MULTIPLE MEASURES - BACKGROUND NOTES

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These notes offer background reading and information for users of the Multiple Measures online tool and website, www.multiplemeasures.org.au.
For further detail, or with any questions, please contact the authors, listed above.

Q 5+6: PEDAGOGY

Q5.   How involved are students in deciding the brief, direction or aims of the assessment task/s?

(Student-directed brief > Staff-directed brief)

Will students respond to a defined question / inquiry defined by the teacher that can be answered through the knowledge of the discipline or are they defining their own question, determining how that question might be answered and in turn contributing to/building knowledge of the discipline (Levy, 2009; Levy & Petrulis, 2012). Where will the students' work fit between these extremes?

KEYWORDS: Self-direction, autonomy, motivation, inquiry-based learning, authorship

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Q6.   Is the process for developing or delivering assessment task/s designed by the students or directed by staff?

(Student-directed process > Staff-directed process)

Your responses to questions via sliders / checkboxes in the tool will filter MM exemplars. These can match your interests for the benchmarking of your own completed units / subjects and will give you a set of similar comparators to inform this. Finding contrasting examples, by using the questions to filter differently, may offer new insights useful for design and development of new units.

Notes

Questions 5 and 6 focus on the role of students (and educators) in the definition of project focus or brief (Q5), and in setting directions for learning in Q6. Factors including choice, self-direction, the disciplinary backgrounds of students, and opportunities for meta-learning development are discussed in relation to four modes of inquiry-based learning that resonate with creative arts and design education.

The extent to which students or staff direct the project brief or inquiry is relevant in relation to the graduate expectations set out for Level 7 of the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) (2013). In their application of skills and knowledge, students are expected to conduct self-directed work and demonstrate autonomy and judgement.

Progression toward these graduate outcomes may be supported by application of four modes of inquiry-based learning – identifying, pursuing, producing and authoring (Levy & Petrulis, 2012). This model offers the potential to move students from a teacher-framed inquiry with significant process support, toward taking responsibility for determining *how* they will respond to their own questions, and increasingly provide independent process support as peers approaching professional practice. The personal dimensions of this progression toward 'authoring' intersect with the 'Student as Scholar' model (Hodge et al., 2008) discussed in Q1.

Designing for process support by both teaching staff and peers is another important factor in interdisciplinary learning activities and assessment tasks. The diverse disciplinary backgrounds of students in interdisciplinary engagements (see Q2) is likely to manifest along the process-application/outcome continuum discussed in Q6. Arguably, creative arts and design students whose courses typically demand early self-reflection, inquiry, group work and collaboration skills (Robertson & Blackler, 2006; Winters, 2011) may be well-placed to develop and provide support as part of their meta-learning skills development.

This pair of questions asks the designer of an interdisciplinary course to consider the level of direction students are assigned in framing their project focus or inquiry, and equally how their self-direction, judgement and autonomy are developed within the learning process. The MM examples discussed highlight how self-direction and process support are expressed through learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and whether these align with the intention of the course if it is considered in terms of process-application or outcome.

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Q5 – PEDAGOGY

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