

Graduate Capabilities For The New Business Environment

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“ The continual focus on graduate skills is really part of a bigger, as yet unresolved, debate about the purpose of university education and how to develop educated persons who are both employable and capable of contributing to civil society”



(BHERT cited in James 2004, p175)



“People don’t simply lack trust in business schools, they actively distrust them. In order to reduce people’s distrust business schools need to show that they value what society values”



Podolny J (2009) HBR June p62



- Graduate Capabilities:

- Facilitate participation in the work force
- Foster a commitment to life long learning and renewal
- Promote being an active, and engaged citizen



Key Questions



- What is meant by a graduate capability ?
- What capability sets are considered valuable ?
- How do we assess if a graduate has them ?



- What do we mean by a graduate capability ?

Score 1 point for each correct answer

- Key skills
- Key competencies
- Transferrable skills
- Graduate attributes
- Employability skills
- Soft skills
- Generic graduate attributes
- Professional skills
- Personal transferrable skills
- Generic competencies
- Generic skills
- Graduate skills



What shapes the students
Contribution to their profession
and as a citizen.....(HECA '92)

The central achievements of
higher education as a
process...(HECA '92)

Skills, personal attributes
and values which should
be acquired regardless
of discipline....(Bowden
02)

Qualities, skills and understandings that
the university community agrees it students
should desirably develop....(Barrie 04)

- What capability sets are considered valuable ?

- *OECD Tuning Report (2008)*

Ranking of the most important generic competences		
Employers	Graduates	Academics
1 Capacity to learn	1 Capacity for analysis and synthesis	1 Basic knowledge of the field of study
2 Capacity to apply knowledge in practice	2 Capacity to learn	2 Capacity for analysis and synthesis
3 Capacity for analysis and synthesis	3 Capacity to apply knowledge in practice	3 Capacity to learn
4 Capacity to adapt to new situations	4 Elementary computing skills	4 Capacity for generating new ideas (creativity)
5 Interpersonal skills	5 Capacity to adapt to new situations	5 Capacity to apply knowledge in practice

Results of 2002 survey (p.38).

Competence Reference No	Generic Competence	Academics	Graduates	Students	Employers
1	Ability for abstract thinking, analysis and reasoning	1	2	2	2
2	Ability to apply knowledge in practical situations	2	1	1	1
4	Knowledge & understanding of the subject area & understanding of the profession	3	4	4	4
14	Ability to identify, pose and solve problems	4	3	3	3
9	Capacity to learn and to stay up-to-date with learning	5	5	7	9

Results of 2008 survey (p.131)

Key capabilities or motherhood statements ?

The Development and Promotion of Critical Thinking

Teamwork

Global Sustainability

Ethical Practice

Life-long Learning



BIHECC 2007



- How might we develop graduate capabilities ?

Ethical Practice	Evidence		
	Quantitative	Qualitative	Experiential
Case study; vignettes; ethical dilemmas		Cagle (2005) Cagle & Baucus (2006) Bodkin & Stevenson (2007) Cagle, Glasgo & Holmers (2008) Ritter (2006)	Hosmer (2000) Sims (2002) Felton & Sims (2005) Sims & Felton (2006) Hunt & Lavarie (2004) Falkenberg & Woiceshyn (2008) Hess & Norman (2004) DesJardins & Diedrich (2003)
Role plays		Bodkin & Stevenson (2007)	Sims (2002) McDonald & Donleavy (1995) Felton & Sims (2005)
Student creation of code of ethics			Sims (2002)
Community service learning; field-based application; internships		Weber & Glyptis (2000) Boss (1994)	Sims (2002) Felton & Sims (2005)
Ethics Bingo		Haywood et al. (2004)	
Critical reflection; journals		Weber & Glyptis (2000) Bodkin & Stevenson (2007)	Hunt & Lavarie (2004) Sims & Felton (2006)
Experiential pedagogical approach		Ritter (2006)	Hunt & Lavarie (2004) Sims (2002) Sims & Felton (2006) DesJardins & Diedrich (2003)
Small group learning; collaborative learning		Ritter (2006)	Hunt & Lavarie (2004) Sims & Felton (2006)

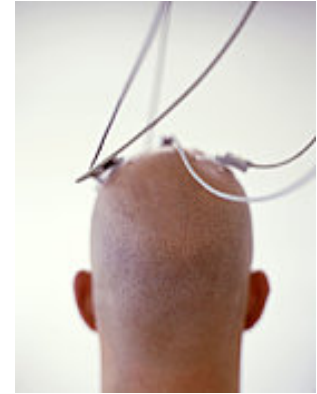
A sample of articles, which offer strategies for promoting ethical practice in the business curriculum. The majority of these strategies were rated as 'successful': but evaluation based on experiential evidence.

Rigby et al., 2009, p.17

Business as Usual? Freeman et al (2008)

- “there was general agreement that graduate skills were important for graduates and that students were not demonstrating generic skill development from their university studies as well as they might be...
- “there was little agreement about the degree to which generic skills were important...whose responsibility they were to teach...or how they should be assessed” (pp.22-3).

Assessment ?



- Not integrated with teaching and learning
- Strong final exam emphasis and 'testing'
- Balance on summative not formative
- Tendency to over-assess
- Generic skills assessment not 'real'



So...



- Divergent and conflicting understandings accentuated by a lack of effective teaching and learning strategies and a lack of assessment and standards to demonstrate their achievement



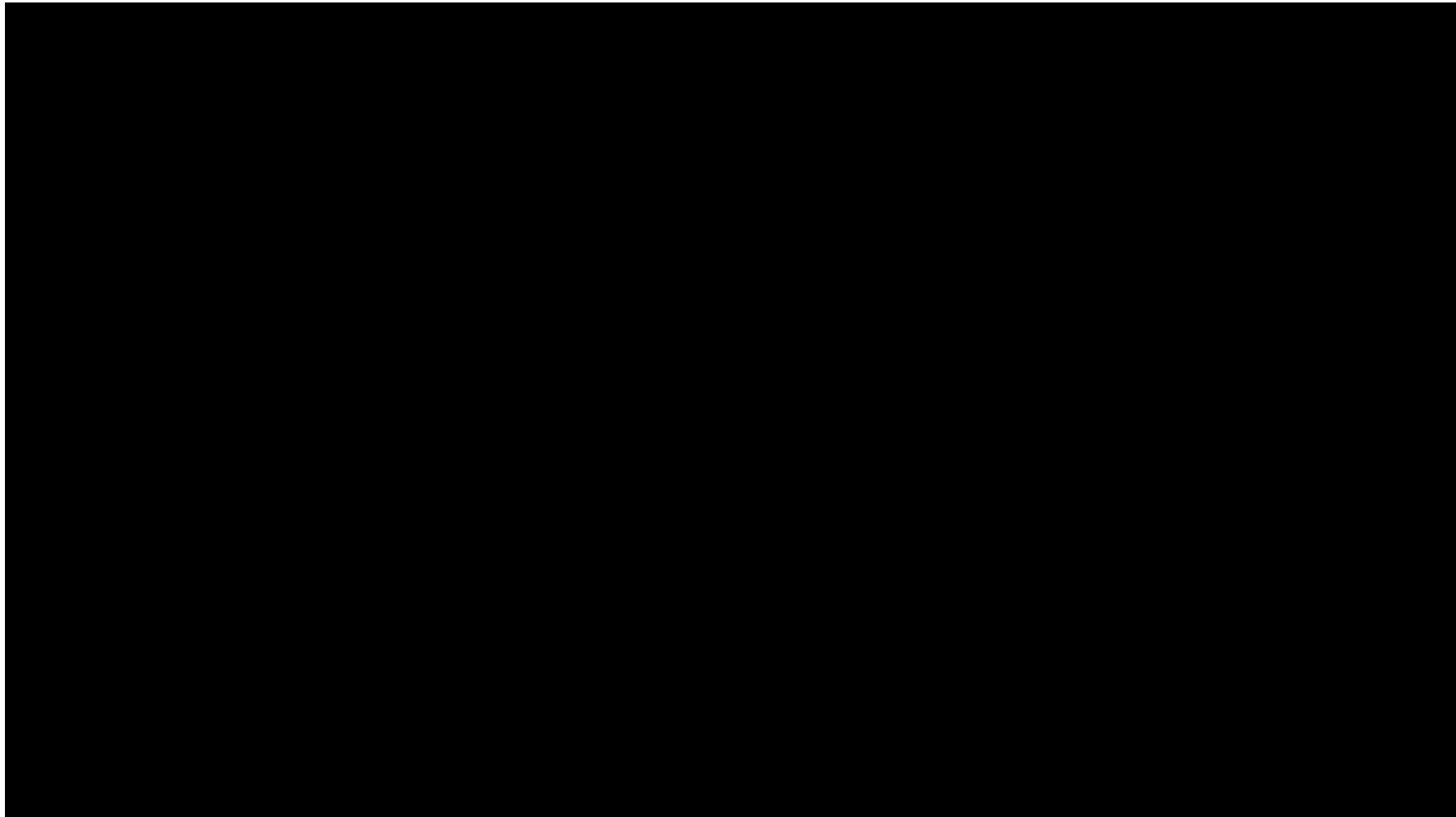
Example 1

Embedding the Development and Grading of Generic Skills in the Business Curriculum (EDGGS)

www.graduateskills.edu.au

- Critical thinking
- Teamwork
- Sustainability
- Ethical practice





Participation and Community Engagement (PACE)

“My experiences have taught me that volunteering or working and living overseas have the potential to transform your life. It certainly transformed mine. It’s been the most important learning experience of my life. You learn a lot about yourself and the world and other people. It broadens your mind, makes you more flexible and you develop the capability to develop relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds.”

Phil Voysey 2009

And more...

- Should employers expect 100% coverage ?
- Should we all have the same capability sets?
- Are students entitled to a voice ?
- Aren't we really talking about innate personality ?

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