain *credibility and authenticity through invisible leadership*, or why *good compliance is good business* — the answers arrived at are never merely procedural. They are, at their core, ethical.

Readers will find here a frank engagement with the realities of contemporary institutional life. Some essays wrestle directly with governance: what it means to approach *academic governance self-critically*, how to understand the *essential elements of a risk appetite statement*, and why *good governance is about leadership, not compliance alone*. Others turn to culture: the dangers that follow when organisations *beware of micromanagement* too late, the subtle corrosion that comes from failing to maintain *integrity despite the pressures of the modern environment*, and the quiet power of recognising that *good leadership is about connection* as much as direction.

The contemporary landscape presents institutions with challenges that are as much philosophical as they are operational. The rise of *Artificial Intelligence versus Actual Intelligence* raises questions about what it means to know, to assess, and to educate. The emergence of *a greying digital nomad in the hybrid workforce* signals that the very nature of employment and belonging is being renegotiated. The need to understand *diversification and associated risk-taking* reminds us that standing still is itself a choice — and rarely a safe one. And running *multi-site operations* introduces complexities of culture, consistency, and accountability that test even the most seasoned leaders.

Yet amid these pressures, the human dimensions of institutional life remain non-negotiable. Several chapters address what organisations owe to their people: *ensuring the welfare and support of international students*, identifying and cultivating the *five key employee qualities* that sustain organisational health, and committing unequivocally to the principle that *it is all about inclusivity*. Similarly, the discussion of *why invigilated assessment still matters* is not merely a defence of tradition; it is a reminder that equity and rigour are partners, not adversaries.

There is also, woven throughout these pages, a serious engagement with what might be called the spirit of an institution — its identity, its memory, its sense of itself across time. The reflective essay *About Musicum20* models the kind of honest institutional self-examination that too rarely finds its way into print. The exploration of how to *integrate management and science principles* demonstrates that rigorous thinking and practical wisdom need not be strangers to one another. And the insistence that *good governance is about leadership*, not merely policy, runs like a spine through the entire collection.

Taken together, these essays do not offer a simple prescription for institutional excellence. What they offer is better: a sustained invitation to think carefully, to lead honestly, and to build organisations worthy of the people they serve. In an era when the pressures on institutions are intense and the temptations toward short-termism are real, that invitation is not merely timely. It is essential.

Dr Tom O’Connor
Melbourne

Preface

This next 50 short articles – *written during 2025* – represent my thinking on a range of topics during the period. To encourage staff around me to be scholarship active – I assumed the role of *champion* and started to write weekly – in one form or another.

The most enjoyable genre has been the 'blog' which proved to be a dynamic way to focus on a range of topics. All 50 short articles in this collection began life in this genre. Many were extended further – but all came from the notion of short, pithy commentaries.

Throughout 2025 I was given the opportunity to work with a number of organisations - in one capacity or another - including the *Australian Guild of Education* (Melbourne); the *Australasian Academy of Higher Education* (Melbourne); *ATMC* (New Zealand); the *Sydney International School of Technology and Commerce* (Sydney/Melbourne), The *Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts* (Sydney); *Elite Education Institute* (Sydney); *Kingsford Institute of Higher Education* (Sydney); *Hitmaker Global Academy* (Singapore); *Campus Q* (Sydney); *AIM Institute* (Sydney); and *Chiang Rai Rajabhat University* (Thailand).

This provided me with the richest of tapestries to write about (and for) – and I am most appreciative.

Writing has always proven to be an excellent means of working through key issues (and problems) and by publishing provides an extremely useful mechanism to not only express my own opinions but has become a form of therapy – and a useful one at that.

To all those around me who have inspired ideas, thoughts and arguments – I remain extremely grateful.

Greg Whateley
Melbourne

CHAPTER 1

A good admissions framework is good practice

Establishing and maintaining a good admissions framework – incorporating an informed, comprehensive and benchmarked policy and procedure - leads to good practice and at the same time ensures students are given the opportunity (where appropriate) to progress and complete their award and at the same time ensure the Australian Higher Education Standards are maintained.

See – What are Threshold Standards and why are they important - 6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf (musicum20.com)

Key elements of a good admissions framework need to be considered.

Fair and consistent

The framework needs to be 'fair and consistent'. Having in place a clearly defined and accessible set of criteria for admission is an essential ingredient of this focus. Integrity remains a vital aspect of every HE organization and this needs to be at the heart of all activity – including admissions.

See – Integrity in business and academia - 6113ad_53bbff3fdd394d979f42c4dc68956d5e.pdf (musicum20.com)

Credit and RPL

Credit and Recognition of Prior Learning need to be available, in line with the Sector, ideally benchmarked and granted – conditional on the achievement of the course learning outcomes and the graduate attributes are *not* compromised. It is critical to have in place a comprehensive, robust and benchmarked policy and procedure around this key area and to follow it with vigilant and integrity.

Diversity, equity and inclusivity

In the consideration and processing of applicants it is important to keep in mind the issues of diversity, equity and inclusivity. If decisions are made to admit students by means of a special admission scenario – these students need to be monitored carefully and consistently to ensure their progress and completion. Ongoing monitoring of students, then, is essential.

See – It is all about inclusivity - 6113ad_c687a086b81d47ec86a45dc819b7a738.pdf (musicum20.com)

Access to admissions information

It is essential that comprehensive and accurate information is provided to potential applicants. In many ways, the more detail the better – and the ideal location for this information is the public website of the organization. Clear and easily accessible information is vital.

See – What needs to be on a HEP website - 6113ad_40d67a8d320b4a5a9ba9da5b0baa1019.pdf (musicum20.com)

English proficiency assurance

For students whose first language is not English, it is a direct responsibility of the institution to ensure that the English capability is appropriate to the level and nature of the study intended. Comprising is a dangerous and unfair process impacting on students and staff – it is inappropriate if it impacts on the opportunity to progress and complete the award in mind.

With these five key issues in mind, it is possible to develop a robust and appropriate admissions framework – that provides for diversity, equity and inclusivity – but at the same time ensures that the criteria for success are accommodated without compromise. In the case of special admission arrangements – a commitment to careful and appropriate monitoring is essential.

CHAPTER 2

A greying digital nomad in the hybrid work world

The challenge was laid down. I, a 'digital convict' (someone who reluctantly joined the digital revolution) wanted to experience the notion of being a digital nomad working from anywhere (WFA) and decided to choose a remote location (London) as part of the experiment – I use the term 'remote' loosely. This happened in July 2022 - and is about to happen again in October 2025.

Q. Why?

A. Because I could/can!

Q. And why London?

A. It was/is sufficiently far enough away to test the limits of the project (some 9 hours or so time difference) and further, what better place for a digital convict of British heritage.

Getting organised prior to departure

The adventure began with the careful inclusion of the essential technologies for the experiment – a laptop (with the appropriate accesses) - in this case a Lenovo Think Book 15 Gen 4; a Logitech wireless mouse and keyboard combination; a Logitech BCC950 Conference Camera; large event calendar (old school); iPhone; a notebook (also old school); a tri-screen;

and a London underground mousepad (not essential, but provides great comfort when you are looking to find your way around the city).

In some ways so simple – despite having to jettison a few bits of clothing to ensure falling below the maximum baggage allowance – the preparation was very straightforward.

Getting organised on arrival

On arrival it was essential to quickly establish a workspace with good light and access. A reliable WIFI connection is crucial, and most rental apartments or hotels offer this, making it the top priority when choosing accommodation.

For an emergency scenario the closest WEWORK option was identified – *just in case*. These facilities are dotted throughout the CBD of London and provide a most useful fallback in case the planned resources cause any trouble. A virtual office will set you back about AUD$500 a month – not a bad option to be honest - Office Space for Rent in London | WeWork

Getting your head around the time difference

Real time interaction was important - and this was achieved through email, sms, WhatsApp, TEAMS and Zoom. The immediacy of response was always impressive – and this made a major contribution to avoiding any sense of isolation.

This challenge was not particularly difficult – the constant reference to time calculation, on the other hand, was a minor challenge (at times annoying) – but quite doable. The laptop was set for Sydney/Melbourne time – and the mobile phone and apartment clock setting were London time. This assisted enormously.

Reflections of a new digital nomad

In all, the establishment of a workspace was very straightforward. Natural lighting is important, though this can be augmented with artificial lighting (lamps and the like) to quite a good level for video conferencing. Good speed WIFI is essential – and was in fact not an issue. Adjusting to the different time zone was also straightforward. Ideally landing in London on the weekend was a solid step. This gave time to adjust the body clock ready for operations on Monday morning. This is highly recommended.

In all – I highly recommend the notion of WFA. The life of a digital nomad is not as remote as first thought.

A curtain call

Once again – this time in October 2025 – I head back to the scene of the initial experience – London – albeit in a different suburb location.

On reflection there is not much I would change this time around. Pretty much the same gear (perhaps slightly newer models) – and the same reliance on good, dependable WIFI - which I have been promised by the digs in Chelsea.

Worth watching – Travelling with a greying digital nomad (MBA TV Aus) - Travelling With A Greying Digital Nomad MBA TV AUS - Professor G

Worth reading – WFA – Working from anywhere and the digital nomad – DN (Musicum20) - Working From Anywhere

CHAPTER 3

About Musicum20

On the eve of the eleventh (11) symposium of Musicum20 in October in Greenwich, London at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance – Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance - it seems appropriate to share a bit of the history of Musicum20 – now in its thirteenth (13) year – and perhaps provide a hint of future developments and initiatives.

Genesis

In October 2004, the *Perspectives of Music in the 21st Century: Music Schools between Tradition and Renovation* Conference was held at the Nagoya University of the Arts, Japan. Amongst the presenters at the Symposium were: **Professor Greg Whateley** – Sydney (*Australian Institute of Music*); **Professor Yutaka Nakagawa** – Nagoya (*Nagoya University of the Arts);* and **Professeur Michael Wladkowski** – Paris (*Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris*)

Greg presented a paper 'Navigating New and Innovative Directions in Global Music Education' written and developed with the late **Dr Peter Calvo**, *Founder of the Australian Institute of Music.* Part of the paper and conference presentation talked about the importance of the emergence of online learning (*Whateley and Bofinger had already created The Virtual Conserv-*

atorium) and the need to develop a worldwide network of friends and informants (benchmarking). The presentations met with strong applause and support – and then nothing.

In the meantime – **Professor Ian Bofinger** and **Greg** commenced a national (Australia) initiative of benchmarking that provided valuable data and reference points. In 2011 the newly established TEQSA (Tertiary Quality and Standards Agency) urged AIM to expand the exercise to include some form of international sharing – a noble concept.

As fate would have it - In mid-2012 Music Philosopher **Yutaka** Nakagawa made contact with **Greg**. He suggested, after lengthy consideration (*of some 8 years mind you – remember he was a philosopher at heart*) that we should rekindle the friendship and thus **Musicum20** was born. After rallying Michael and Ian to the cause - The first symposium in 2013 was in fact held at the Nagoya University of the Arts - Nagoya 2013 | musicum20

A humorous note – Greg had suggested Musicum6 as a worthy title for the project – Ian dismissed it as short sighted and proposed Musicum20.

Vision

Musicum20 is an international co-operative venture that brings together a range of adjunct personnel from a range of institutions – music, music education, business, arts management, corporate management, academic management, arts law, dance, theatre, and higher education compliance – to mention some. These partners are *not* in direct competition with each other - this achieves a relationship and dialogue of complete trust and transparency. Most importantly, it is *person based* (rather than institution) which provides maximum portability and speed and provides the necessary champions for a project of this kind to fly and survive – and indeed continue if individuals move from Institution to Institution (as has been the case). Clearly the model was a good one - Musicum20 is now in its thirteenth year and growing and diversifying each year.

The goal was to have *20 partners/members worldwide* that work co-operatively at a number of levels. There are currently *twenty-two members* (22) from Australia, France, South Korea, Hong Kong, Germany, China, Singapore, Thailand and the United Kingdom - Home / | musicum20

The newest member to be inducted (in London in October 2025) is **Associate Professor Christopher McLeod** from the Australian Guild of Education (Melbourne) - Associate Professor Christopher McLeod | musicum20. Christopher has already made a significant contribution to the Musicum20 publications – eJournal - eJournal | musicum20; Book chapters - Books | musicum20, and blogs - Blogs | musicum20 – and hopefully this commitment will continue on for many years to come.

Goals

The initial goals of the project were multilayered and included –

Initiative	**Status/Achievement**
An annual international symposium	London 2025 is the 11th symposium - London 2025 | musicum20
International exchange and visits	Ongoing
An eJournal	Established and active – 7 editions to date - eJournal | musicum20
Cross institutional enrolments	AIM (Sydney, Australia), AMPA (Sydney, Australia) and Pop Academie (Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany) and KNUE (Seoul,

Initiative	Status/Achievement
	South Korea) have hosted students
Benchmarking	Ongoing
Moderation	Used with regard to grade distribution across multiple institutions
A common postgraduate award	Not yet achieved – but advanced standing has been granted on a number of occasions.

In addition –

In 2022 a **book series** was initiated – currently there are 9 in the series - https://www.musicum20.com/books

In 2022 a repository of **podcasts** was initiated – there are currently 19 in the series - Podcasts | musicum20

In 2024 a student Masters' level **research papers** repository was established – there are currently 6 in the series - Master's Research | musicum20

In 2024 a **blog series** commenced – there are currently 143+ in the series - Blogs | musicum20

Symposia

The annual symposia are significant – the eleventh being held in London in October 2025. The program was disrupted by COVID 19 in 2020/2021 – but resumed in 2022 back in Singapore. The number of papers/presentations has been maintained (and even intensified) over the years –

2013 - Japan - 15 presentations - Nagoya 2013 | musicum20
2014 - Hong Kong - 13 presentations - Hong Kong 2014 | musicum20

2015 - South Korea - 16 presentations - Korea 2015 | musicum20
2016 - Germany - 9 presentations - Mannheim 2016 | musicum20
2017 - Australia - 11 presentations - Sydney 2017 | musicum20
2018 – France - 7 presentations - Paris 2018 | musicum20
2019 - Singapore - 11 presentations - Singapore 2019 | musicum20

Pause for COVID

2022 - Singapore - 14 presentations - Singapore 2022 | musicum20
2023 - Vietnam - 14 presentations - Vietnam 2023 | musicum20
2024 - Macau - 26 presentations - Macau 2024 | musicum20

A total of 136 papers to date – with a further 23 in London 2025 - London 2025 | musicum20

Papers/Presentations are geared to *worldwide issues* including developments in technology, transnational education initiatives, AI, academic and corporate integrity, trends, funding, music production and composition, and futures.

The format has changed over the thirteen years. What began essentially as F2F events (with the odd online presentation) has now morphed into hybrid conferences with more presentation online than F2F. Arguably, the world has changed – and the COVID 19 pandemic changed the way we meet and confer.

The real power, though, of symposia is the meeting on location and the exchange of updates, ideas, theories and visions – best shared out of symposia schedule often over meals and drinks. No doubt London will prove useful to all involved.

The London 2025 symposium is proudly sponsored by –

The Australian Academy of Music and Performing Arts (AMPA) - AMPA - Academy of Music and Performing Arts - AMPA | Academy of Music and Performing Arts

The Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance (TLCMD) - Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Campus Q (CQ) - Campus Q | Australian education software solutions | Sydney | CampusQ

From a personal perspective I have been proud to serve as president of Musicum20 since its inception. I have had the immense privilege of 'being there' as it stepped through a range of challenges and morphs – it is with great pleasure that I will moderate/chair the London 2025 event. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the founders – ***Yutaka****,* ***Michael*** *and* ***Ian*** *– for their ongoing support.*

Chapter 4

All a matter of integrity despite the mode of delivery

I have long held the view that the mode of delivery should have options for students. I also hold the view that online learning and teaching is just as effective as face-to-face delivery – and perhaps a hybrid approach is the best option of all. Each mode has its challenges – and these need to be met head on. No single mode is superior.

In a recent article by Tom Winkler (14.02.205 Future Campus) – **Online integrity under microscope** – the issue was reported that the national regulator of higher education courses raised the possibility of distinguishing between online programs and face to face programs on actual testamurs – implying that the online option was of lesser importance given the reliance on online assessment – and a 'warning' might be advisable. Winkler went on to stress that it was a *provocation* rather than a *statement*.

This sort of thinking is in response to concerns about generative AI – which does not confine itself to online courses.

Post COVID (if we can be bold enough to suggest it is over) the notion of blended learning/hybrid learning being somehow inferior to face-to-face learning is somewhat questionable. In truth a small revolution took place that enabled the sector to rethink the way we do things – and look at alternatives. Put simply, the tired lecture theatre/tutorial approach was not exactly ideal.

The key question is about *academic integrity* – and how to maintain it – whether online F2F or blended (hybrid).

Balanced assessment

I have always argued in favour of a shift from examination halls to a more balanced approach to assessment. Certainly, the academic integrity issue is always with us – but we need to understand that invigilation (in its many forms) remains a genuine option – online is no exception.

See - Biggest HE challenges for 2025-26: Opinion | Campus Review

Hybrid learning

The most effective approach has been a hybrid solution. This means that online classes can be delivered live from anywhere – and my own experience has been that it is well received and supported by students. A mix of F2F and online may possibly be the solution for those overly concerned about integrity and the inappropriate use of AI.

See - Student satisfaction shows why hybrid learning is here to stay: opinion | Campus Review

The new normal

We have created a new environment – whether we like it or not – that requires us to embrace the new technology, consider the possibilities of online delivery – and most importantly provide options for our students.

See - Is the new normal here to stay? – opinion | Campus Review

The very notion of undermining online delivery is unacceptable. The idea of somehow augmenting the importance of F2F learning is questionable. The real challenge is maintaining academic integrity in a range of modes – and achieving the learning and graduate outcomes. Some form of invigilation may ease the concern.

Chapter 5

An approach to academic governance self-assurance

Academic Governance (as is with Corporate Governance) in the Higher Education Sector also remains of paramount importance. Several of the Higher Education Standards (Threshold) deal directly with the focus and a useful TEQSA guidance note is both informative and instructive. When auditing academic governance – an essential in the self-assurance move – it is most useful to use both the 'standards' and the 'guidance note' as part of the navigation process.

Relevant Threshold Standards

The key standards that need to be considered as part of a self-assurance of academic *governance* include – 2.1 Facilities and infrastructure; 2,2 Diversity and Equity; 2.3 Academic Board oversight; 3.1 Academic governance quality assurances; 3.2 academic oversight of scholarship and qualifications; 3.3 Learning resources; 5.1 and 5.2 Monitoring of courses; 6.1 Academic governance link to corporate governance; 6.2 and 6.3 Policies, systems and processes; 7.2 and 7.2 information management and dissemination.

See - What are the Threshold Standards and why are they important (September 2024) - 6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf

TEQSA Guidance Note

The current guidance note on *academic governance* fleshes out some 15 or so inclusions – sufficient academic capability; structure of academic governance; links between academic and corporate governance; strategic and operational planning; academic quality assurance systems; student participation in academic governance; institutional monitoring; quality of educational activities; adequate oversight and support of scholarship; academic leadership; effective monitoring, review and improvement of curse quality; adequate policy frameworks; equivalency and student experience; corporate decisions based on sufficient academic advice; and ensure vigilance and good judgement.

See – Self-assurance is the name of the game (June 2025) - 6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf

Rolling audits

A key element of self-assurance is the notion of *rolling audits*. Essentially, start with an independent (external) audit/review as an initial step followed by regular internal auditing on an ongoing basis. Ideally quarterly - but more importantly whenever a change is made that requires updating. The value of ensuring that documentation is up to date and informative should not be under-estimated. Self-assurance requires this regular approach – and the confidence that comes from having currency and accuracy is of maximum importance.

See – Rolling audits – a mechanism for self-assurance (August 2024) - 6113ad_beb80a2de7ae43dc9fb8c7bedfa4e78b.pdf

The reality of self-assurance

Informed self-assurance is critical. If you are fortunate enough to have the expertise and capacity within the organization the process becomes relatively straight forward. Where gaps are identified – it may be useful to organize some external advice that ensures that you are on the right track.

Benchmarking, then, becomes vital. The opportunity to share information and gain a clear idea of what is needed is a most valuable opportunity that should be encouraged and embraced.

See - Self-assurance supported by benchmarking (June 2025) - 6113ad_76a97e2709b64a2880055366e6b4ef48.pdf

The entire self-assurance process is incredibility exhilarating and satisfying. The process involves a high level of commitment – but the returns are positive. The process also provides ample opportunity to identify gaps that need filling.

Worth reading – An approach to corporate governance self-assurance (July 2025) - 6113ad_5ab4136aafbe4afcb7f95cd32ebaaaf9.pdf

CHAPTER 6

Artificial Intelligence (AI) versus Actual Intelligence (AcI)

There is little doubt that artificial intelligence is all around us. Every time I book a flight somewhere I am supported by AI. Every time I call into my banking app I am supported by AI. Making payments (TELSTRA, Vodafone and the like) I am interfacing with AI. Accessing an uber after a night out I am interfacing with a booking bot). Yesterday my robot cleaned the swimming pool for me – so AI is with me whether I like it or not – in this instance I do actually like it.

I have, over the last few months, had some encounters with 'real people' however - on the telephone (AcI). Where I needed specific support or instruction - I was able to chat to some very nice and supportive people who gave me valuable direction and comfort. Ironically they assisted me in interfacing with the AI embedded in their systems.

But, as noted AI is here to stay.

What is artificial intelligence (AI)

'Essentially AI refers to the capability of a digital computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings' (Pluralsight).

So many things in my life are now computer driven or supported – probably more things than I actually realise - if the truth be known.

The big issue in higher education at the present time is academic integrity. The concern is that artificial intelligence (specifically ChatGPT) is being used as a substitute for students working through assignments and projects themselves and generating AI versions. *'Using AI for evil rather than good' so to speak.*

The internet changed the way we access information – so nothing new there. The issue at hand is wanting students to think things through themselves – access an extraordinary amount of data that is available – but actually write their assignments themselves using 'actual intelligence'. I am all for that.

What is actual intelligence (AcI)

'Actual intelligence is a very general mental capability that involves the ability to reason, plan, solve problems, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly, and learn from experience' (Wikipedia)

In my mind AcI is about using my own brain power (as limited as it is) to work my way through conversation and action. That is writing my own papers/articles, physically purchasing items from the supermarket (I could for example go online and have them delivered), and essentially interfacing with my world - in person.

My current concern is that *actual intelligence* is being eroded by the convenience of *artificial intelligence*. The further concern is the loss of creativity and humanness in our thinking and writing – and to me that would be a real shame.

So

My preference is to abstain – as much as I can – from AI. I realise it is impossible – but I am trying to maximise my mental capacity whenever possible and at the same time dutifully acknowledge the important role that AI plays in my life. I much prefer to write my own work (although I am grateful to spell and grammar check along the way), I prefer to plan my own travel itineraries (although I am grateful to online booking opportunities), I prefer to go shopping in the mall (although *amazon* has become a very useful tool) and I prefer to maintain my own pool environment (although my cleaning robot and I have become very close – I suspect exchanging views on topical issues is inevitable).

I guess most of all I am concerned that eventually *I will become a robot myself* – simply interfacing with other robots - in an effort to simplify my life and activities. I hope not!

CHAPTER 7

Beware of Micromanagement

As a long-term observer of management – micromanagement (often rooted in an earnest desire to ensure excellence and prevent errors) is a workplace disaster with far-reaching consequences. It manifests when managers or leaders exert excessive control over the minutiae of their team's work, scrutinizing every detail and leaving little room for autonomy or creative freedom. While the initial intent may be noble – often driven by ambition or (perhaps) anxiety - the effects of micromanagement ripple throughout organisations, stifling innovation, eroding morale, and ultimately hindering productivity.

So, what is micromanagement

Micromanagement refers to the practice of meticulously overseeing and controlling every aspect of a subordinate's work, often beyond reasonable necessity. This style of management typically involves activities such as *constant monitoring* of employees' tasks and activities; *frequent and detailed instructions* on how to perform duties; *limiting delegation of responsibility or autonomy*; *reluctance to trust* employees to make decisions; and *regular interventions and corrections.*

While some degree of supervision is essential – in fact *no* supervision is *poor* management - micromanagement crosses the line. It replaces healthy guidance and support with an oppressive scrutiny, often communicated through endless emails, status meetings, and check-ins that leave employees feeling both undervalued and overwhelmed. An evident symptom of micromanagement is the departure of key personnel – the 'revolving door syndrome'.

Why does micromanagement occur in the first place

In order to address the issue of micromanagement one needs to fully understand why it occurs. Several factors can drive individuals toward this management style. These factors may (and often) include – perfectionism; lack of trust; anxiety (often associated with change); a need to control; insecurity; inexperience in management; and (arguably the hardest to overcome) an organisational culture of micromanagement.

How you recognise micromanagement

Recognizing the signs of micromanagement allows for timely intervention. Some of the clear indicators include - frequent requests for status updates and progress reports; reluctance – on the part of the micromanager - to delegate tasks or projects; focus on unnecessary documentation and structure; managers making decisions that should be left to the team; employees feeling unable to take initiative or propose solutions; regular corrections, edits, or overrides of employees' work; and high levels of frustration, disengagement, or turnover among staff. If these symptoms are present, it is likely that micromanagement is affecting the workplace, with consequences that grow more severe over time.

How does micromanagement impact on the organisation

The impact/effects of micromanagement can be severe. It can *demotivate* employees; cause *disengagement*; stifle *creativity* *and innovation*; increase *stress*; cause *burnout*; create high *turnover* and poor retention of staff; allow *inefficient use* of resources.

How to remedy micromanagement

Addressing/overcoming micromanagement is no easy task – especially if it has become part of the organisation's culture. Some approaches suggested by the literature include – building trust and delegating; setting clear expectations from the start (including KPIs); focus on outcomes; encourage open communication; develop management and leadership skills (including mentorship opportunities).

Empowerment may be the solution

Wherever and whenever possible – cultivate a workplace culture that values *empowerment*. This involves – encouraging risk taking; recognising and celebrating achievements (both large and small); work on psychological safety; invest in staff development; and promote leadership in the workplace.

Micromanagement - though often stemming from good intentions - can be a destructive force within organisations. By building trust, setting clear expectations, embracing autonomy, and fostering open communication, workplaces can overcome micromanagement tendencies and in turn unlock the full potential of their teams.

Also worth reading -

Leadership styles – a starting point (2024) - 6113ad_c482a119f6074198a97b17491e78dc7a.pdf

Transformational leadership and the new reality (2025) - 6113ad_94f769b047444a0082b26903741fa569.pdf

Understanding emotional intelligence (EI) – and applying it to your leadership style and approach (2025) - 6113ad_688b923e84e44169b9420f3e8fd5d126.pdf

CHAPTER 8

Challenges associated with running multiple higher education campuses

Operating multiple campuses in the higher education sector presents a range of unique ***challenges****. While expanding to different locations can certainly increase access, reach new student demographics, and enhance institutional reputation - it requires careful planning and resource management to ensure consistent quality and operational efficiency across all sites. I am an advocate of multiple sites, multiple products and multiple modes of delivery.*

Academic Quality and Standards

Maintaining consistent academic standards across campuses can be (and is) difficult. Variations in teaching resources, teaching staff expertise (an experience), and student support services may lead to discrepancies in the educational experience. Ensuring uniform curriculum delivery, assessment methods and learning outcomes requires robust quality assurance frameworks and regular monitoring. Experience has taught me – these issues are critical.

Resource Allocation and Infrastructure Management

Distributing resources such as funding, technology and staff across multiple campuses is a complex task (not for the faint hearted). Each campus may (and usually does) have distinct needs based on size, location (made even more difficult if campuses are interstate and/or overseas) and - student population and demography. Balancing investments in infrastructure, libraries (partly solved with eLibraries) and IT systems is crucial to avoid disparities and ensure every campus is adequately equipped.

Communication and Coordination

Effective communication between campuses is essential for coherent administration and collaborative decision-making. Geographic distance can hinder the flow of information, slow down processes, and create silos/empires. Utilising digital platforms and establishing clear governance structures can help mitigate these issues, but challenges may still arise, especially with time zone differences. *On reflection – this may actually be - the most critical issue.*

Staffing and Faculty Recruitment

Recruiting and retaining qualified staff for multiple locations can be challenging. Some campuses, especially those in regional or remote areas, may struggle to attract experienced faculty and support staff. This can impact the quality of teaching as well as 'student services' provided - and may require tailored recruitment strategies and incentives. *The further the distance between campuses – the bigger this issue becomes.*

Student Experience, Wellbeing and Engagement

Students at different campuses may have varied experiences due to differences in facilities, extracurricular activities, and support services for example. Ensuring equitable access to opportunities and fostering a sense of belonging across all sites is critical. Institutions must address these disparities to maintain student satisfaction and retention. *With that said – it is useful to collect data specific to each campus – before aggregating. Often issues arising require bespoke solutions.*

Regulatory Compliance and Accreditation

Each campus may be subject to different local regulations and accreditation requirements, especially if they are located in different states or countries. Navigating these complexities necessitates specialised knowledge and robust compliance systems to ensure all campuses meet legal and educational standards. The **national** regulator in Australia – TEQSA – makes the educational task easier but state regulations also need to be addressed. *international campuses have added complexity that needs to be addressed.*

Matters financial

Operating multiple campuses <u>increases operational costs</u> - including maintenance, staffing, security, and utilities. Ensuring financial sustainability requires strategic planning, efficient budgeting, and sometimes - cross-subsidisation between campuses (especially in start-up phases). Institutions must monitor expenditures closely and seek diverse revenue streams to remain viable.

Technology Integration

Integrating technology across all campuses, such as learning management systems, administrative platforms, and communication tools, can be technically challenging. Ensuring ‘interoperability’ and providing adequate training for staff and students are essential for seamless operations.

Running multiple higher education campuses offers significant opportunities - but also comes with significant challenges. Addressing these complexities requires good strategic leadership, effective resource management, and a commitment to equity and quality across all sites. Institutions that successfully navigate these issues can – without doubt - strengthen their position in the competitive education landscape and achieve wonderful outcomes. I reflect on scenarios where additional campuses have actually saved the organisation from 'going under'.

Also (possibly) worth reading –

Multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery – the way forward (March 2025) - 6113ad_26dd3f1b903a47108787ec29badb7b4d.pdf

Diversification and associated risk taking (August 2025) - 6113ad_7c082a9805854a2c87febbcced619a31.pdf

The benefits of diversifying offerings in higher education (November 2025) - 6113ad_5a8574616bec4ae387ee7b9f9b6a82b7.pdf

How to apply a blue ocean strategy (November 2925) - 6113ad_ed899f81e719433586e66f59c7c93bc5.pdf

CHAPTER 9

Credibility and authenticity – through invigilation

With a focus on both domestic and international higher education students in the Australian context – notions around credibility and authenticity have never been more important to the Sector given our recent emergence from the shadows of the pandemic. The Australian reputation for high quality education and delivery must be guarded at all costs – and any concerns relating to integrity and authenticity must be met head on – and our credibility must be ensured.

The new reality has 'coughed up' some significant changes – one of those being the issue of eCheating – for the want of a better term.

Heightened media attention

This concern has been augmented from well-intended, though misplaced, media attention around the notion of students cheating online and using products such as ChatGPT for the very wrong reasons. The shift away from exams to assignments has also had an unsettling impact – in some cases again unfounded – but in some cases unnerving to say the least.

Shift from exams to assignments

Many business schools have publicized the fact that they have replaced examinations with assignments completely – opening the gate wider for fraud and deception. One can only assume that the decision is less to do with student welfare and reputation, and more to do with marketing and growing numbers. The notion is disappointing at many levels.

See - A Shift From Exams to Assignments (ubss.edu.au)

Return to the examination halls

A number of universities have suggested the solution is to return to the examination hall with pen and paper in tow, accompanied by long queues of identifying students and well-trained invigilators. This too – though perhaps an alternative option – is most impractical and simply out of sorts with the new reality that we now live in post pandemic.

Online proctored examinations/tests

Online, proctored (invigilated) examinations/tests are in my mind the best option. My own experience – using a product called *Invigilator Plus* – has been very positive and the product impressive. There are a number of products on the market. The take-up was very positive by both staff and students and the credibility of the teaching and learning was reinforced. Shared data suggested high levels of completion rates of exams and high levels of student satisfaction with the process.

See - Online Exam Proctoring Software | invigilatorPlus

A mixed assessment mode

My own school – at the time, and as part of the COVID-19 strategy- converted from a 100% examination regime to a 60% examination in early 2020. This maintained good levels of authenticity and academic integrity – though not perfect.

I am proposing that a mixed mode of assessment be maintained using a proctoring package and feel this would enhance the credibility of offerings - particularly those by external bodies.

When it comes to authenticity and academic integrity – the cost must come second to the assurances that our students are being maintained – and our credibility is intact.

CHAPTER 10

Diversification and associated risk taking

I have for many years proffered the notion that growth is keenly aligned with multiple products, multiple sites and multiple modes of delivery – essentially diversification. Within the Higher Education Sector - the notion of single offerings, sites and modes would likely end up in a stalled organization – I have seen this happen on numerous occasions. The opposite – also seen happen on many occasions – is the best way to go -assuming the institution wants growth.

Diversification

Diversification is in fact a risk management/mitigation strategy that spreads investment across asset types and sectors to avoid risk. Essentially, poor performance in one given area is offset by better performance in another – in theory anyway. It makes sense. In the HE environment – the notion of multiple products, locations and modes also makes sense. *It is a form of diversification.*

See – Multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery (March 2025) - 6113ad_26dd3f1b903a47108787ec29badb7b4d.pdf

Managing Risk

The higher education international student environment is high risk in the first place. Adding additional sites (for example) adds to the risk in one sense – but at the same time allows for growth and diversity by capturing multiple markets. Additional locations usually attract additional enrolments. I have witnessed this within a given State – and again across multiple States. *There is a reason for signage and logos from everywhere becoming visible in the Melbourne CBD for example.*

The current catch phrase that has become somewhat of an obsession is 'risk appetite' – which I find amusing to be honest. If you do not have an appetite for risk stay out of the education (particularly international) market in the first place. I remember seeing a door sign – 'leave your umbrella and jargon at the door'.

See – Understanding and managing risk at an Institute of Higher Education (September 2024) - 6113ad_579ae844f1b740e5ae36a5663160d3a3.pdf

Understanding and managing risk

To a degree risk can be a great motivator. Risk can be used to advantage and should not be only viewed as a negative.

In reality - all business is about risk taking – and perhaps the notion of developing a *risk culture* is not such a bad idea. To develop this so-called 'risk appetite' you would need to carefully evaluate how your employees (and particularly senior management) handle stress - that is usually associated with risk taking.

The term 'calculated risk' is about balancing (carefully) the potential risks of a venture with the potential rewards that will follow. There is a degree of probability thinking involved – and some would argue it is not for the feint hearted. Very little is achieved through risk aversion – on the other hand enormous gains can be achieved through calculated risk.

See – Understanding and managing risk at an Institute of Higher Education (September 2024) - 6113ad_579ae844f1b740e5ae36a5663160d3a3.pdf

Appreciating the challenges associated with diversification

Achievement is very rarely easy. The most rewarding outcomes usually are a result of hard work and focus. The notion then of setting up additional campuses (by way of example) for an organization is not without challenge and risk. There is cost, logistics and management issues to be considered – but at the end of the day – diversification will reap benefit.

A popular analogy – certainly one I have used on occasions – is the 'spinning plates' concept. It is possible to do multiple tasks (spin multiple plates) – you just need to ensure that it is well managed and supported – and most importantly do not take your eye off the plates and only interfere when needed.

See – The Spinning Plates (May 2025) - 6113ad_96eeba69c1374e57889159c175d2fb3c.pdf

Diversification is about risk taking. Risk taking in turn – if calculated and thought through carefully - usually brings about reward. There is certainly challenge associated with developing multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery – but there are also significant benefits.

CHAPTER 11

Ensuring the welfare and support of international students

The teaching and learning of international students in Australia are not only big business – but also comes with significant responsibility.

The **HESF Threshold Standards** ensure that ALL students (including international) are supported with a quality framework ensuring that the reputation of the Australian Higher Education system is maintained.

See – What are the Threshold Standards and why are they important - 6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf

In addition, the **National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training for Overseas Students** has in place 11 standards and some 184 sub-standards that are designed to ensure the *welfare and support* of international students specifically.

See – National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018 - Department of Education, Australian Government

The standards in brief

Standard 1 sets out that registered providers must uphold the integrity and reputation of Australia's education industry by ensuring the marketing of their courses and services is not false or misleading.

Standards 2 ensures registered providers recruit responsibly and ensure that overseas students are appropriately qualified for the course they are seeking to enrol in. Overseas students must have sufficient information to enable them to make informed decisions about studying with their chosen registered provider.

Standard 3 outlines the obligations and rights of both registered providers and overseas students must be clearly set out in a formal written agreement between the two parties.

Standard 4 acknowledges Education agents are an important part of the international education sector in Australia. Registered providers must ensure that their education agents act ethically, honestly and in the best interest of overseas students and uphold the reputation of Australia's international education sector.

Standard 5 reiterates that the Australian Government is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of younger overseas students.

Standard 6 notes that overseas students require certain support services as they are living and studying in an unfamiliar environment. Registered providers are responsible for providing access to certain services to ensure the mental and physical wellbeing of their overseas students.

Standard 7 iterates that registered providers must not knowingly enrol an overseas student wishing to transfer from another registered provider's course prior to the overseas student completing six months of their principal course of study, except in certain circumstances.

Standard 8 ensures overseas students must make satisfactory course progress and, where applicable, attendance as a condition of their student visa.

Standard 9 notes that an overseas student's enrolment can be deferred, suspended or cancelled. This may be initiated by either the overseas student for compassionate and compelling circumstances, or the registered provider for an overseas student's breach of visa conditions, failure to pay fees, misbehaviour, or other condition listed in a registered provider's policy. Registered providers must manage the enrolment of overseas students and maintain up-to-date enrolment information in the Provider Registration and International Student Management System (PRISMS) database.

Standard 10 insists that registered providers need to have an 'internal' complaints-handling and appeals process in place. Professional, timely, inexpensive and documented complaints-handling and appeals processes ensure that grievances between overseas students and registered providers can be heard and addressed.

Standard 11 demands that registered providers must meet the requirements for Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) registration. Noting that only full-time courses can be registered on CRICOS. Registered providers must also ensure the ESOS agency approves and has up-to-date information on specific aspects of the registered provider's operations and any registered courses.

A collective support mechanism and network

The Standards (along with the extensive range of sub-standards) work towards creating an important student *support mechanism* – that further endorses and underlines the mandatory HESF – and at the same time develops a vital *network* of standards and support mechanisms for providers as they continue to do the important work of educating international students.

CHAPTER 12

Essential Elements of a Risk Appetite Statement for a Higher Education Institution

A risk appetite statement is a critical component of an effective risk management framework within higher education institutions. It communicates the amount and type of risk an institution is willing to pursue or retain in order to achieve its objectives. A well-crafted risk appetite statement helps guide decision-making, resource allocation, and strategic planning - while ensuring alignment with the institution's mission, values, and regulatory obligations.

Alignment with Mission and Values

The risk appetite statement (RAS) should explicitly reference the institution's mission, vision, and core values. This alignment ensures that risk-taking supports the broader strategic objectives and cultural context of the provider. It should articulate how risk tolerance supports or enables the delivery of educational, scholarship, and community engagement goals.

Our own institution has a clearly defined **strategic intent** that notes context, vision, intent and values - 87330e_4edc9c9a6efa429ea75b56ebb85271b6.pdf

Clear Definition of Risk Appetite

The statement must clearly define what "risk appetite" means for the institution. It should distinguish between risk **appetite** (*the amount of risk willing to be taken*) and risk **tolerance** (*the acceptable level of variation around targets*). This definition sets the foundation for consistent understanding across the institution.

Scope of Risk Categories

A comprehensive risk appetite statement addresses key risk categories relevant to higher education that usually includes matters such as – reputational standing; financial safeguards and viability; academic and corporate governance; academic quality and integrity; management and human resources; responsibilities to the student body; quality of the curriculum; and information technology and security.

For each category, the institution may specify different levels of risk appetite (such as low, moderate, high). Our own institution has in place a **Risk Register** that is regularly reviewed and adjusted accordingly - Risk Register – divided into 8 categories.

Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

Effective risk appetite statements often blend *qualitative* descriptions with *quantitative* measures. Qualitative measures might include narrative statements about the institution's willingness to accept risk in certain areas - while quantitative measures could involve financial thresholds, performance metrics, or tolerance ranges.

Academic and Corporate Governance

The statement should clarify governance arrangements, including who is responsible for setting, reviewing, and monitoring risk appetite. Roles and accountabilities - typically at the level of Corporate Board, Academic Board (Senate) and/or Senior Executive need to be articulated. This should be clearly outlined.

Reviewing and Updating

Risk appetite is by no means static. The statement needs to specify how and when it will be reviewed and updated (ideally quarterly – though annually is acceptable). This ongoing (rolling) auditing ensures relevance and responsiveness to new challenges or opportunities.

See – Rolling audits – a mechanism for self-assurance (2024) - 6113ad_beb80a2de7ae43dc9fb8c7bedfa4e78b.pdf

Communication and Integration

It is essential that the risk appetite statement (RAS) is effectively *communicated* across the institution and integrated into key processes. *Communication* is an essential element of good management – including risk. This integration should embrace strategic planning; project management; and finance/resource allocation. It should, ideally, serve as a reference point for decision-making at all organisational levels.

A well thought through (and preferably benchmarked) Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) is an essential governance tool for higher education institutions. By addressing the key elements of alignment with mission; clear definitions; comprehensive risk coverage; measurable criteria; governance clarity; regular ongoing review; and effective communication - the statement provides a foundation for sound risk management and strategic success.

CHAPTER 13

Five Key Employee Qualities

Reflecting on many years of managing staff and working co-operatively with employees the thought occurred to me – what makes a good employee? – that is what are the qualities necessary. When it comes to building a successful workplace certain qualities consistently stand out in top-performing employees (certainly in my experience). The top five that come to mind include reliability, communication, adaptability, teamwork and initiative.

Reliability

Being dependable is crucial. Reliable employees consistently meet deadlines, arrive on time, and deliver on promises - making them a trusted part of any team. Reliable employees ensure trust and confidence – not only with the employer but also with colleagues. Ensuring reliability (and consistency) is critical to success.

Communication

Effective communication - whether it is listening, speaking, or writing - ensures that tasks are understood and collaboration is smooth. Good communicators help avoid misunderstandings and keep projects on track. In many ways – communication is the key to success and provides a high level of positivity in the workplace.

Adaptability

Workplaces are often (usually) dynamic, so an employee who can adjust to new situations, learn quickly, and embrace changes - is highly valued. Adaptable staff help teams respond to challenges and opportunities. The current work environment requires a high level of adaptability – changes appear to be occurring rapidly in an environment impacted by COVID 19 and a corresponding digital revolution.

Teamwork

Cooperating with colleagues, respecting diverse viewpoints, and contributing positively to group efforts all underpin strong teamwork. Employees with this quality help create a harmonious and productive environment. There is little doubt in my mind that teamwork (high levels of co-operation) makes all the difference in the working environment – harnessing that energy is critical if progress and success is desired.

Initiative

'Taking action' without always being prompted demonstrates initiative. Employees who proactively seek solutions, volunteer for tasks, and show a willingness to go the extra mile are true assets to any organisation. There is an old saying that is apt – 'it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission'.

*From an **employee** perspective focusing on these qualities can help individuals excel in their roles and contribute to a positive workplace culture. From an **employer** perspective – these are the qualities that one should look for in team members and encourage* *wherever possible and feasible – and are most useful considerations in the initial employment process.*

Well worth reading –

Keertana **Amandraj** (2024) 30+ positive character traits of a great employee - 30+ Positive Character Traits of a Great Employee | Career Contessa

Jamie **Birt** (2025) 10 qualities of a good employee - 10 Qualities of a Good Employee (With Examples) | Indeed.com

Junun **Saleh** (2025) qualities of a good employee: how to find it? - Qualities of a Good Employee: How to Find It? | Monitask

CHAPTER 14

Five Reasons Why Invigilated Assessment Is Important in Higher Education

Invigilated assessments, also known as supervised or proctored exams, are a cornerstone of higher education. These assessments are conducted under strict supervision to ensure fairness, integrity, and validity in the evaluation process. Here are five key reasons why invigilated assessment plays a crucial role in universities and other tertiary institutions across Australia.

Academic Integrity

Invigilated assessments help prevent cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. The presence of an invigilator (either in person or online) ensures that students are following the rules and using only permitted resources, thereby maintaining the credibility and reputation of the institution.

Ensuring Fairness

Supervised exams create a level playing field where all students are subject to the same conditions. This removes advantages that some students might gain from unsupervised or online assessments, making the results more equitable and trustworthy.

Authentic Assessment of Knowledge

Invigilated assessments allow educators to accurately gauge a student's understanding of the material without external assistance. This means that the results reflect the individual student's knowledge and skills, rather than their ability to access resources or collaborate with others.

Compliance with Accreditation Standards

Many accreditation bodies require evidence of invigilated assessment as part of their standards for course approval and renewal – and understandably so. Higher Education providers must demonstrate that their assessment practices meet these requirements to maintain their accreditation status and continue offering recognised qualifications.

Preparation for Professional Practice

In many professions, individuals are required to complete supervised examinations as part of their certification or licensing process. Invigilated assessments in higher education help students develop the skills and resilience needed to perform under pressure and adhere to strict examination protocols in their future careers.

Invigilated assessments remain an essential component of higher education in Australia. They protect the ***integrity*** *of academic qualifications, foster* ***fairness****, and* ***prepare*** *students for the demands of professional life. Universities and Institutes of Higher Education continue to rely on these assessments to ensure that* *graduates are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in a competitive world.*

Also worth reading –

Invigilated exams – ensuring integrity and equity in assessment - Invigilated exams - ensuring integrity and equity in assessment — invigilatorPlus Blog

Online invigilation – key considerations - https://blog.invigilatorplus.com.au/ip-proctoring/online-invigilation-key-considerations

Ensuring academic integrity and compliance in the online proctoring environment - Ensuring academic integrity and compliance in the online proctoring environment — invigilatorPlus Blog

CHAPTER 15

Good compliance is good business

For reasons unknown, many find the term 'compliance' either off-putting or unnecessarily tedious. Not so. Fundamental to success is knowing the rules and regulations within any endeavour and higher education is no exception. As an independent higher education provider – attracting quality staff and students nationally and from all over the world – the need to be compliant and have in place the necessary measures and processes to ensure adherence is essential.

The analogy I often used is the 'giraffe' (in the zoo) and the 'yellow line' (on the station platform) – best not to 'stick out too much' and 'stay within the lines' – so to speak -

The Yellow Line and the Giraffe - https://www.ubss.edu.au/article/the-yellow-line-and-the-giraffe-a-cautionary-tale-of-compliance/

Threshold Standards

Australian Higher Education is governed and directed by way of the **Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021**. As the name would suggest there are standards that must be met – even better, exceeded – but nevertheless, they form the basis of best practice in both corporate and academic behaviour within the Sector.

The value of understanding and adhering to the standards was discussed in a recent blog –

It is a matter of standards - https://www.ubss.edu.au/article/it-is-a-matter-of-standards/

Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance provides the necessary framework to ensure that a provider understands the corporate requirements of operating within the Sector and at the same time has a clear, articulated structure that ensures compliance.

Corporate Governance relates to specific standards including 6.1 (Corporate governance), 6.2 (Corporate monitoring and accountability), 7.1 (Representation of the entity) and 7.3 (Information management). The framework in place needs to ensure these standards are met and are comprehensive – 33 components at present – and that each is addressed and accounted for. Equally important is the process of regularly (frequently) reporting against the framework to senior management and stakeholders.

Academic Governance

Academic Governance in turn explores the essential elements of good (preferably excellent) learning and teaching. Again, an understanding of what is required and how this can be achieved is essential. Academic performance is fundamental to the success of any provider – business schools are no exception.

Academic Governance relates to specific standards including 5.1 (Internal approval), 5.2 (Policies), 5.3 (Periodic reviews), 5.4 (WIL and supervision), 6.3 (Processes and structures), 6.3.1 (Academic oversight), 6.3.2 (Quality of teaching and learning), 7.2 (Accurate and timely information for students), and 7.3.3 (Information systems). There are elements of overlap with corporate issues – but the academic governance elements need to be clear and evident.

Regular Audit and Providing Evidence

The importance of conducting regular audits, updating documentation and maintaining awareness across an institution – in relation to compliance and quality commitment – cannot be overstated.

My own institution is active in the process and regularly communicates with all staff and stakeholders about what processes are in place and how the standards, corporate governance and academic governance are managed and adhered to.

For further insight into the challenges facing Higher Education in the next few years see -The Big Five Challenges - https://www.ubss.edu.au/article/the-big-five-higher-ed-challenges/

Chapter 16

Good governance is about leadership not management

There is so much chatter about governance – 'good governance' specifically. A great deal of emphasis is put on the somewhat superficial format of reports and documents – sometimes the emphasis is somewhat childish. Governance is not about the look and feel, it is about the relationship between elements of the business and the supportive nature of that interface.

My observation is that one of the negative elements of governance is 'staying too long' in the job. A three-year stint in key governance roles (chairs, committee leads, memberships and the like) is probably ideal. Anything beyond that point usually leads to tensions and losing sight of the actual role specifics – providing support to the business personnel and mechanisms.

Ideal duration of governance roles – three years – and move on.

Importance of good leadership

Leadership and management are not the same thing – which may come as a surprise to many. Good leadership provides ongoing support to those *in* management – and this usually requires support and encouragement as opposed to criticism.

I have on several occasions now seen that line blurred somewhat.

I recall a scenario where the Chair of the Board of Directors believed he could do a better job than his senior staff – and ever so quietly had them removed – one on a 'trumped up' charge of misbehaviour (later determined as unfounded) and the other *performance managed* out. The overall result – significant destruction of the business and significantly diminished student numbers - not to mention the harm done to those two senior staff involved.

A second incident occurred when an over-zealous Chair decided that she could do the job better than the CEO. Stealthily and quite inappropriately she manoeuvred the CEO out and assumed the role of acting CEO – with no concern for conflict of interest of course. Ironically, she claimed her particular area of expertise to be 'governance'. Not surprisingly her role was short-lived.

What was witnessed (on two occasions now) is the misuse (or perhaps misunderstanding) of leadership. Instead of providing support and encouragement – the need to 'be in charge' vanquished the logic of the day. I might add – all three displaced managers were considered by their peers to be very good at their jobs.

Good leaders understand the importance of empowerment, team development, communication (there it is again), emotional intelligence, problem solving ability, respect, strategic thinking and active listening – amongst other things.

Importance of good management

Good management is about ensuring systems are in order and people are supported in their working efforts. Management can take on many forms – but at the heart of good management is a clear understanding of the business and a solid grasp of people management and support.

Current thinking (I have taught management and leadership for many years) is that good management involves communication skills (vital in my opinion), empathy and support, strategic thinking, conflict management ability and of course adaptability.

If a manager has these skills – and is prepared to hone them - they will achieve extraordinary things.

So, what is good governance all about

'Governance is the overall complex system or framework of processes, functions, structures, rules, laws and norms born out of the relationships, interactions, power dynamics and communication within an organized group of individuals.'

Good governance understands the importance of supporting and nurturing the people within the organisation in an effort to ensure loyalty and commitment.

Smaller groups are best served by informal structures. The notion of imposing large scale systems on small enterprises is not only inappropriate – it is also counter-productive – and needs to be guarded against.

CHAPTER 17

Good leadership – is about connection and presence

Often good leaders had to be the smartest people in the room – in truth this is no longer correct. Good leadership is about connecting with staff and externals in a meaningful way – developing trust, confidence and a feeling of belonging (being part of the team). This is a shift away from the traditional view. On reflection – good leadership is about presence.

I recently conducted an independent performance survey *of myself* (5 point scale) with my own immediate staff – and used 10 specific leadership/management skills/attributes identified in the lietarture -

Communication	4.9
Problem solving	4.7
Respect for others	4.9
Strategic thinking	4.9
Active listening	4.8
Empathy	4.8
Support	4.8
Conflict management	4.8

Team development and empowering	4.9
Adaptability	4.8
OVERALL	4.83

Intersting enough, at least six of the key indicators (highlighted) were related to **connecting** with staff – communication, respect, active listening, empathy, support, and team development/empowering.

In more recent times I commissioned an independent *staff survey* (SP3 2025) using standard metrics –

	Survey Questions	SP1 2025	SP2 2025	SP3 2025
Q1	You are provided with the tools and resources to do your job well	3.14	4.80	5.00
Q2	Your job requirements are clearly communicated and goals and strategies are clearly defined	3.43	4.80	4.83
Q3	You feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things	4.00	4.80	4.83
Q4	Your supervisor visibly demonstrates a commitment to quality	4.71	5.00	5.00
Q5	You are satisfied with the level of involvement in decisions that directly affect your work.	3.14	4.80	5.00
Q6	AGE does a good job of keeping employees informed about matters affecting your	3.71	4.40	5.00
Q7	Overall, you are satisfied with your job?	4.29	4.80	5.00
	Average	**3.77**	**4.77**	**4.95**

It is intersting to note that there is a close correlation between the leader and staff morale overall.

A national/international view

During my working career (now 52 years) I have had the opportunity to work/research in four States of Australia and five countries. This has provided me with a valuable set of experiences and observations of both leaders and managers within a diverse range of settings and institutions.

I have witnessed 'cultures' that have thrived, not because of policies, procedures, governance structures or metrics - *but because people felt safe and valued*. I saw teams that delivered results not just because they had to - *but because they wanted to*. This has been a critical learning experience for me.

Sadly, I have also seen/witnessed cultures that have essentially collapsed beneath the weight of bureaucracy, policy and protocol where morale was low and ideas never emerged, and *brilliant professionals burned out* – often in silence.

It was never about budget, technology or strategy. *It was always about the leader's* presence *and how they connected with their team/s.*

The importance of presence

Presence is not just about being physically available. It is about emotional clarity, it is about intention to listen, and the humility to let others be seen and heard.

Presence is by no means being soft. It is strategic. It shapes how people feel, how they perform, and whether they stay. It determines if great ideas ever get spoken aloud and if innovation takes root or dies in silence. In every thriving team I have witnessed - presence was the catalyst that shaped that culture.

This presence builds trust – often in ways unseen – such as hallway conversations, a coffee shared, a walk around the block/campus, offhand encouragement, formal acknowledgement and even a thoughtful pause before a difficult conversation/encounter.

How to build presence as a leader

Cultivating presence is not necessarily about adding another skill to your own toolkit. Rather, it is about possibly changing how you currently lead.

As a leader, you need to slow down long enough to *hear* what is not being said - you need to notice your *own emotional state* before reacting to someone else - and you need to choose *connection over control.*

It also means regularly considering - do people feel safer, more capable, and more seen after interacting with you? Because the *tone* is always set at the top, the impact, then, of your presence ripples further down than you can possibly imagine.

Good leadership is complex and difficult. It is NOT about being the smartest person in the room. Good leadership is about connecting with staff and being present. It is about developing trust, confidence and a feeling of belonging (being part of the team

Also worth reading –

Leadesrhip styles – a staring point - 6113ad_c482a119f6074198a97b17491e78dc7a.pdf

Transformational leadership and the new reality - 6113ad_94f769b047444a0082b26903741fa569.pdf

Understanding Emotional Intelligence (EI) – and applying it to your leadership style and approach - 6113ad_688b923e84e44169b9420f3e8fd5d126.pdf

Governance is about leadersip not management - 6113ad_4a2ffc930bcf4f8c81f115677e00326a.pdf

CHAPTER 18

Integrating Management (Science) Principles to Foster Sustainable Communities in Australia

Local sustainable development has become a critical priority for communities across Australia (and for that matter around the world). The application of management sciences offers a strategic approach to tackling complex environmental, economic, and social challenges at the local level. By leveraging data-driven decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and innovative management tools - local governments and organisations can pursue sustainable growth while protecting natural resources and supporting community wellbeing.

Understanding Management Sciences

Management sciences encompass a range of analytical, quantitative, and qualitative methods used for effective planning, organising, directing, and controlling resources. These sciences draw from disciplines such as operations research, systems analysis, project management, and organisational behaviour. In the context of local sustainable development, management sciences help structure complex problems, evaluate alternatives, and implement solutions that balance competing interests.

Principles of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is defined by its focus on meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. The three core pillars are -

- *Environmental sustainability* – that is protecting ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources
- *Economic sustainability* – including supporting stable, long-term economic growth and employment

  and
- *Social sustainability* - with a focus on promoting equity, social inclusion, and community resilience.

The role of Management Sciences in Local Sustainable Development

Management sciences provide practical tools and frameworks for local councils, businesses, and community groups to design and evaluate sustainable initiatives. Some of the key contributions include -

- Strategic Planning - using scenario analysis and forecasting to set long-term goals and identify pathways for sustainable growth
- Resource Optimisation - Applying operations research to allocate resources efficiently, minimise waste, and reduce costs
- Stakeholder Engagement - facilitating collaboration among residents, businesses, Indigenous groups, and government bodies through participatory decision-making models

- Performance Measurement - developing metrics and dashboards to track environmental, economic, and social outcomes
- Risk Management - identifying and mitigating risks associated with climate change, resource depletion, and shifting demographics.

The Australian Context

Across Australia, management sciences have guided successful local sustainability initiatives. Some examples worth noting - Urban Water Management in Perth; Sustainable Transport in Melbourne; and Community Renewable Energy in Byron Bay (New South Wales).

Worth reading –

Better urban water management

Understanding Sustainable Transport Solutions for Melbourne - Onyx Removals

https://saegroup.com.au/blog/australias-first-community-owned-renewable-energy-retailer-to-open-in-byron-bay/

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the promise of management sciences, local governments and organisations face certain challenges such as limited funding, data gaps, and the need for skilled personnel. However, advances in digital technology, open data, and collaborative platforms are opening new opportunities for evidence-based decision-making and community-driven sustainability.

The integration of management sciences into local sustainable development is essential for building resilient, equitable, and environmentally sound communities in Australia. Through strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and rigorous performance *tracking, local leaders can navigate complexity and create lasting positive change for current and future generations.*

Chapter 19

It is all about inclusivity

Diversity, equity and inclusivity are key elements of a truly welcoming work environment – and a higher education institution is no exception. If the three elements can be applied to a higher education provider, the outcome is usually impressive – and equally important, staff and students at that institution usually feel comfortable and enjoy their time and experience with the provider.

For students it is about feeling welcome and supported. For staff members it is about acceptance and being appreciated. The challenges are often demanding (to say the least), but the outcome is well worth the effort.

Diversity

Diversity, according to the Victorian Government, is described as 'what makes each of us unique and includes our backgrounds, personality, life experiences and beliefs, all of the things that make us who we are. It is a combination of our differences that shape our view of the world, our perspective and our approach. Diversity is also about recognising, respecting and valuing differences based on ethnicity, gender, age, race, religion, disability and sexual orientation. It also includes an infinite range of individual unique characteristics and experiences, such as communication style, career path, life experience, educational background, geographic location, income level, marital status, parental status and other variables that influence personal perspective'.

See - Why diversity in the workplace matters and how to increase DEI - Workable

Equity (Equal Opportunity)

Equity is captured again, by the Victorian Government, as meaning that 'every person can participate freely and equally in areas of public life such as in the workplace, in education, or in accessing goods and services without disadvantage or less favourable treatment due to their unique attributes. Everyone in the workplace (and HE environment) has rights and responsibilities under equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation to prevent discrimination, harassment, vilification or victimisation'.

See - 7 exceptional examples of equity in the workplace | InStride

Inclusivity

Inclusivity is articulated by way of 'practices that anticipate and accommodate the needs of a diversity of people, minimising the need for adjustments to respond to individual needs, while maintaining quality and other standards.'

See - The importance of inclusion in the workplace (kornferry.com)

The three elements are interdependent and can be highly complementary.

Mandated in Higher Education

The Higher Education Standards Framework (2021) mandates that HE providers ensure that the three elements are embraced and evident. Standards 1.1.1 and 1.3 address admission requirements, orientation and progression. Standards 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.3.3 emphasise the need to accommodate under-represented or disadvantaged groups, encourage the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the provision of wellbeing and safety conditions. Standards 3.3, 3,.3.3 and 3.3.4 speak to access to learning support and learning resources. Standards 7.2 and 7.2.2d emphasise the provision of information, policies and requirements.

See - Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

The importance of leadership

In order to achieve a community of acceptance the role of the leader is vital. Good leadership not only endorses the three elements but *models* them as well. Consideration, acceptance and support play a key role in creating a harmonious community – and the leader has a critical role in this. The more I reflect on leadership – the more I appreciate how critical good leadership is within the organisation – and how quickly a community can suffer when the leadership is lacking.

See - *Why is Leadership Important? | Indeed.com*

The three elements – diversity, equity and inclusivity – working together and actually operating (not just given lip-service to) can create a dynamic and comfortable environment for all students and staff. The effort is well worth the trouble.

Chapter 20

Key issues associated with operating a HEP

The matter of operating a HEP - irrespective of size or focus – is both complex and at the same time simple. The oversight is based on five key elements that together ensure both compliance and quality. Each can be considered independently – but essentially must also be viewed as an interface that underlines quality assurance. Further, ongoing auditing and reviews become vital. There are numerous elements to compliance.

Corporate Governance

The oversight of corporate responsibilities is a key element and is best summarised in terms of a governing entity that is capable and qualified to oversee the operations and quality of the HEP entity. Capability is measured by way of a skills matrix and qualification is measured by experience and standing.

See - Guidance note: Corporate governance | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

Academic Governance

All aspects of the academic endeavour need to be overseen (and monitored) by means of an Academic Board/Senate. Membership is best ensured using independent, external and internal membership. Regular consideration of a range of matters academic must be reviewed and academic operation supported.

See - Guidance note: Academic governance | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

Scholarship

Teaching staff and those overseeing teaching staff need to be scholarship active. Each HEP needs to understand what exactly scholarship means (this can vary from institution to institution) and determine how it is to be measured. There needs to be a direct correlation to what is being taught and how it is delivered – currency and relevance being the key issues.

See - Guidance note: Scholarship | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

Strategic Planning

A sense of direction is vital - and this is best achieved with a well thought through, and shared vision of where the organisation is headed. The strategic plan needs to be visible and used to develop key performance indicators (KPIs) for the leadership team and the two oversight groups (both corporate and academic).

See – APracticalGuideToStrategicPlanningInHigherEducation (nwic.edu)

Risk Management

A clear understanding of the risk associated with Higher Education delivery is paramount. This needs to be accompanied by sensible mitigation strategies that are regularly reviewed and refined. A common practice is to utilise a traffic light system that readily demonstrates the nature of the risk and the likely impact on the organisation if not managed appropriately. Regular review of the overall risk management statement is essential.

See - Understanding and Managing Risk at an Institute (ubss.edu.au)

Utilising these five key elements satisfies a significant number of the demands of the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. The seven domains provide a framework for providing evidence of satisfying the standards and are often an excellent starting point to determine where the gaps lie in both new and continuing operations.

See- Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 | Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (teqsa.gov.au)

CHAPTER 21

Leadership Styles – a starting point

When exploring the topic of leadership styles – a myriad of models and approaches jumps to mind. It is not uncommon to start remembering (reflecting on) leaders you have known or who have had influence on you personally – both good and bad. The exercise is very useful – and is best contextualized in terms of the size, nature and focus of the organization in which these leaders operated. It is also feasible that good leaders you have encountered fluctuated between styles – given changing circumstances.

Influenced by Knight (2024) – six specific leadership styles are well worth consideration -

6 Common Leadership Styles — and How to Decide Which to Use When (hbr.org)

Coercive leadership

The focus here is on ensuring compliance and fast turnaround results. The leader can be aggressive at times – demanding often – and sometimes even outright rude. Industries with strict deadlines and processes often cultivate this particular style – and though it is often effective in terms of outcomes

– it is generally not appreciated by underlings and subordinates.

Authoritative leadership

This is largely about developing a strong vision for the future, and ensuring those plans are carried out – often to the letter. The style can be very productive – but not particularly democratic or sensitive to the needs of those around the leader. Some refer to it as a 'military' style approach where the greater good is the most important thing.

Pacesetting leadership

The intent is about setting standard – and leading 'from the front'. It is usually evidenced in the leader taking a proactive role in the operation – and setting the pace. It can be a very useful style in that it provides the larger team with a rhythm and flow of activity that is built on expectations – and those laid out by the pace setter. It can also be exhausting if the pace is too fast and too demanding. Pacesetters are often high achievers.

Affiliative leadership

The focus here is about building a sense of emotional affiliation with team members. It can be useful in developing identity and mission but can be difficult for those who do not quite 'fit the mold' so to speak. The approach can be highly effective – nd at the same time alienating.

Democratic leadership

The approach is largely about gaining consensus – or at least a majority view on managing and progressing. The style is demanding in that it requires gaining 'buy in' from members – but the outcome can become quite powerful and pervasive.

Coaching leadership

The focus here is on encouraging performance with a particular view of developing leaders within the group – whether they stay with the company or move on to lead other institutions. This approach often creates high levels of support and loyalty.

On reflection – all six styles can be useful and effective. The most effective leaders (in my mind and my memory) were the ones that were able to adjust their style to suit the circumstance – and this often meant varying to suit the circumstance within the same organization. A good example is an organization that started as a small entity with the prevailing leadership being ***democratic*** *– but as the organization grew and grew the style varied to at times* ***authoritative*** *and then on to* ***coaching****. Size, focus and timing are huge factors influencing leadership style.*

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CHAPTER 22

Measuring Success

Success means different things to different people and organisations. Measuring success is about determining whether goals are being achieved and whether progress aligns with values, expectations, and objectives. There's no single, universal way to measure success, as it varies greatly depending on context—personal, professional, or organisational.

In terms of personal success

For individuals, success can be measured in several ways. Common approaches include such things as -

- Achievement of Goals – that is setting personal goals and tracking progress towards them, whether they are related to career, relationships, health, or personal growth.
- Satisfaction and Happiness – by assessing your level of contentment and happiness with life circumstances and choices.
- Growth and Learning – in terms of reflecting on how much you've learnt, overcome challenges, or developed new skills over time.

and

- Work-Life Balance - by evaluating your ability to maintain balance between work, leisure, and family commitments.

In terms of professional Success

Success in the workplace is often gauged through more structured methods including -

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) - these are measurable values that demonstrate how effectively objectives are being met. For example, sales targets, customer satisfaction scores, or project completion rates.
- Career Progression - tracking promotions, new responsibilities, or skill development as markers of professional growth.

and

- Feedback and Recognition - considering feedback from managers, peers, or clients, as well as awards or other forms of recognition.

In terms of organisational success

Businesses, organisations and institutions typically measure success using a mix of financial and non-financial metrics including -

- Financial Performance - analysing profit, revenue, cost savings, and return on investment.
- Customer Satisfaction - using surveys, reviews, and retention rates to gauge how well customer needs are being met.
- Employee Engagement - assessing staff morale, retention, and productivity.

and

- Social Impact - measuring contributions to the community or environment through programs, donations, or sustainability initiatives.

Qualitative vs Quantitative Measurement

Success can be measured both quantitatively (using numbers and statistics) and qualitatively (considering personal feelings, experiences, and stories). A blend (mix) of both provides a more complete picture.

Measuring success depends on clearly defined goals and values. By regularly reflecting, setting targets, and considering both tangible and intangible outcomes, you can determine how successful you have been in your chosen pursuits.

CHAPTER 23

Multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery – the way forward

I have held the view for many years – taught it, wrote about it and probably exhausted colleagues and friends with it – that success in the higher education sector is about three things specifically - multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery. If all three can be worked in tandem – success is inevitable. The combination, though, is not as simple as it sounds. The infrastructure to sustain the three elements is significant and a high degree of expertise is required both at the operations and governance levels. I explore all three in turn –

Multiple products

My own larger organization has a range of products delivered in Australia with the help of four entities. The product range includes undergraduate and postgraduate offerings in Business, Accounting, Marketing, Networking and Telecommunications, Information and Communications Technology, Cybersecurity, Music, Early Childhood Education, Information technology and aspirations to provide Social Work and a Master of Business Administration. This list is impressive – and the diversity clever.

Multiple locations

The organization has spread its campuses across Victoria and New South Wales including West Melbourne, North Melbourne, Geelong, Dandenong, Sydney CBD and Parramatta. There is an intent to add additional sites in the near future – both nationally and internationally. Again, the concept of multiple locations has been embraced.

These two elements working together have been effective and student numbers are positive.

Multiple modes of delivery

In many ways this third (and equally important) element is the most difficult. Currently the delivery is essentially face to face (F2F) with a small online presence. The future, in my opinion, is that online, hybrid and offshore delivery needs to be explored and incorporated into the DNA of the organization. It does require expertise and will require attracting sufficient expertise to make it happen – but it is well worth the effort.

Combining the three elements = multiple products, multiple locations and multiple modes of delivery – are and always will be the way forward. Putting the three elements together requires both courage and a sense of optimism – but the outcome will be extremely satisfying.

Possibly worth reading –

Student Satisfaction shows why hybrid learning is here to stay - Student satisfaction shows why hybrid learning is here to stay: opinion | Campus Review

Are digital classrooms a viable permanent solution? - Are digital classrooms a viable permanent alternative? – Opinion | Campus Review

Offshore, onshore or just not sure? - Offshore, onshore or just not sure? The future of hybrid teaching – opinion | Campus Review

What is meant by 'hybrid' delivery and how does it work in higher education? - What is meant by 'hybrid' delivery and how does it work in higher education? opinion | Campus Review

Transition to an online MBA – a genuine game changer - Transition to an online MBA: a genuine game changer | Campus Review

CHAPTER 24

Normal Distribution of academic results

'The process of **standardisation** adjusts the raw mark so that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged based on the trimester/semester/year they sit the assessment or by their subject choice. After standardisation the distribution of marks is the same from year to year and subject to subject – this is the ideal consistency'.

In truth it is a *fair and appropriate process*. It is often referred to as **normalisation (normal distribution)** and/or **moderation.**

Worth reading - Understanding standardisation in the assessment of student performance | Educational Quality & Assessment Programme | Pacific Community (SPC)

In the Higher Education context

Many (if not most) Universities and HEPs use the process – that is following 'the bell curve'. The standard curve is best captured -

High Distinction	10%
Distinction	15%
Credit	50%

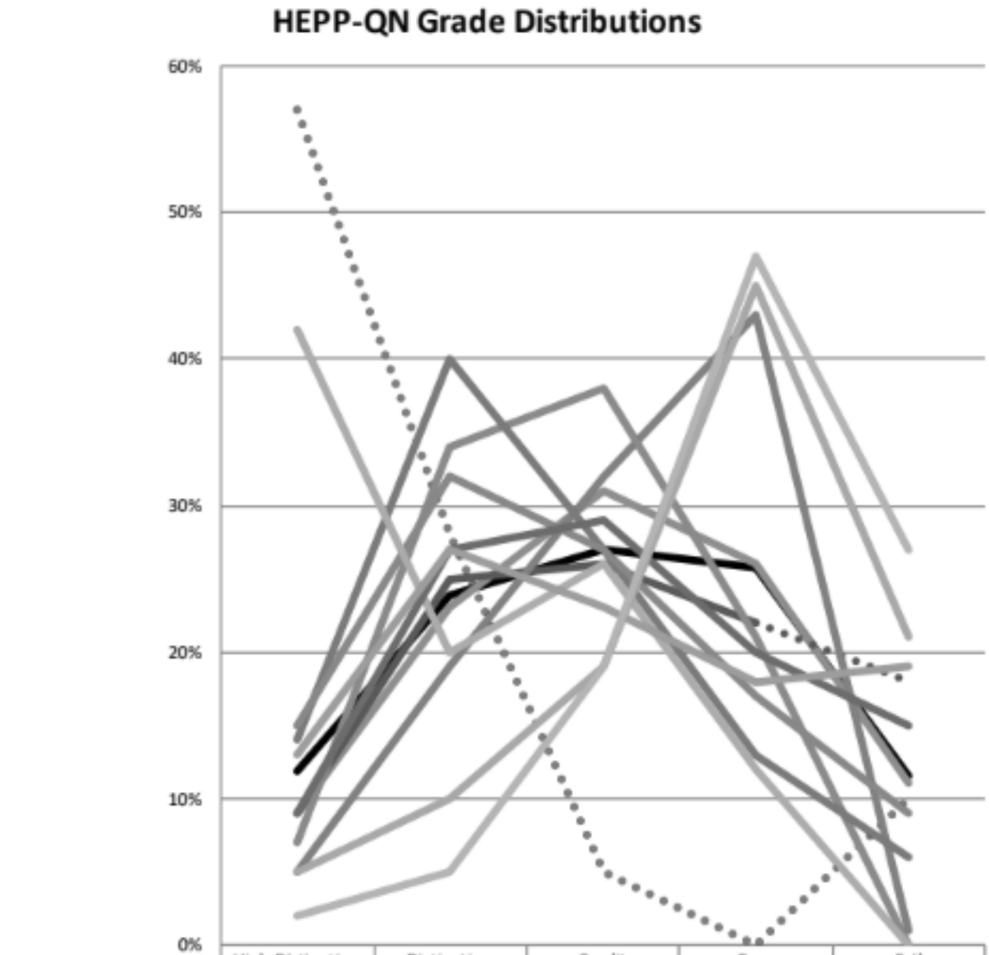
Pass	15%
Fail	10%

The underlying rationale being consistency and fairness – over a sustained period.

Worth reading - Bell Shaped Curve: Normal Distribution In Statistics

Worth reading - "Grading on a Curve" and How It Affects Students - Through Education

A recent industry wide exercise (involving 13 HEPs) demonstrates the diversity of grading –



	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Fail
AGE	57%	28%	5%	0%	10%
AVERAGE HEPPQN	12%	24%	27%	26%	12%
HEPPQN 01	9%	23%	31%	26%	11%
HEPPQN 02	9%	25%	26%	22%	18%
HEPPQN 03	5%	19%	32%	43%	1%
HEPPQN 04	7%	34%	38%	21%	0%
HEPPQN 05	14%	40%	27%	13%	6%
HEPPQN 06	15%	32%	27%	17%	9%
HEPPQN 07	42%	20%	26%	12%	0%
HEPPQN 09	9%	27%	29%	20%	15%
HEPPQN 10	13%	27%	23%	18%	19%
HEPPQN 11	5%	10%	19%	45%	21%
HEPPQN 12	2%	5%	19%	47%	27%

Several outliers (AGE, HEPPQN07, HEPPQN11 and HEPPQN12) demonstrate the inconsistency of non-moderated outcomes.

The following table captures the overall distribution of this project –

High Distinction	12%
Distinction	24%
Credit	27%
Pass	26%
Fail	12%

The distinction/credit/pass grades are inconsistent in truth – and could be adjusted appropriately.

A fairer and more consistent standardising would tidy up the issue – and I suspect the standardisation of the four outliers would go close to securing a standard 'bell curve' outcome.

Consistency is key

In order to maintain consistency and at the same time ensure fairness the use of standardising is critical. The so called 'bell curve' (given its shape – and sometimes referred to as Gaussian or deMoivre distribution) in fact is fair and consistent and is readily achieved once the full complement of results has been gathered.

The process is simply about adjusting the results to avoid outliers and maintain consistency.

What does occur – over time – is that teaching staff become more realistic and consistent with their ongoing marking – and end up marking to the curve – that is becoming more consistent and fairer in their assessments.

Chapter 25

On Being a Digital Nomad

I have - in a career spanning more than 50 years – had the opportunity to work and travel. The first ten years or so I was based in Melbourne and taught at a handful of institutions – always face to face (F2F). In some ways teaching at a number of institutions at the same time taught me the concept of being a nomad (of sorts) – though limited to the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Over the next thirty years or so I taught in multiple locations – both interstate and overseas. Physically relocating to Tasmania, Queensland and New South Wales certainly reinforced the nomadic tendency. Teaching and consulting opportunities overseas (New Zealand, Singapore, Japan, Maldives, South Korea, Hong Kong, France for example) also taught me the importance of communication and contact.

The last ten years – though – have been the most transformative from further relocations, weekly interstate commutes and of course COVID-19 adventures around working online and remotely. Trips overseas using digital nomad strategies have also proved most satisfactory – finally convincing myself that being a digital nomad was in fact a most satisfying approach to management and teaching.

Collecting other viewpoints and shared experiences

I was inspired to produce – '*WFA – working from anywhere and the digital nomad – DN'*, Intertype in 2022 - Working From Anywhere Formatted. This collection consisted of 22 chapters (from a range of authors including myself) talking about the 'digital nomad' experience from a range of viewpoints.

I went on to write (at around about the same time) a number of articles on the topic including (for example) – '*What it's really like as a greying remote worker in the hybrid work world'* (Campus Review) - What it's really like as a greying remote worker in the hybrid work world – opinion – Campus Review

The opportunity to reflect and write has further cemented the legitimacy of the notion of being a DN and provided a certain degree of clarity.

We are not alone

To my surprise (according to Lupini, 2025) there are over 35 million people worldwide that identify as *digital nomads*. Her definition is 'a digital nomad who earns an income working online, typically from a variety of countries. Many digital nomads prioritise frequent travel, often to international destinations'

The belief goes on. In order to be effective one needs to have good *internet connectivity*, a range of *remote work tools* and of course the *online platforms* needed to do the jobs required. Being *tech-savvy* is also a major asset. The most defining issue, however, is actually - the desire to travel

Remote working (WFH)

A remote worker on the other hand is someone who likely works from home – that is away from the office – but not necessarily travels or relocates. This is not to be confused with being a DN.

Hannah (2023) suggests 'remote work refers to any work that is performed outside of the company's own dedicated office workspace, in a location of the worker's choosing. Remote work can be done in a co-working space, at home, at a café.'

The distinction though – it does not suggest remote locations or travel.

Post COVID-19 we are seeing a certain flexibility creeping into the workplace that allows (sometimes even encourages) workers to work away from 'the office' for some of the time. Worth noting there are also strong arguments being made for staff to return to the office.

In the education environment (where my work is done) – the need to have student/staff facing staff on site is quite reasonable and makes a great deal of sense.

The challenges of being a digital nomad

There are certainly challenges associated with digital nomad work. Things like *loneliness and isolation* are often an issue, the *instability of income*, *staying productive* and complexity around visas and *travel documentation*.

My own personal experiences across Asia and Europe have not been particularly difficult. My work has often been for periods of two to six weeks at a range of locations (across AUSTRALIA, Asia and Europe). *Time zones* were the real challenge – if I am to be honest – that required significant discipline when it required early starts and late finishes to coincide with home organization schedules.

The challenges of *connectivity* were at times annoying – but generally workable. *Platforms and systems* were straight forward – but again the *time zone* issue was the largest challenge.

I expressed this viewpoint in a chapter (2022) – WFA – Working from anywhere – and the digital nomad - 6113ad_0af52db5f8204e6fb48b5601058249b8.pdf – and in another collection – 'The New reality' (2023) - GCA Vol 11 - Formatted

Being able to work and at the same time travel and explore has been a wonderful experience personally (and professionally for that matter) and remains a constant reminder that 'working outside of the square' can be quite satisfying as well as productive.

References

Hannah, J. (2023) - What Does Remote Work Mean (vs WFH vs Hybrid Work)?

Lupini, C (2025) - What is a Digital Nomad and How Do You Become One?

CHAPTER 26

On Being a Good Leader

Leadership is both an ancient calling (some would argue) and – and yet modern necessity. Across cultures and eras, the traits of effective leaders have been debated, studied, and celebrated. Yet, despite countless theories and models (not to mention my own years of teaching leadership and management) the essence of good leadership remains rooted in the timeless human desire to inspire, guide, and elevate others. Good leadership is not about titles or positions – it is about ***actions****,* ***influence****, and oddly enough -* ***heart****.*

What is leadership?

Leadership entails the ability to guide individuals or groups toward a common goal. Unlike management, which often focuses on processes and efficiency, leadership *is fundamentally about people*—motivating, empowering, and nurturing their growth. It is an art - shaped by empathy, vision, humility, and resilience.

Vision and Direction

A good leader possesses a clear **vision** - a meaningful sense of purpose that acts as a compass for themselves and their team. This vision is best not imposed, but shared and co-created, so that every member feels invested in the journey ahead – not exactly an easy task. Articulating this vision requires clarity and passion - but also the humility to listen and adapt.

Vision alone is not enough. A leader must translate ideas into actionable steps, setting realistic goals and mapping out the path to achievement. This involves *anticipating challenges*, *being open* to new information, and *adjusting strategies* as circumstances evolve. On reflection – this is quite difficult.

Communication

Communication is the lifeblood of leadership. Effective communication is the cornerstone of good leadership. Leaders must be able to convey ideas clearly, listen actively, and foster an environment where honest dialogue thrives. This involves *active listening*, *transparency* and *feedback*.

Empowering Others

A good leader recognises the potential of each team member and seeks to *empower them* through delegation, encouragement, and support. Empowerment is not about relinquishing responsibility – it is about trusting others to take initiative and make decisions. This trust fosters a sense of ownership, commitment, and accountability. The key issues here are delegation, development and recognition.

Emotional Intelligence and Self-Awareness

The best leaders are deeply self-aware. They understand their strengths and limitations, and they manage their emotions with composure and empathy. Emotional intelligence enables leaders to build authentic relationships, defuse conflicts, and generally inspire loyalty.

Self-awareness also means seeking feedback and being willing to admit mistakes. Leaders who own their vulnerabilities in turn model courage and resilience, encouraging others to do the same.

Integrity and Ethics

Trust is the foundation of effective leadership, and *trust is built on integrity*. A good leader acts with honesty and fairness, upholding the values they espouse. They make decisions guided by ethical principles, even when it is difficult or - unpopular.

When leaders act with integrity, they create a culture of 'mutual respect'- where people feel valued and safe. This ethical foundation not only protects the organisation but also inspires others to strive for excellence.

Adaptability and Resilience

Change is inevitable, and good leaders navigate uncertainty with grace and determination. *Adaptability* means being open to new ideas, learning from setbacks, and adjusting course when needed. *Resilient* leaders remain steadfast in the face of adversity, modelling optimism and tenacity for those they lead.

During times of crisis leaders must provide clarity, stability, and reassurance. They acknowledge difficulties honestly, but also point toward hope and solutions, helping their teams emerge stronger on the other side.

Building a Collaborative Environment

No leader succeeds alone. Good leadership is about building cohesive teams where collaboration and diversity are celebrated. This means encouraging open communication and cooperation across all levels; valuing diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and skills as sources of innovation; and fostering an inclusive environment where everyone can contribute to their fullest potential.

A collaborative environment enables teams to tackle complex problems creatively and efficiently, while strengthening bonds of trust and loyalty.

Continuous Learning and Growth

The best leaders are lifelong learners. They seek out new knowledge, solicit feedback, and reflect on their experiences to grow and improve. This commitment to learning ensures they remain relevant and effective, no matter how the world changes. Leaders who model curiosity and humility create cultures of innovation and adaptability. They empower others to experiment, embrace change, and pursue excellence without fear of failure.

I very much like the view that 'being a good leader is not a destination, but a journey' - a continual process of self-discovery, service, and adaptability. It certainly demands courage to make difficult decisions, humility to serve others, and vision to inspire progress.

Great leaders are remembered not only for what they achieved, but for how they made others feel - valued, capable, and inspired to be their best selves. They create ripples that extend far beyond their tenure, shaping cultures, organizations, and communities for generations to come.

Also worth reading –

Leadership styles – a starting point - 6113ad_c482a119f6074198a97b17491e78dc7a.pdf

Transformational leadership and the new reality - 6113ad_94f769b047444a0082b26903741fa569.pdf

Understanding emotional intelligence (EI) – and applying it to your leadership style and approach - 6113ad_688b923e84e44169b9420f3e8fd5d126.pdf

Understanding self-assurance on a personal level - 6113ad_3969d8b1c6f74ef2a7564ce257ec5d67.pdf

CHAPTER 27

On thinking about the future and moving forward

I have accepted the role of moderator of an upcoming symposium in London in October 2025. The focus is ***The Next 5 (years)*** *and the emphasis is on predicting what things would look like in the following five years. The effort began with a twenty-year prediction that became almost impossible – given the speed of change and the unpredictability of what was ahead. Framed to a shorter five-year period the responses (papers) flew in from around the world – Australia, Macau (China), United Kingdom, Japan, France and Thailand. Also most interesting is a snapshot (prediction) across numerous Sectors including - corporate governance; music education; global business; music composition; global financial markets; business education and training; 'skills without borders'; global economic and geopolitical shifts; ES; AI skills gap; state-based funding in Asia; and creative industry challenges. Essentially - a 'Pot Pourri'*

The accompanying publication – **The Next 5 Years** - is prefaced with 'This publication places the emphasis on predicting what the next 5 years will look like from a number of perspectives. The challenge this time around is to look closely at what we have achieved to date - and then, using a longer lens, predict what our future (within a number of industries) will actually look like. It is not so much about 'crystal ball gazing' as an informed (and possibly optimistic) projection of both ourselves and the world around us'. My own humble contribution is in three parts.

A free eCopy of the book is available online - The Next 5

The next 5 (years)

Written in November 2024 and reflecting on the so-called 'post COVID period' (remember COVID is still with us) I predicted a significant shift to online learning in higher education specifically; questioned the dubious wisdom in the mandated return to the F2F classroom; acknowledged the emerging challenges associated with balancing assessment and managing academic integrity (already a big issue in the higher education sector); emphasised the need for strategies for developing scholarship opportunities for non-research organisations; emphasised the notions of meeting smarter and heightened communication; and championed the understanding/adhering to compliance on an ongoing 'rolling' basis.

See - 6113ad_ad083e7f7a5c43188158ddfd225d30dc.pdf

See - 6113ad_7ceeeffeef164cdbae32e84a11b16cd5.pdf

The implausible dream

Written in November 2024 the chapter shares a journey that began in the mid-1990s teaching a masters' level program as a transnational project (now all the rage). The program involved teaching eight (8) subjects in intensive mode on location in Singapore. It involved me personally flying to Singapore twelve (12) days at a time teaching on two weekends and three evenings – and being available each day for student and learning support.

In the early 2000s I co-created *The Virtual Conservatorium* that provided the opportunity to deliver a music degree to anywhere and anyone using an online platform. Despite the relatively 'clunky' technology of the time (certainly compared to what we use today) – the idea worked. It also meant reduction in travel commitment to support students.

See - 6113ad_6706699af95e4b578f4b1bece1172c4e.pdf

In the mid-2000s I was able to support the development of online subjects across a larger University context and multiple locations. In the early 2020s it became imperative (partly driven by the COVID pandemic) to develop online product and processes that included online work integrated learning (WIL) segments and a bespoke online invigilation program. The mode was essentially online and later morphed into hybrid.

In 2024 I became involved in an online (with hybrid option) delivery of a doctoral program for a Thailand University reaching across a vast territory using some quality online resources and video conferring equipment.

Who would have believed this was possible (plausible in 1990)?

See - 6113ad_bf1c441df2694d81a08242cca09f5485.pdf

Strategically thinking

Written in February 2026 I was asked to develop a strategic plan/strategic intent for a small higher education provider. There was little doubt in my mind that a plan was needed if a five- year projection (later tightened to a four-year plan) was to be put in place. With a student centric focus, the intent developed five key domains including growth, diversity, quality, co-operation and benchmarking – each domain with a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) that were easy to report against on a regular basis.

See - 6113ad_b5c24928610c4f338eb3276bf251f487.pdf

Reflecting on some thirty years of innovation (one could argue creating a future) the thought occurred to me that I have been actively involved in five-year projections and in most cases successfully predicting the future – without really knowing. So, the next five years will no doubt see me out of the higher education environment (retirement pending) meaning I will not be an active participant - but I remain fascinated with the range of predictions in the collection and look forward to moderating some twenty-three (23) presentations in October.

See - London 2025 | musicum20

CHAPTER 28

Rolling Audits – a mechanism for self-assurance

Annual audits are commonplace in all organisations. They are a means of matching expectations with reality. In quality operations – the audits are more regular and usually focus on specific issues associated with performance and projection.

My own view is that institutions should be committed to a high level of audit (reflection) and self-assurance – consistent with the current higher education environment. This would be best practice and evidence of integrity.

Daily Audits

Cash flow updates (cash receipts and balances) should be provided each day as a means of understanding the daily shift. This is an excellent device for senior management to monitor spending and prioritise commitments.

Along with this (during relevant recruitment periods) should be daily *updates on enrolment data*.

A range of *daily updates* can be provided by email whether they be operational or scholarship-related – to keep core staff up to date and informed. This would be quite an achievement –

and considerably more impressive than most providers in the Sector are currently achieving.

Weekly Audits

The daily updates – operational and scholarship related – could be amalgamated each week into *a Weekly Bulletin* for all staff and should be published each Monday morning (start of a new week) as a means of keeping staff up-to-date and informed. It is also a very useful device for maintaining morale and ensuring a high level of communication.

Fortnightly Audits

These weekly updates could be further amalgamated into a *Newsletter/Message from the CEO* that is provided to staff members (and other stakeholders) every second Friday. This ensures greater transparency and keeps *everyone* informed. The evident repetition, is actually a good thing – and ensures greater access and 'buy in'.

Monthly Audits

Each month the *Executive Management Committee* should provide a *Business Unit Report* (BUR) that provides detail on a range of key issues (associated with the current Strategic Plan) and provide senior staff with a most useful oversight of the business at large. The exercise should be overseen by the CEO highlighting the importance of both the regular reports and the meetings.

These same reports can be disseminated to the quarterly *Board of Directors meetings* as a means of keeping members up-to-date and informed. It has been noted that this effort is appreciated. The reports often trigger a request for a presentation on a specific item/issue – adding to the currency of the efforts.

Monthly financial updates should be provided against the agreed budget – these of course are extremely useful for monitoring progress and adjusting accordingly.

Monthly Reports on *Scholarship* are a means of monitoring scholarly activity across the institution – and encouraging and reinforcing a culture of scholarship.

The *Academic Senate* (AS) that meets six times a year and overviews academic activities in the school. As a standing committee of the Board of Directors, the minutes of these meetings should be shared and help guide decision making across the institution,

Quarterly Audits

Various Standing Committee Reports are essential. The reports should be standing items on all Board of Directors' agenda and at the same time distributed across the institution as a means of keeping all informed of various developments – both positive and negative.

Trimester/Semester Audits

Each trimester/semester several audits need to be conducted in the form of either *surveys* or committee *updates*.

Student Surveys (SFUs) provide evidence of the satisfaction with the teaching and learning. These surveys can be used for current or longitudinal purposes – and serve as vital guide to the current and future teaching and learning strategy.

Staff Satisfaction surveys should also be conducted each trimester/semester. These are a critical barometer for maintaining quality staff. Wherever possible/feasible, suggestions should actioned and/or implemented.

Standing Committees relating to the *Threshold Standards and Grades Review* should provide comprehensive reports thar are best disseminated and reviewed by stakeholders.

Annual

Finance Audits (external) should be conducted by a reputable authority. These are critical for reporting to regulators and shareholders. These audits are usually conducted over a three-to-six-month period with external auditors examining, at close range, the financial activity and conduct of the organisation.

An *Annual Report* should be provided each year (usually early in the following year) that overviews performance against the Strategic Plan and includes some form of projections for the following year.

An *Scholarship Report* should be provided each year providing the detail around the scholarly activities of staff.

A *Snapshot* should also be produced summarising the extent of the activity of the institution bringing together much of the data provided throughout the year. *This complements the Annual Report.*

It is essentially the commitment to this level of information and reflection (audit) that, in my opinion, is solid evidence of an institution's commitment to quality and compliance – and in turn, understanding the true meaning of self-assurance. Transparency is vital in these circumstances – and this is achieved by these rolling (ongoing) audits and reports. Communication is vital – there can never be too much of it.

Worth reading -

Good compliance is good business - 6113ad_6c3cfa0b3a084f53a8373408af0e74d0.pdf (musicum20.com)

Key issues associated with operating an HEP - 6113ad_7e531373e6404ea0b7167950e78539da.pdf (musicum20.com)

CHAPTER 29

Scholarship can take on (and should include) many forms

*The very notion of **scholarship** (as distinct from research) can in fact take on many forms. From the outset it is essential to establish a clear understanding of what scholarship means in the context of a teaching and learning environment within the Higher Education Sector – and specifically your own institution and its current focus.*

What is scholarship

The national regulator (TEQSA) expresses the focus by means of the Threshold Standards and in particular *Standards 3.1.2 and 3.2.3* suggesting scholarship informs course design and ensures that the content and learning activities of a course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry; *and* it is essential for staff to maintain knowledge of their field of teaching through continuing scholarship and that teaching and assessment are contemporary and relevant to the discipline. Using the published guidelines provides the opportunity for a provider to establish an understanding of scholarship.

See: Guidance note: Scholarship, *TESQA*

A clear understanding is essential

A clear and evident understanding of what scholarship means to staff is essential. This is best expressed in an *appropriate context* (the focus and nature of the institution) and *made available* to all staff on a regular basis – reminding them *what scholarship encompasses* and to *keep accurate records* leading to the annual harvest.

See – Understanding scholarship – and customising it to your own institution - 6113ad_d79ff452410c4a1ea824f4929a8e4584.pdf

Scholarship versus research

Somewhere along the way a distracting view that only research papers count – this is clearly misinformation and has done much to dampen the enthusiasm of staff in non- research focussed environments. In truth scholarship can be many things as-long-as it relates to the business of teaching and learning - and within the scope of the discipline in which the staffer is involved.

See – What is the difference between scholarship and research - 6113ad_d67c23a894bb4ba19598437e61bb2dfe.pdf

Indicative scholarly activities

An indicative list of scholarly activities (*though not exhaustive*) might include activities such as -

1 - Publishing in peer reviewed forums
2 - Blogs
3 - Internal papers, articles and chapters
4 - Media presentations
5 - Newsletters
6 - Attendance at Professional Development days
7 - Creating learning infrastructures
8 - Literature reviews

9 - Textbooks or study guides
10 - Course design and collaboration
11 - Serving industry or government as external consultants
12 - Assuming leadership roles in professional organisations
13 - Advising student leaders
14 - Technical reports and presentations
15 - Speeches and keynote addresses
16 - Research on learning
17 - Developing testing materials
18 - Developing new teaching methods
19 - Mentoring postgraduate students
20 - Mentoring staff
21 - Designing and implementing assessment systems
22 - Accreditation or quality systems documentation
23 – Teaching at other institutions
24 – Completing short courses for professional development purposes
25 – Enrolling in a formal course to upgrade qualifications

Relates to specific teaching and learning

The list is almost endless – as-long-as it *relates directly to the teaching and learning* of an individual staffer or the focus and intent of the institution. Leaders, for example, will focus on sector issues and contributions to the industry; arts staff will focus on the creative outlets and associated methodologies; education staff will focus on the current industry context; business staff on matters of currency and pedagogy; and so on.

See – The importance of scholarship in Higher Education - 6113ad_a13c6cfa941e4fb89f199a181122e1e3.pdf

Capturing the evidence

Mindful that these activities need to be captured on an ongoing basis and reported annually – a useful table will assist in the process of collection and recording – the recommendation is to locate the *harvesting tool* on your desktop and capture the activities as they occur. This will certainly make the reporting considerably easier and more accurate when the time comes.

At all times is it essential to be mindful that *all activities need to be directly related to the teaching and learning* of the staffer in the context of their current institution.

A sample, evidence capturing tool

The following table serves as a useful harvesting tool that records activity – preferably on an ongoing basis rather that at the point of request – and contributes to regular reports and an annual summary (harvest) of scholarly activity –

Positions held	
Memberships	
Conferences and Symposia	
Articles and papers	
Benchmarking activities	
Self-education	
Teaching at other like institutions	
Formal courses	
Other	

Remember – the key issues of relevance to a staffer's current teaching and learning – and how the scholarly activities benefit currency and student outcomes – is vital.

Ideally staff are encouraged to be active across as many of the domains as possible – though it would be unrealistic to expect that all would be active in all domains – this would be simply unrealistic.

Ongoing celebration and sharing – developing a 'culture of scholarship'

Ideally daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly and annual reporting of scholarship activities is embraced. It would celebrate success and develop a *culture of scholarship* – essential to success. The *daily* achievements can be in the form of an email – the *weekly* as a bulletin – the *fortnightly* as a Message/Newsletter - the *monthly* as a Scholarship Update - the *quarterly* acknowledgement as a preliminary annual report update - and the *annual* as a formal gathering/harvesting of the work during the year including a table of individual recognition.

Scholarship (in its many forms) is a vital aspect of the work of the contemporary academic (including those in leadership roles) and needs to be encouraged, celebrated and recorded appropriately. Developing a 'culture of scholarship' is a time consuming and demanding exercise – but a valuable and required commitment.

CHAPTER 30

Self-Assurance is the name of the game

There is little doubt in my mind that self-assurance is a vital aspect of any organization – higher education providers are no exception. Good self-assurance requires providers to develop ongoing internal audits and health checks that would be best designed to align with the Regulator's standards and guidance notes. There are a number of key foci to be considered – I provide a spotlight on five to illustrate the issue of self-assurance -

Academic Governance

It is essential to maintain ongoing monitoring of academic governance related activity including changes to personnel, structure of academic governance, links between academic and corporate governance, strategic and operational planning, quality assurance systems, student participation, institutional monitoring and review, quality of educational activities, oversight and support of scholarship, academic leadership, course quality, policy framework, equivalency in outcomes and experience, advice and of course academic integrity.

My own organization does regular health checks (self-assurance). The most recent in this domain was conducted in June 2025 - 87330e_5066cb7888e2464286f90ec9b1e54889.pdf

Corporate Governance

This is another key area of focus that needs ongoing (consistent) review and adjustment (as required). The essential considerations include – independence of members, competence to undertake governance role, direction setting and oversight, delegati0on of authority, financial sustainability, performance monitoring, corporate direction, risk management, corporate culture, quality of education delivered, strategic planning, keeping a true record of activity, following legislative compliance, managing finances, ensuring equity and diversity, managing unexpected events, incidents and complaints.

My own organization does regular health checks (self-assurance). The most recent in this domain was conducted in June 2025 - 8776b7_ded0a02072a84a91a5af951cbcda38ad.pdf

Scholarship

The key foci for this domain includes – overview, developing appropriate policies and operations, using scholarship to inform course design, ensuring staff are active, continuing scholarship, student referencing, resource allocation, institutional activities, peer reviewed output, scholarly review, evidence based activity, teaching practice engagement, involvement with professional bodies, higher degree undertakings, specialized practice, secondments, informing teaching and supervision and of course participation.

My own organization does regular health checks (self-assurance). The most recent in this domain was conducted in

January 2025 - 8776b7_ded0a02072a84a91a5af951cbcda38ad.pdf

Risk Management

This is a vital issue in the current higher education environment. Self-assurance needs to focus on matters such as – monitoring and reviewing, operating effectively and in a sustainable way, ensuring financial viability, insisting on financial monitoring, understanding risk and putting in place appropriate mitigation and of course compliance with the Higher Education Standards Framework (often referred to as the Threshold Stands).

My own organization does regular health checks (self-assurance). The most recent in this domain was conducted in March 2025 - 8776b7_ded0a02072a84a91a5af951cbcda38ad.pdf

Student Support

This is another essential focus area that needs to be monitored and self-assured on an ongoing basis. Essentials include – effective risk assessment and control, contacts and services, education programs, support for students, systems and processes in place, commitment to wellbeing and safety, risk identification and mitigation, foreseeable event preparation, appropriate and effective response to incidents, material change obligations, managing student grievances, working with privacy legislation, zero tolerance, misadventure outside of provider control, competency of staff, importance of work , health and safety, and monitoring complaints to the regulator.

My own organization does regular health checks (self-assurance). The most recent in this domain was conducted in January 2025 - 8776b7_ded0a02072a84a91a5af951cbcda38ad.pdf

These five examples serve as a potential model for self-assurance focus. There are many other areas that deserve focus – too many for this discussion. The key issue here is ensuing regular (perhaps rolling) audits against identified criteria/foci and where deficiencies or shortcomings are identified – actioning some form of mitigation or improvement. Once noted as 'continuous improvement' – now better described as self-assurance.

CHAPTER 31

Strategic Intent – knowing which way to go

“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”
“That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,” said the Cat.
“I don’t much care where–” said Alice.
“Then it doesn’t matter which way you go,” said the Cat.
Lewis Carroll – Alice in Wonderland

Critical to our plan – either business or personal – is the need to have some form of direction. This can often be articulated in terms of KPIs – Key Performance Indicators – that provide a series of landmarks against which we can navigate. They are often described as punctuation points – based on the notion that once achieved, one can rest for a short time and then aim for the next level. These goals need to be thought through, realistic and achievable. Having unachievable goals are a waste of everybody’s time and energy – and usually result in low morale and dissatisfaction.

I use five distinct domains/categories of KPIs that assist the navigation and – they include they are considered in turn as a recently established regime for a small HEP.

Growth

This section (domain) deals with programs, locations, student numbers and finances. With a view that good schools grow. Excellent schools manage this growth and ensure ongoing support for students and staff in the process.

Diversity

This domain provides a focus on domestic and international student numbers, nationalities, undergraduate and postgraduate student balance. Good schools encourage diversity. Excellent schools energise this diversity and develop a range of activities that maximise quality and opportunity.

Quality

Quality is about measuring full-time versus part-time staff, staff qualifications ensuring AQF+1, progression, attrition, completion, student satisfaction, staff satisfaction, student staff ratio (SSR) and other external/independent survey scoring. Good schools monitor KPIs. Excellent schools use the data collected to continuously improve and reshape.

Cooperation

This domain considers adjuncts, fellows, national and international partners, national and international projects. Good schools consider co-operative activity. Excellent schools embrace it and ensure that it is initiated and maintained as part of the essential corporate identity.

Benchmarking

This domain encompasses partners, internal and external surveys, graduate surveys, grade distribution comparisons, peak body surveys and independent surveys. Good schools reflect. Excellent schools actively reflect and compare internally and externally and use the comparisons for continuous improvement.

I believe in the nautical phrase – 'steady as she goes' (an order for a helmsman to keep a ship's current course) in that it implies a thoughtful approach to the five domains – not a mad rush to achieve all the outcomes as soon as possible. A three to four-year approach is wise – and regular reviewing against the targets/KPIs should be put in place across the organisation and articulated at every possible opportunity. The KPIs are an 'ALL of organisation' issue – not simply leadership performance demands. To achieve the desired outcomes – ALL staff need to be actively involved and committed.

CHAPTER 32

Student Support – Academic and Non-academic

An important part of the provision of an Institute of Higher Education (IHE) is the vital area of student support. This falls into two categories – Academic (Learning Support) and Non-academic (Student Support). It is important to make a clear distinction between the two and ensure that both aspects are overseen by a senior staff member with adequate support staff and resources allocated – irrespective of the size of the provider.

This does not mean that there is no overlap – support simply does not work like that – and often student issues involve both academic and non-academic support – but for the ease of understanding coverage and approach the two are divided – but ideally work in harmony for the benefit of the student.

The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) highlight key issues surrounding *student support* across a number of domains including 1.1.1, 1.3.2 and 1.3.6 – providing appropriate admission, targeted support and equivalence of opportunity; 2.1.2, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.3.5, 2.4 with a focus on secure IT systems, inclusivity, equity and diversity, support contacts, support services, safe environment, management of critical incidents and an appropriate complaints management system; 3.3.4 – maintaining contact with students; 5.2, 5.3.5, 5.4 – maintaining academic integrity, obtaining student feedback and managing partnerships; 6.1.4, 6.2.1c, 6.2.1e, 6.2.1i – creating a safe environment, adequate resourcing, risk management, and business continuity; 7.2, 7.2.4, 7.3.3b, 7.3.3c – adequate information, notice of disruption, privacy and confidentiality, and incident recording and management. Obviously, a big deal.

Academic (Learning) Support

Focus areas for this domain and team include – assisting students with their learning and associated skills development; providing individual advice and guidance to students on a range of matters academic; providing individual consultation with students as required; providing lecture and tutorial support as required; assisting with bookings as required; working co-operatively with the campus staff to create a positive and welcoming environment; and taking an active role in hybrid and face to face supervision.

Non-academic (Student) Support

Focus areas for this domain and team include – assisting students with enrolment processes; activating student accounts both in the learning management system (LMS) and the student management system (SMS); ensuring ongoing access to the necessary APPS and software; supporting enrolment variations; providing directory assistance; enabling leave applications; ensuring student welfare; and being available to students for a range of other queries in a timely way.

Student Support, Student Welfare and Student Safety

Clear evidence of this support is essential given the current emphasis around the topic within the Sector (not to mention the current TEQSA focus) given the move back to face-to-face delivery. Institutions need to self-assure that they have in place the necessary mechanisms and intent. For virtual students – the same foci remain essential – and can be handled remotely and appropriately.

Institutions usually have policies and procedures in place that mandate this kind of support. Additional issues such as inclusivity and diversity also remain key issues in the contemporary environment.

See –

What are Threshold Standards and why are they important - 6113ad_8584b9e8e229438d830f63af90c030dd.pdf

It is all about inclusivity - 6113ad_c687a086b81d47ec86a45dc819b7a738.pdf

The Big Five (5) Higher Education Challenges Ahead in 2025 and 20266113ad_c2c220487c4c4c0caae2bbbb2231766a.pdf

CHAPTER 33

The Benefits of Diversifying Offerings in Higher Education

Diversifying offerings in a higher education context refers to expanding the range of courses, programs, learning formats, and support services provided by an institution. This approach has become increasingly important as providers respond to the evolving needs of students, employers, and (for that matter) society at large.

Diverse Student Needs

Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds, with different interests, career goals, learning styles, and life circumstances. By offering a broader selection of courses and programs - including part-time study, online learning, micro-credentials, and interdisciplinary degrees - providers can better cater to individual preferences and requirements. This inclusivity (through diversity) helps more students find pathways that suit their aspirations and situations.

Also see – It is all about inclusivity (October 2024) - 6113ad_c687a086b81d47ec86a45dc819b7a738.pdf

Employability

The job market is constantly changing, with new industries emerging and traditional roles evolving. Diversifying offerings allows higher education providers to respond quickly to industry trends and equip students with relevant, up-to-date skills. For example, integrating digital literacy, sustainability, artificial intelligence, or entrepreneurship into various programs can better prepare graduates for the workforce.

Innovation and Collaboration

When HE providers offer a range of disciplines and program structures, it fosters opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation. Students and staff can work across traditional boundaries, leading to creative solutions to complex problems, richer learning experiences, and meaningful scholarship.

Institutional Resilience

Relying heavily on a narrow set of courses or student demographics can make a HE provider vulnerable to shifts in demand or external shocks, such as changes in government policy or global events. Diversifying offerings helps institutions remain resilient and adaptable, ensuring long-term sustainability by attracting a broader student base and exploring new revenue streams.

Access and Equity

Expanding offerings can help break down barriers to higher education. For instance, introducing flexible study options, scholarships, or targeted programs for underrepresented groups can help more people access university, contributing to greater social equity and mobility.

Community and Global Needs

HE providers play a vital role in addressing local and global challenges, such as climate change, public health, and social justice. By diversifying their offerings, institutions can develop specialised programs and research initiatives that directly address these pressing issues, making a positive impact on society.

Diversifying offerings in higher education is a good thing because it enables universities to serve a broader range of students, respond to the changing world of work, foster innovation, and remain resilient in a dynamic environment. Ultimately, it helps ensure that higher education remains relevant, accessible, and valuable for individuals and society as a whole.

Also see –

Diversification and associated risk taking (August 2025) - 6113ad_7c082a9805854a2c87febbcced619a31.pdf

Alternative modes of delivery (September 2025) - 6113ad_0caeaebce6234b4cbe41ea26073e5a6c.pdf

Understanding and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in higher education (October 2025) - 6113ad_98eb2d875cd040259d64cd426cf3efae.pdf

CHAPTER 34

The implausible dream

A recent conversation about WFA and the option of hybrid teaching and learning triggered a memory relating to transnational education and how changes in thinking -and of course the technology available today - has changed the landscape – for good – and in line with a dream (vision) that started many years ago.

Past context

In the mid-1990s I found myself teaching a masters' level program as a transnational project for *Griffith University, Queensland*. The student cohort was in Singapore.

The programme involved teaching eight (8) subjects each year in intensive mode on location in Singapore. It was an Australian award with up to 30-40 Singapore students at a time who attended over a ten (10) day period to accommodate their work commitments. It involved me flying to Singapore for twelve (12) days at a time – teaching on two weekends and three evenings – and being available throughout the week for student and learning support.

The programme was well received and included the option for students to come to Australia for one subject delivered in intensive mode. This was regularly taken up.

The technology of the time involved email communication, a basic dedicated website and the use of overhead projector slides for teaching that I would bring with me each delivery.

The mode was F2F intensive.

Middle context

In the early 2000s I (along with a colleague – *Professor Ian Bofinger*) developed the idea of a Virtual Conservatorium for *Central Queensland University* that provided the opportunity to deliver a music degree to anywhere and anyone using an online platform. It was presented locally, nationally and internationally.

We were able to deliver subjects on-line using a variety of software (some developed specifically for us) and placing students with location specific performance teachers and ensemble groups.

The model worked – though the technology of the time was basic and a bit 'clunky'. In principle though, *The Virtual Conservatorium* became a reality and was both acknowledged and criticised within the Sector.

Ironically, and as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic circa 2019, all conservatoria around the world found themselves delivering online – not such a silly idea after all. *It only took 19 years to catch on.*

The mode was hybrid.

Present context

In 2024 I am currently involved in a hybrid delivery of a Doctoral program (with *Associate Professor Tom O'Connor* and *Emeritus Professor Jim Mienczakowski*) for *Chiang Rai Rajabhat University* in Thailand. This is a transnational project of the University and currently has students enrolled in Melbourne, Australia.

The mode of delivery is hybrid – but mostly online using ZOOM and other resources to deliver the project and publishing student assignments in the form of blogs on a public website

See - https://www.musicum20.com/blogs

Using current technology with solid WIFI and associated equipment – the programme is achieving excitingly, good outcomes and a positive upbeat response from both students and teaching staff. Essentially – the dream of the 90s has now reached fruition – utilising soft resources and cloud-based storage.

What, at the time, was a dream – has now become a reality. The COVID-19 pandemic combined with the digital revolution that accompanied it (often referred to as the dual tsunamis) have made the notion of transnational delivery quite straight forward and in truth has enhanced the delivery and context.

What has taken some thirty (30) years to refine is in truth a dream coming true. The notion - If you want something to happen – first dream about it – and do everything in your power to make it happen. Dreams do come true.

Worth Reading – **WFA Working from anywhere and the digital nomad DN** - https://www.musicum20.com/_files/ugd/6113ad_ee5ff055560e4dd4a36aac9c4bb289f3.pdf

CHAPTER 35

The Importance of Integrity

***Integrity** is often described as the quality of being honest and - having strong moral principles. In Australia, as elsewhere, integrity forms the backbone of trust and respect in society, influencing everything from personal relationships to workplace culture and community wellbeing. If we can maintain our integrity – we have been successful.*

Personal Integrity

On a personal level, integrity means staying true to your values, being honest in your actions and words, and doing the right thing even when no one is watching (*particularly when no one is watching*). Australians certainly value things like - mateship, fairness, and honesty - and these are closely tied to the notion of *integrity*. People with integrity are indeed trusted by friends and family and often serve as role models within their friendship circles. Maintaining personal integrity fosters self-respect (essential) and helps build a reputation that stands the test of time.

Integrity in the Workplace

In professional settings – *such as the workplace* - integrity is crucial for building trust among colleagues, clients, and partners. It underpins ethical decision-making, transparency, and accountability. Employers in Australia often seek team members who can demonstrate integrity - as it reduces risks of misconduct and enhances organisational culture. When employees act with integrity, it leads to - a more positive and productive work environment; higher levels of collaboration; and long-term success. Integrity is also about showing respect and treating those around us with dignity. It is important to develop a 'culture of respect' that ensures appropriate behaviour is essentially automatic and ingrained.

Integrity in the Community

Integrity strengthens the fabric of local communities. When individuals, organisations, and governments act with integrity, they foster environments where people feel safe, respected, and valued. Integrity encourages fair play, mutual respect, and social responsibility, which are important for maintaining harmony and addressing issues such as discrimination, corruption, and injustice.

Integrity in Leadership

Leaders who exemplify integrity inspire confidence and loyalty among their teams. Whether in government, business, education or community organisations - leaders are frequently faced with challenging decisions (often daily). Acting with integrity involves being honest, admitting mistakes, and prioritising the greater good over personal gains. This approach helps maintain public trust and sets a standard for others to follow. This is by no means an easy challenge – but it is an important one.

Integrity is more than just a personal virtue - one could argue that it is a cornerstone of a healthy, functioning society. By committing to honesty, transparency, and ethical behaviour, individuals and organisations contribute to a better Australia – a better world in fact - one that values trust, fairness, and respect for all. Upholding integrity ensures that we can rely on one another, work together effectively, ensure support and dignity and build lasting relationships based on mutual understanding.

Also worth reading –

Integrity in business and academia (August 2024) - 6113ad_53bbff3fdd394d979f42c4dc68956d5e.pdf

All a matter of integrity despite the mode of delivery (February 2025) - 6113ad_78e7dc08f21d4dad9049875149d4f76e.pdf

Work hard and be kind (September 2025) - 6113ad_515ea4278cf74589be6b30577854cb03.pdf

CHAPTER 36

The yellow line and the giraffe: revisited

Sometimes it is useful to create a metaphor to remind us of the importance of things and ensure the meaning is as clear as possible. Compliance is an essential element of good governance in all sectors – and especially the higher education sector.

Therefore, the use of a metaphor is an excellent opportunity to reinforce the importance of remaining inside the rules and not overreaching.

Some of the most important (and possibly powerful) lessons learnt - over a long period of time - suggest that the notion of a metaphor is a highly useful concept when it comes to behaviour and operation. Some, more amusing than others, help us understand the importance of caution and appropriate behaviour.

The yellow line

At most train station platforms (certainly in Melbourne) there is an obvious yellow line that is noted by regular announcements suggesting the importance of staying behind the yellow line as a train approaches.

As one walks along the platform it is obvious - and the meaning is anything but vague. In truth, irrespective of whether a train is approaching, it is best practice to 'stay behind' the yellow line at all times to avoid unnecessary danger or misstep.

It is about *caution* first. It is also about ensuring travellers remain safe and protected.

Likewise in terms of compliance – a set of standards and rules have been established - and it is essential that institutions not only maintain these regulations but ensure all activities are compliant and are *'behind the yellow line'*.

It is essential to be up to date with national and state regulations and that being aware of the presence of 'a yellow line' reminds us to stay well within the borders and restrictions to avoid mischance.

The giraffe

One of the most striking features of a visit to Taronga Zoo in Sydney - is that the giraffe can be seen above the fence line – standing majestically, and incredibly obvious.

I have often pondered that of all the residents the giraffe has the best view of the harbour. Its image appears on the official website suggesting the importance of both the location and the animal itself.

In compliance terms, the notion is not a particularly good one.

It is better to stay below the fence line assured by ongoing benchmarking and a sensible and measured approach to operations and behaviours.

The very notion of 'sticking out' would imply a possible disregard for the norm and the normal – and is probably not the best option.

The importance of compliance

As we recover from COVID days (I am not entirely convinced we are post-COVID given the number of cases still prevalent across the country – I suspect the media has simply lost interest) we should endeavour to be aware of changing rules and regulations and at the same time base our recovery practices on clear and well thought through compliance – *standing behind the yellow line at all times* and *not overreaching above the fence line*.

This could become the mantra for 'this new reality' we find ourselves in.

Chapter 37

Rethinking Meeting Smarter

Irrespective of your industry or sector (mine happens to be Higher Education) meetings are an essential fabric of both compliance and governance – and provide essential communication within - and across the organisation. In my current roles, it was not unusual to have at least five or six formal meetings a week – whether it be dealing with operational matters, risk management, work health and safety, student well-being and/or compliance in general.

The COVID pandemic created a new model that has application post-pandemic (remember COVID-19 is still with us believe or not – it is just that the media has lost interest) using a range of technology and diverse solutions that we would be wise to consider as we move forward.

F2F Meetings

There will always be a place for the standard Face-to-Face (F2F) meeting, where people gather-together and enjoy a degree of socialising and contextualising. This is of particular benefit for new employees who need to get to know those with whom they work – especially if the business is located on multiple sites and states. The F2F element provides recognition and context. It is, however, troublesome in terms of cost and health risks.

Online Meetings

The surge in the online option was a direct result of the pandemic and technology developments (the so called 'digital revolution') and have been extremely useful. The mode is incredibly time saving and highly cost-effective and I suggest it will remain with us for some time – if not forever.

Hybrid

The hybrid mix (F2F and online options) provides the best of both worlds in that we are enabled to F2F with our closer colleagues and interface online with those from a distance. The mode works extremely well at present – it is engaging, time efficient and cost-efficient. With the right technology in place, this can be the most effective opportunity moving forward. In truth, most of the meetings I currently attend are hybrid.

Other alternatives including outdoor meetings

However, there are many other alternatives to in-room and/or online meetings, including sharing a cup of coffee offsite; strolling through the local park chatting along the way; phone conferencing; and during a workout.

The health benefits of outdoors (where possible) and moving about are considerable. Fresh air is always a good thing in a Vitamin D deficient public as it is known to increase our levels through outdoor activity. Walking releases endorphins which in turn has a positive spin on your own well-being and positivity.

When moving about (walking through the city or a park), the distraction from taking phone calls and texts is diminished and the focus on the key topic/s can be enhanced considerably, and issues can be dealt with and sometimes solved. The distance planned can also provide you with the necessary start–middle–end of your meeting sequence.

All worth considering.

Meetings are an essential aspect of our work – but using creative options and strategies can be very worthwhile with some very positive outcomes, if thought through carefully and used appropriately.

CHAPTER 38

Top Five Cybersecurity Issues for Higher Education

The higher education sector in Australia faces increasing cybersecurity challenges, with universities and colleges frequently targeted by cybercriminals. Sensitive research data, personal student information, and critical infrastructure make these institutions prime targets. Inspired by a recent book by Dr Monjur Ahmed – Cyber Security Leadership – led me to consider what I thought are the top five (5) cybersecurity threats to higher education (not in any particular order).

See – Cyber Security Leadership (2025) - Cyber Security Leadership

Phishing and Social Engineering Attacks

'*Phishing*' remains one of the most prevalent threats, with attackers sending deceptive emails to staff and students in an attempt to steal login credentials or distribute malware. You would be surprised how often this happens. Social engineering tactics are becoming more sophisticated (no surprise) often leveraging university/college branding (for example) or urgent messages to trick recipients into taking harmful actions.

Ransomware Attacks

'Ransomware' incidents have also surged within the sector, with attackers encrypting institutional data and demanding payment for its release. These attacks can (and do) disrupt essential services, halt research, and put student information at risk. Recovery can be costly and time-consuming - making prevention and regular backups critical.

Data Breaches and Unauthorised Access

Universities hold vast amounts of sensitive data including - intellectual property, research findings, and personally identifiable information of students and staff. Weak or reused passwords, unpatched systems, and insufficient access controls can all lead to data breaches, causing reputational damage and potential legal consequences.

Insecure Remote Learning Platforms

The rapid adoption of online learning tools has expanded the attack surface for cybercriminals. Vulnerabilities in video conferencing platforms, learning management systems (LMS), and third-party education apps can be exploited to gain unauthorised access, eavesdrop on classes, or disrupt learning activities.

Insider Threats

Apparently, not all threats come from outside the institution. Disgruntled employees, careless staff, or students with access to sensitive systems can inadvertently (or deliberately) compromise security. Insider threats can be difficult to detect and may involve data theft, sabotage, or the accidental sharing of confidential information. To my mind this is the most disappointing threat in so many ways.

Australian higher education institutions must remain vigilant and proactive in their cybersecurity efforts. Regular staff and student training, robust security policies, and up-to-date technical controls are essential to mitigating these top risks and protecting valuable resources in the digital age.

CHAPTER 39

Transformational leadership and the new reality

Notions of leadership and management have been discussed and employed in commercial enterprises and business schools for many years – there are very few postgraduate courses that do not cover the key associated issues. Most MBA programs provide significant focus – and many opt for two subjects – one on leadership and the other on management suggesting they are associated – but at the same time worthy of consideration independently.

Of course, whilst management is generally considered to concern the routine administrative function of running an enterprise, leadership is most often seen as transformative relationship interactions between a leader and staff- essential to encouraging, developing, and negotiating organisational change. Consequently, most effective leaders also need to be effective managers – or at least be able to fully understand the importance of managerial functions.

Not a new concept

Transformational leadership, though not a new concept is emerging as the mode of leadership best suited to the *new reality*. The new reality – emerging from the ashes of COVID-19 –

calls for a refreshed approach to leadership (and management for that matter) that understands the importance of involving staff in decision making and at the same time develops a bold, new approach to succession planning and leadership training.

But what is transformational leadership?

A solid definition of transformational leadership is – 'a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders.'

Essentially *the followers become the leaders.*

The ideal approach to change management is using a leadership approach that assists the change to take place and equally important to ensure that those involved have a high level of 'buy in' and feel that they are part of that change – and despite perhaps being uncomfortable with all the elements of the change (perfectly understandable) – are able to embrace the 'new reality' with their self-esteem and ownership intact. leadership that relies on the encouragement of a team to realize overall success.

Elements of transformational leadership

It is a commonly held view that there are four elements of transformational leadership. They are –

Idealized influence refers to modelling of exemplary behaviours that in turn are aligned with the goals of the organisation. In order to achieve this - leaders need to be aware of the goals; embrace these goals with high levels of enthusiasm and commitment; and encourage other staff to embrace the issues/ideals. Essentially, it is about providing a high-level role model so that others can emulate it.

Inspirational motivation is the degree to which a leader articulates an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. Leaders who use inspirational motivation have high standards and high expectations of their followers. They are able to clearly articulate the goals/objectives so that followers not only understand them – but actively embrace them.

Intellectual stimulation is best understood as encouraging innovation and creativity, as well as thinking critically and solving problems. Intellectual stimulation involves arousing the thoughts and imagination of followers, as well as stimulating their ability to identify and solve problems creatively.

Individual consideration is the extent to which a leader attends to each follower's needs and is a mentor, coach, or guide to the follower. The leader listens to the concerns and needs of each follower, provides support, and is empathic of each situation and background. This is about knowing what the various needs of the employment group are – individualising it carefully – and wherever possible supporting those needs and aspirations.

CHAPTER 40

Understanding 360 Degree Evaluation and Feedback

A 360-degree evaluation and feedback process is a popular performance appraisal method used in organisations to gather comprehensive feedback about an employee (or manager) from multiple sources. This approach contrasts with traditional performance reviews, which typically involve feedback from just one manager or supervisor – and often from the top down

. Instead, the 360-degree method collects input from a range of stakeholders, providing a well-rounded view of an individual's performance, behaviours, and impact within the workplace.

What is a 360 Degree Evaluation?

A 360-degree evaluation, also known as 360-feedback, involves gathering feedback from an employee's (or manager's) direct reports, peers, and sometimes even - clients. The employee (or manager) also completes a *self-assessment*. This holistic approach aims to provide a more balanced, objective, and actionable insight into an individual's strengths and areas for improvement. *In the higher education context – a most useful tool for a CEO or Executive Dean.*

Who is involved in the process?

The process attempts to be **holistic** and usually includes **a self-assessment** reflecting on own performance and behaviours; **Peer feedback** is sought from colleagues who work alongside the individual offering insights into teamwork, collaboration, and interpersonal skills; **Direct Reports** are able to provide feedback on leadership, communication, and management style (applicable for those in leadership roles and often best achieved through an anonymous/independent survey); and even **Clients** may be invited to share their perspectives, particularly for client-facing roles.

What are the benefits

The benefits are considerable. The process is comprehensive; it improves self-awareness which in turn enhances professional growth and skill development; it enhances team dynamics and communication; and (if managed appropriately and transparently) ultimately supports organisational goals. The key – enhancing the benefits noted – is to publish the outcomes so that all team members can see. In other words – *no secrets* (this also enhances overall communication within the organisation).

How the 360 Degree Feedback Process Works

The process is best viewed in the following terms (steps) –

- Select participants – that is Identify relevant stakeholders to provide feedback.
- Distribute the survey/s - the best approach being anonymous questionnaires/surveys are distributed to all participants, usually covering areas such as communication, leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, strategic thinking and job-specific competencies.

- Collect and analyse the data – often best done by an independent source who collects the data and provides a short report – often in table form for simplicity. If there are qualitative elements – have these included.
- Share the results and encourage feedback – including areas for further development/action planning.

There are challenges

While 360-degree feedback offers many advantages, there are also challenges that need to be taken into account. The potential for biased or unconstructive feedback; the risk of overwhelming participants with too much information; and the need for organisational support and follow-through are some of these challenges.

Proper planning, clear communication, and ongoing support are essential ingredients to maximising the benefits of this approach.

360-degree evaluation (and feedback) are valuable tools for personal and professional development. By gathering insights from a variety of perspectives, individuals and organisations can foster a genuine culture of continuous improvement, enhance self-awareness, and drive better performance outcomes. For many – this will require a degree of courage (especially for leaders) – but the benefits outweigh the challenges.

CHAPTER 41

Understanding Scholarship - and customising it for your own institution

Scholarship - is an essential part of teaching and the management of teaching personnel in the higher education context. The challenge for all non-research providers is to clearly identify what scholarship means – what are the recognizable elements of scholarship – how is the data collected – and how is the effort of scholarship acknowledged and supported on an ongoing basis.

What scholarship means

The national regulator (TEQSA) expresses the focus on scholarship by means of the HESF (Threshold Standards) 3.1.2 and 3.2.3 suggesting scholarship informs course design and ensures that the content and learning activities of a course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry; and it is essential for staff to maintain knowledge of their field of teaching through continued scholarship and that teaching and assessment are contemporary and relevant to the discipline. In other words - scholarship keeps staff (and those supervising staff) - *current*.

Elements of scholarship

In truth scholarship can be many things – as long as it directly relates to teaching and learning – and within the context of the focus or discipline of the organization. There are however a number of general domains that cross over including –

1 - Publishing in peer reviewed forums
2 - Blogs
3 - Internal papers, articles and chapters articles
4 - Media presentations
5 - Newsletters
6 - Attendance at Professional development days
7 - Creating learning infrastructures
8 - Literature reviews
9 - Textbooks or study guides
10 - Course design and collaboration
11 - Serving industry or government as external consultants
12 - Assuming leadership roles in professional organisations
13 - Advising student leaders
14 - Technical reports and presentations
15 - Speeches and keynote addresses
16 - Research on learning
17 - Developing testing materials
18 - Developing new teaching methods
19 - Mentoring postgraduate students
20 - Mentoring staff
21 - Designing and implementing assessment systems
22 - Accreditation or quality systems documentation
23 – Teaching at other institutions
24 – Completing short courses for professional development purposes
25 – Enrolling in a formal course to upgrade qualifications

The list is indeed comprehensive (and also+ non-exhaustive) and as noted does cross over a range of institute foci including business and IT.

Capturing the effort and evidence – and celebrating success

The biggest challenge of course is ensuring that scholarly activity is captured and profiled. Without endorsement overall effort is difficult to cultivate. Developing a 'culture of scholarship' is a challenge – but it is achievable. The secret lies in public recognition of effort – in its many forms – which in turn encourages all staff to become active. As tedious as the task sounds – administrators need to acknowledge and celebrate each, and every, effort by way of daily, weekly, monthly and annual acknowledgement.

In turn individual staff need to be able to report their efforts in a meaningful (and relatively simple) way. A useful harvesting tool (reporting mechanism) is relatively easy to construct –

Positions held	12
Memberships	11,
Conference and symposia	6, 15
Articles and papers	1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 14
Benchmarking activties	16
Self-education	24
Teaching at other like institutions	23
Formal courses	25
Other	4, 5, 7, 10, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22

Helping staff to engage in and maintain scholarship enhancing currency is always a challenge. Experience though suggests if enough positive reinforcement is in place – developing a genuine *culture of scholarly activity is not only doable – but also incredibly satisfying for all concerned.*

CHAPTER 42

Understanding self-assurance at an organisational level

Self-assurance, often described as an individual's confidence in their abilities and judgments, is a quality that can be cultivated collectively within organisations. When translated to an organisational scale, self-assurance becomes a powerful force – essentially a culture of trust, resilience, and empowered decision-making that permeates every level of the structure.

Defining self-assurance in organisational contexts

Self-assurance at an organisational level refers to the *collective confidence* an organisation possesses in its vision, people, processes, and ability to adapt and thrive. It is not simply the aggregate of individual self-confidence, but a deeper, shared sense of capability and trust. This assurance is reflected in how the organisation communicates, executes strategy, and responds to challenges.

Key elements of organisational self-assurance

The key elements to consider here are -

- Shared Vision and Purpose

- Empowered Employees
- Resilient Culture
- Transparent Communication
- Continuous Improvement

How important is organisational self-assurance?

Self-assurance is by no means a luxury, but a necessity in today's volatile, uncertain, complex, and - ambiguous environment. It enables organisations to -

- Navigate Change
- Foster Creativity and Innovation
- Build Customer Trust
- Drive Performance
- Retain Talent

Drivers of organisational self-assurance

The foundations of organisational self-assurance are both structural - and cultural. Numerous factors contribute to its development. The factors that drive self-assurance include –

- Leadership and role modelling
- Structured processes and systems
- Staff development and training
- Recognition and celebration of success
- Acknowledging achievements – *both large and small*
- Open communication and feedback mechanisms
- Constructive dialogue
- Psychological safety

Challenges to building organisational self-assurance

There are, however, *challenges* to self-assurance – one such challenge being poor leadership that is inconsistent, indecisive, or opaque and this can erode trust and confidence. Other key challenges include -

- Lack of Shared Purpose
- Fear of Failure – including risk aversion
- Communication Gaps
- Change Fatigue – 'too much too soon'

Strategies to foster self-assurance organisation-wide

Moving from intention to reality requires purposeful strategies. There are many actionable steps to nurture self-assurance throughout the organisation. These include (though not exhaustive) –

- Clarify and communicate organisational vision ('over and over')
- Empower decision making
- Encourage continuous learning (scholarship/professional development)
- Model authentic leadership
- Build a feedback-rich culture
- Recognise and reward success
- Strengthen systems and processes through regular ('rolling') audits
- Nurture psychological safety

How to measure organisational self-assurance

To track progress, organisations can use the following approaches (again not exhaustive) -

- Employee engagement **surveys** assessing confidence in strategy, leadership, and processes
- **360-degree feedback** evaluating trust and empowerment within teams
- **Retention and turnover rates** as measures of organisational health
- **innovation metrics**, such as new initiatives launched/programs developed

- **Customer satisfaction** monitoring

Self-assurance at an organisational level is more than collective optimism - it is a tangible, actionable culture that supports adaptability, innovation, and sustained performance. By prioritising clear vision, empowered decision-making, resilient systems, authentic leadership, and psychological safety, organisations can weather storms and seize opportunities with confidence. In a rapidly changing world, organisational self-assurance is not simply a trait to admire—it is a strategy for enduring success.

Also worth considering –

Understanding self-assurance on a personal level - 6113ad_3969d8b1c6f74ef2a7564ce257ec5d67.pdf

An approach to corporate governance self-assurance - 6113ad_5ab4136aafbe4afcb7f95cd32ebaaaf9.pdf

An approach to academic governance self-assurance - 6113ad_427070e6ddec4f58bd57dd7cfe3daa61.pdf

Self-assurance is the name of the game - 6113ad_01ebe83fd03b40568654a89c9b4d714b.pdf

Self-assurance supported by benchmarking - 6113ad_76a97e2709b64a2880055366e6b4ef48.pdf

CHAPTER 43

Understanding self-assurance on a personal level

Self-assurance is a quality that radiates from within, shaping interactions, ambitions, and the ability to weather life's inevitable storms. It is not arrogance, nor is it complacency; rather, self-assurance is the quiet, steady belief in one's own abilities and worth. To understand self-assurance is to delve into the intricate weave of psychology, experience, practice, and self-acceptance that produces a mindset both resilient and adaptive.

Defining Self-Assurance

At its core, self-assurance is a sense of confidence that is anchored internally rather than externally. It is the conviction that - regardless of circumstance or the opinions of others - one has inherent value and the competence to face challenges.

Self-assurance is often mistaken for arrogance, but the distinction is clear upon closer inspection. Arrogance is an overestimation of one's abilities and a tendency to diminish others. Self-assurance on the other hand allows for humility and embraces growth, rooted in reality - rather than exaggeration.

The Psychological Underpinnings of Self-Assurance

Self-assurance is not an inborn trait but rather a psychological state that can be cultivated. Central to self-assurance are several key psychological components -

- Self-Efficacy
- Internal Locus of Control
- Self-Acceptance
- Resilience

Cultivating Self-Assurance

Anyone can nurture self-assurance through intentional habits and attitudes. The following practices are essential –

- Self-reflection
- Setting achievable goals
- Positive self-talk
- Embracing failure
- Seeking Support and role models

Self-Assurance in Action

Self-assured individuals carry themselves with a quiet confidence. In *social situations*, they listen as much as they speak, not needing to dominate or shrink away. In *the workplace*, they take initiative, own mistakes, and collaborate openly. In times of uncertainty, they rely on their ability to adapt, trusting themselves to navigate the unknown. Self-assurance also manifests in the ability to assert boundaries and say "no" when necessary, without guilt or apology. This assertiveness is not aggression - but rather a respectful communication of needs and limits.

The Benefits of Self-Assurance

The rewards of cultivating self-assurance extend into nearly every facet of life -

- Healthier relationships
- Enhanced performance
- Lower stress
- Greater independence
- Increased happiness

Challenges to Self-Assurance

Life presents hurdles that can unsettle even the most grounded individual. Criticism, rejection, comparison, and change are all tests of self-assurance. In today's hyperconnected world, social media can further amplify insecurities and foster comparison, eroding self-confidence.

To protect and strengthen self-assurance, it is crucial to -

- Limit comparison with others - recognising that each person's journey is unique
- Practice self-care and mindfulness to remain present and grounded
- Seek professional support should doubts or anxieties arise

Understanding self-assurance is to embrace the journey of self-discovery and growth. It is a dynamic quality, cultivated through reflection, action, resilience, and compassion - both for oneself and others. Self-assurance is not the absence of fear or failure - but the presence of faith in yourself to rise, adapt, and flourish. As you build self-assurance, you not only transform your own life but also inspire and uplift those around you. The foundation of every great endeavour, relationship, or adventure is the quiet knowledge: "I am enough, and I can." Nurture this knowledge, and you will walk through the world with a confidence that is unshakable, gentle, and deeply your own.

Chapter 44

Understanding and managing risk at an Institute of Higher Education

Risk, per se, is all around us in our everyday lives and we all take precautions to ensure our health and wellbeing. The processes we put in place are part of our *risk mitigation*. The same principle applies to higher education providers. The key issues then are – to determine what the risks are; what are the best mitigation strategies needed; and how we best manage the risk process over time (regular review) including making sure stakeholders are kept up to date.

Identifying the Key Risks

A capable organisation should be able to highlight the key risks associated with delivering domestic and international higher education students. This needs to be managed through a detailed, regularly reviewed, and benchmarked **Risk Register**.

Maintaining the register is an essential part of compliance and a feature of good corporate governance.

The register needs to be comprehensive and would do well to cover a range of key risk domains including – *Strategic* Risk, *Operational* Risks, *Financial* Risks, *Compliance and Legal* Risks, *Reputational* Risks, *Human Resources* Risks, *Health and Safety* Risks, *Technology and Cybersecurity* Risks, *Environmental* Risks, *Project Management* Risks, *Supply Chain* Risks, *Cultural and Social* Risks, *Insurance and Risk Transfer*.

A good risk register is benchmarked against other like institutions (triangulation) to ensure appropriateness.

Mitigating the Risks

A key area of responsibility is the development of effective (and appropriate) mitigation strategies that are articulated clearly and followed carefully. The process of identifying risk is crucial – so too is the development of sensible and well-articulated strategies to mitigate these risks. Ideally, risk is circumvented (because of the mitigation strategies in place that are regularly reviewed) before the actual issue becomes unmanageable or harmful.

Managing the Risk Process

Fundamental to the success of risk identification and mitigation is managing an appropriate process for the regular examination of the risks identified and ensuring that the mitigation strategies are updated and monitored.

This mitigation needs to be comprehensive and well thought through. Additionally, it needs to be reviewed regularly championed by senior staff members and supported the by board/committee structure of the organisation.

This is best practice.

A log of the dates of the regular reviews should be embedded in the Risk Register as a means of evidencing regular review and adjustment that has taken place.

Keeping Stakeholders Informed

It is important to ensure that the Governing Body is kept up to date with the risk assessment and mitigation. Further, good corporate governance suggests that ALL stakeholders are kept informed. To this end the Risk Register is best made available on the public website; ALL staff and stakeholders are informed of meetings and reviews; and any changes to the Risk Register are highlighted by way of internal bulletins and external newsletters.

Risk Management should be a standing item on all Board of Directors' and Academic Board meetings.

Transparency is the key.

CHAPTER 45

Ways to Improve your time management

Time management is a critical skill for boosting productivity, reducing stress, and achieving personal and professional goals. Irrespective of whether you are a student, an employee, an employer, or managing a project - refining how you organise your day can make a world of difference.

Establising clear priorities

A suggestion is to start each day by identifying your most important tasks (priorities) The 'Eisenhower Matrix' is a useful approach to distinguish between what is urgent and important

The Eisenhower Matrix: Prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance.		
	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	**Quadrant 1: Do** "The Fire-Fighting Zone" Tasks are both urgent and important, demanding immediate attention.	**Quadrant 2: Schedule** "The Visionary Zone" Tasks are pivotal for long-term success, but don't require immediate action.
Not Important	**Quadrant 3: Delegate** "The Delegation Zone" Tasks here seem pressing, but may not align with your larger goals	**Quadrant 4: Eliminate** "The Elimination Zone" asks here neither serve an immediate need nor align with long-term objectives.

By focusing on high-priority items first, you ensure that essential jobs get done – and in a timely way.

Forward planning

It is always a good idea to spend a little time planning your schedule. This might be best achieved at the end of the day (planning for tomorrow) or at the very start of the day (planning for the day ahead). 'To-do lists' are very effective – whether paper based or digital can be most effective.

The use of a calendar (digital or otherwise) helps to block out time for specific activities. Planning helps anticipate potential bottlenecks and allocate time appropriately.

Minimising distractions

Distractions can eat into your productive time. Identify what commonly interrupts your workflow - be it your mobile phone, emails, electronic messages and/or noisy environments. It is essential to take steps to minimise the disruption caused. Simple things like turning off unnecessary notifications, setting boundaries with colleagues, and creating a dedicated workspace – are all very useful and effective strategies.

Breaking tasks up into smaller pieces

Large projects can often feel overwhelming and (believe it or not) lead to procrastination. Break big tasks into smaller, manageable steps and tackle them one at a time.

This approach keeps you motivated and makes progress visible, helping you stay on track.

Reviewing and reflecting

At the end of each day/week it is important to take time to review what you have accomplished – and, equally important, what did not go as planned.

Reflecting helps you spot patterns, adjust your methods, and continuously improve your time management strategy. Admitting 'missed targets' is (actually) a positive approach to effective time management.

Improving time management is not simply about doing more - it is about doing what matters most – and doing it more efficiently. By establishing clear priorities; forward planning, minimising distractions, Breaking tasks up into smaller pieces; and regularly reviewing and reflecting – you will find yourself more productive and better organised than you have ever been.

CHAPTER 46

What colour is your collar

A recent conversation on 'diversity of workers' inspired an interest in exploring how workers could be categorized by way of a 'coloured collar' designation – that I knew very little about. In my mind I knew about Blue Collar, White Collar and more recently Gold Collar worker designations – but to my surprise the range is significantly more extensive – though not as popular in the Australian context and lingo - and many I had not actually heard of prior to an exploration.

Blue Collar

The term 'blue collar' suggests a member of the working class who generally performs manual labour of some kind and is often on an hourly payment rate. A bit of research found that the term was first introduced in 1924 – and arguably originated given the fact that workers often work blue denim or cambric shirts. *I guess the name just stuck.*

White Collar

In the 1930s the term 'white collar' was associated with workers in the clerical, administrative and managerial functions. The role usually comes with a salary. The term often applies (certainly in the current environment) to office workers – and they are frequently in management roles.

Gold collar

The 'gold' reference appears to have a close connection to the rise in technology and of course the growing demand for highly specialized skills in healthcare, finance and of course – technology itself. They are usually placed in high skill and high demand fields including doctors, lawyers, engineers, pilots and scientists.

But wait - there are more

To my surprise there are a considerable number of other designations (less known) but nonetheless out there that took me by surprise. These include (though not limited to) –

Pink collar – someone who works in nursing, education or customer service.
Orange collar – prison labourers
Brown collar – military personnel.
Purple collar – technical workers
Scarlet collar – workers in the sex industry
Black collar – manual labourers in fields such as mining or oil drilling
Grey collar - mix of physical and intellectual work
Yellow collar – creative industries
Red collar – government workers

And now two of my favourites –

Dog collar – clergy members
No collar – artists and 'free spirits'

To my surprise the categories are extensive. The ones noted are simply an interesting selection – there are considerably more profiled. In most cases there is a logic behind the designation – some however have a touch of humour.

CHAPTER 47

What is the difference between scholarship and research

*In academic - and professional settings - the terms **scholarship** and **research** are often used interchangeably (and usually incorrectly). They refer to distinct concepts. Understanding the difference is important for students, educators, administrators and professionals who engage with knowledge creation and dissemination. This is particularly relevant to non-research teaching only institutions – which is the case for many private providers across Australia.*

What is Scholarship?

Scholarship refers to the broad process of engaging with, analysing, synthesising, and communicating knowledge. It encompasses activities such as studying existing literature; critiquing theories; and developing new insights based on a comprehensive understanding of a given field.

Scholarship is *not* limited to generating new data - it includes the thoughtful interpretation and integration of existing information. Examples of scholarship include writing a literature review; presenting theoretical frameworks; and contributing to academic discussions. The full range (and often dependent on the type of organisation) can be quite extensive.

See – Scholarship can take on many form (August 2024) - 6113ad_2887992fd3a440a4bca4cbcb6414de4f.pdf

Scholarship can take on many forms in a business school environment (April 2025) – 6113ad_13f3e8dd22d74ef69115b627c09751a1.pdf

Understanding scholarship – and customising it for your own organisation (May 2025) - 6113ad_d79ff452410c4a1ea824f4929a8e4584.pdf

What is Research?

Research is a more specific activity *within* scholarship, focused on the systematic *creation of new knowledge* or *validation of existing knowledge*. It involves collecting data, testing hypotheses, and applying scientific or scholarly methods to answer specific questions. Research can be experimental, observational, qualitative or quantitative - depending on the discipline. Examples include conducting laboratory experiments, field studies, surveys, or interviews. An emerging trend is a mixed mode approach that combines both qualitative and quantitative.

What then are the key differences?

Scholarship is broader in scope and includes research, as well as critical analysis and synthesis of existing knowledge. **Research** is a subset of scholarship (not the other way around) and is focused specifically on generating new knowledge.

Scholarship aims to advance understanding, critique, and share knowledge. **Research** aims to discover, test, and establish new facts or theories.

Scholarship activities include reviewing literature, writing essays, and developing theoretical models. **Research** activities involve designing experiments, collecting data, and analysing results.

Scholarship may result in reviews, essays, or theoretical papers. **Research** typically produces original findings, data sets, or new theories.

While all research is scholarship, not all scholarship is research. Scholarship provides the foundation for research, and research contributes to the ongoing development of scholarship. So - they can be complimentary in so many ways.

CHAPTER 48

What makes a good boss?

*Leadership has evolved dramatically over the years (not a bad thing) and has been shaped by changing workplace cultures, technological advancements, and a deeper understanding of human motivation. Among the many roles in an organisation, '**the boss**' stands somewhere between vision/execution – strategy/morale. But what truly makes a good boss? On careful consideration it is multifaceted answer that encompasses a blend of personal qualities, professional skills - and emotional intelligence. Let's consider the big ones -*

Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Central to effective leadership is *empathy*—the ability to perceive, understand, and respect the feelings and perspectives of others. A good boss does not merely issue directives; they *listen* intently (active listening) and *respond* to the emotional needs of their team. *Emotional intelligence* - which includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills - enables a good boss to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and foster a supportive environment.

Clear Communication

Communication is fundamental to effective leadership. A good boss articulates *expectations*, provides regular *feedback*, and creates an *open forum* for ideas and concerns. This *transparency* ensures that everyone understands their roles, responsibilities, and how their efforts contribute to the larger goals of the organisation. It also provides the opportunity to *celebrate* achievement and effort. Without this focus – morale will 'take a beating'.

Integrity and Authenticity

Trust is critical to any productive team, and the integrity of the boss – sets the tone. When a good boss demonstrates honesty, ethical decision-making, and consistency between words and actions, they cultivate an atmosphere of *trust and respect* – and this becomes critical.

Vision and Strategic Thinking

A good boss possesses a *clear vision* for the future, inspiring their team to aim high and pursue ambitious goals. *Strategic thinking* involves anticipating challenges, identifying opportunities, and setting a path that aligns with both organisational objectives and employee aspirations. It also requires a degree of *risk taking*.

Empowerment and Delegation

'Micromanagement' can stifle creativity and morale, whereas *empowerment* (on the other hand) unleashes potential. A good boss knows how to *delegate* tasks effectively, *trusting* their team members to execute responsibilities while providing appropriate guidance and resources. This becomes one of the most critical aspects that contribute to staff staying.

Adaptability and Learning Mindset

The modern workplace is marked by rapid change – this is abundantly clear. A good boss not only adapts to new technologies and processes - but also encourages their team to embrace learning and innovation.

Building a Positive Culture

Culture is the invisible force shaping motivation, collaboration, and satisfaction. A good boss actively cultivates a positive work environment, setting the tone for *inclusivity*, *respect*, and *camaraderie*.

Accountability and Performance

Leadership involves both encouragement and accountability. A good boss sets high standards, follows up on commitments, and ensures that performance metrics (KPIs) are clear - and fair.

Mentorship and Support

The best bosses are *mentors* as well as managers. They invest in the development of their staff, offering guidance, sharing insights, and helping employees unlock their potential.

The qualities that define a good boss are timeless and evolving. Empathy, clear communication, integrity, strategic vision, adaptability, and a commitment to building a positive culture form the foundation upon which effective leadership is built. In practice, these qualities manifest through everyday actions: ***listening*** *to concerns,* ***celebrating*** *achievements,* ***guiding*** *growth, and* ***setting*** *an example of authenticity and fairness.*

A good boss is more than a manager—they are a ***steward*** *of motivation, an* ***architect*** *of opportunity, and a* ***catalyst*** *for collective success. By embracing these principles, anyone in a position of* *leadership can aspire not only to manage but to inspire, leaving an enduring impact on their team and organisation.*

CHAPTER 49

Why Academic Integrity Counts

Academic integrity refers to the ethical standards and level of honesty upheld in educational settings – and in particular the higher education sector It encompasses values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Maintaining academic integrity means producing work that is genuinely <u>your own</u>, properly <u>acknowledging sources</u>, and <u>avoiding dishonest practices</u> like plagiarism or cheating.

Building Trust and Credibility

Academic integrity is critical in building trust within the educational community. When students, teachers, and institutions act honestly, it fosters a *culture* where everyone can rely on the authenticity of each other's work and achievements. This trust is fundamental not only within higher education institutions but, for that matter, also in the wider community and workplace.

Professional Development

Upholding academic integrity develops important personal qualities such as *responsibility, perseverance, and ethical decision-making*. These attributes are highly valued in professional environments across Australia (and beyond). Employers seek graduates and staff who can be trusted to act ethically and contribute positively to their organisations.

A matter of Fairness

Academic integrity guarantees *a fair learning environment*. When students submit work that is genuinely their own, everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed based on merit. Unfair practices like copying assignments or using unauthorised resources undermine this fairness and devalue genuine achievement.

Protecting the Value of Qualifications

Australian educational qualifications are recognised and respected worldwide. Academic integrity ensures that these qualifications truly reflect a student's knowledge and abilities. If integrity is compromised, the reputation and value of degrees may be diminished, affecting both current and future graduates.

Consequences

Breaching academic integrity can lead to serious consequences, including - academic penalties, suspension, or expulsion. Additionally, it can damage an individual's reputation and future career prospects. Maintaining integrity helps avoid these risks and supports long-term success.

Academic integrity is the foundation of a fair and reputable educational system. It supports learning, personal growth, and the credibility of Australian qualifications. By committing to honesty and ethical conduct, students and teachers strengthen their communities and prepare for meaningful (and hopefully successful) futures.

Chapter 50

Work hard and be kind

*Inspired by a poster I saw recently I had pause to ponder the two best pieces of advice I could possibly give to higher education graduating students (and I do) – **work hard** and **be kind**. In a world that often feels unnecessarily complex and somewhat chaotic - certain truths remain timeless. Among the simplest and most profound is a guiding mantra - "Work hard and be kind." These words, unassuming yet powerful, encapsulate values that transcend cultures, eras, and professions. They do not require privilege or special talent—only dedication and empathy.*

The importance of hard work

Without doubt hard work is the *engine* behind progress, achievement, and self-discovery. Throughout history, individuals who have reached great heights - whether in science, art, sports, or social change for that matter - have done so not merely through talent, but through relentless effort. Hard work is not just about the hours invested, it is also about the resilience to face setbacks; the discipline to persist; and the willingness to stretch beyond comfort zones.

The literature on the matter suggests that working hard does many thangs – it builds character; unlocks potential; fuels opportunity and cultivates fulfillment. Work hard does not always mean working longer hours - it often means working smarter. If you establish clear goals – and break them into manageable smaller steps - a great deal can be achieved. Consider an athlete training for years before reaching the podium; or a student mastering a subject one concept at a time. In the workplace - hard work can manifest in many ways including - taking initiative, collaborating with colleagues, and continuously seeking improvement. Over time, these small, consistent acts of effort accumulate, often yielding results that seem impossible at the outset.

The importance of kindness

'If hard work is the <u>fuel</u> for achievement, kindness is the <u>glue</u> that holds communities together'. Being kind should not be seen as a weakness - or for that matter a luxury. Kindness is an essential component of human connection and wellbeing. Again, the literature suggests kindness does many things – it strengthens *relationships*; it boosts *well-being*; it creates a positive *environment/workplace*; and believe it or not – it inspires *change and innovation.*

Combining hard work and kindness

There is no doubt in my mind that combining the two concepts – hard work and kindness – can truly be transformative. If applied to leadership, teamwork, family and community – great outcomes can be achieved. There is much talk, at the moment, about 'resilience' – In challenging times, hard work helps us endure, while kindness provides the comfort and solidarity needed to persevere.

How to put these essential into practice

There are many ways to integrate working hard and being kind into our daily routine/lives. These include – setting personal goals; practice gratitude; offer help whenever you can; reflect and improve; and of course – lead by example.

"Work hard and be kind" may sound simple – it is not - but its impact can be significant. These principles underpin personal achievement, strengthen relationships, and enrich communities – I have witnessed it first-hand. They are accessible to all, regardless of background or circumstance. In embracing ***hard work****, we discover our capacity to grow, create, and achieve. In embracing* ***kindness****, we affirm our shared humanity and build a better world - one act at a time.*

Also worth reading –

Transformational leadership and the new reality (2025) - 6113ad_94f769b047444a0082b26903741fa569.pdf

Understanding emotional intelligence (EI) – and applying it to your leadership style and approach (2025) - 6113ad_688b923e84e44169b9420f3e8fd5d126.pdf

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