



Background

Professional development activities for UB TAFE teachers around Employability Skills have been on-going since the end of 2003. This journey began with the Transferable Skills Project in 2003 – 2004, followed by the Generic Skills Project in 2005 and the Employability Skills Project in 2006. These projects have been generated by a number of key government papers (see Attachment A) at both State and Federal levels which have put the incorporation of these skills into Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses firmly on the agenda in recent years.

The aims of these projects, past and present (see Attachment B), have sought to provide teachers at UB TAFE with a solid theoretical and practical base for integrating employability skills into their learning, teaching and assessment practices. We now have at least one teacher in all program areas who can use employability skills in their day-to-day course delivery, and confidently discuss employability skills with learners and employers.

The change from the Mayer Key Competencies to the DEST Employability Skills Framework did require a review of concepts and approaches. (For a comparison of the two frameworks see *The Employment Edge at UB TAFE: Employability Skills Resource Kit for TAFE Teachers*, p. 20 – 23) From 1 January 2007, all revised and new Training Packages will contain an Employability Skills Qualification Summary and describe the facets of the eight employability skills when applied to level and context. Employability skills will very much be 'front and centre' in any Training Package endorsed material from 2007 onwards. At UB TAFE, we are very well placed to accommodate these changes.

Teachers however will still need to be able to identify employability skills in endorsed material and develop strategies to integrate them into their teaching and assessing practices to suit their student cohort.

The 2006 Project

What did we do?

The Action Plan

This project was a timely and appropriate professional development activity for 11 TAFE teachers from across a range of program areas and campuses. The main aim of the project was to develop ways of integrating employability skills into all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment in order to enhance UB TAFE graduates' employment prospects. As well, project participants had many opportunities to develop their own employability skills.

During Semester 1, participants met twice monthly. Topics for activity and discussion included:

- Employability skills – what are they?
- Employability skills in Training Packages/curricula – two guest from Victoria University who have expertise in this area. We also video conferenced this session to Charles Darwin University, Darwin.
- Employability skills in the classroom – practical activities from *Fostering Generic Skills*.