From impediment to innovation: Introducing a residential school within the Human Services Discipline

Aastha Malhotra[1], David Steggall[1], and Christina Campbell[1]
1. School of Health and Wellbeing

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

The Context

Recent external program accreditation identified the need for increased face-to-face student engagement within the Human Services core courses. A three-day residential school within the Human Services Case Management course was proposed and accepted. This poster describes how an integrated approach enabled the successful launch of a new residential school within an existing course.

The Challenge & the Opportunity

Contextual challenges included adherence to pre-established learning objectives, external accreditation requirements, tight timelines, financial constraints and the logistics of accommodating over a hundred students on-campus over a weekend.

External accreditation requirements may act as a catalyst for change in pedagogy and instructional delivery while causing temporary impediments and stress. However, we argue that a proactive approach can turn the process into an opportunity for innovation that meets university standards, accreditation requirements and offers students a meaningful & enjoyable learning experience. We hope our reflections provide insights to other academics contending with similar contextual challenges while designing learning and teaching initiatives.

Student Feedback
- I enjoyed the residential school and the way the weeks were set out.
- Through teaching, all the resources needed to complete assignments were provided.
- The lecturer brought in lot of guest speakers to provide content around the materials in a 'real life' setting
- Residential school was the best aspect of this course - hands on learning and great insight from industry professionals.
- The residential school was very successful, I learned so much about the topic over the three days, the presenters were excellent and it was very efficiently organised.

Human Services Case Management

Case management is a collaborative care delivery process incorporating assessment, planning, facilitation and advocacy. Diversity in terms of service areas (for example aged care, disability support and child protection) and delivery models (for example, referral-only to complex long-term care) and quasi market funding models renders a field fraught with complex and competing views of case management practice. Student learning needs to take the above into account so that future case managers are not only able to meet the demands of the role but assist vulnerable clients in navigating the case management process and a competitive market.

The Process and Solution

Through the brainstorming stages, three guiding principles that would shape our process and solutions were identified:

- **A**sset-Mapping so that we could leverage and build on existing resources and expertise available across USQ. We consulted with the ICT staff, timetabling team and colleagues in other disciplines who were experienced in running residential schools.

- **B**ase our work in existing best practices including adopting a constructivist and inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning that is well-suited to the case management context. Our aim was to provide students contemporary content that would provide students with subject matter, problem-solving skills and exposure to multiple sources of information.

- **C**ollaborative approach where the content included short sessions from the Human Services teaching team specialising in topics such as mental health and child safety as well as from USQ Health & Wellness and USQ Careers and Employability thus adding richness to course content.

Key learning outcomes and elements of our solution are captured in Figure A.
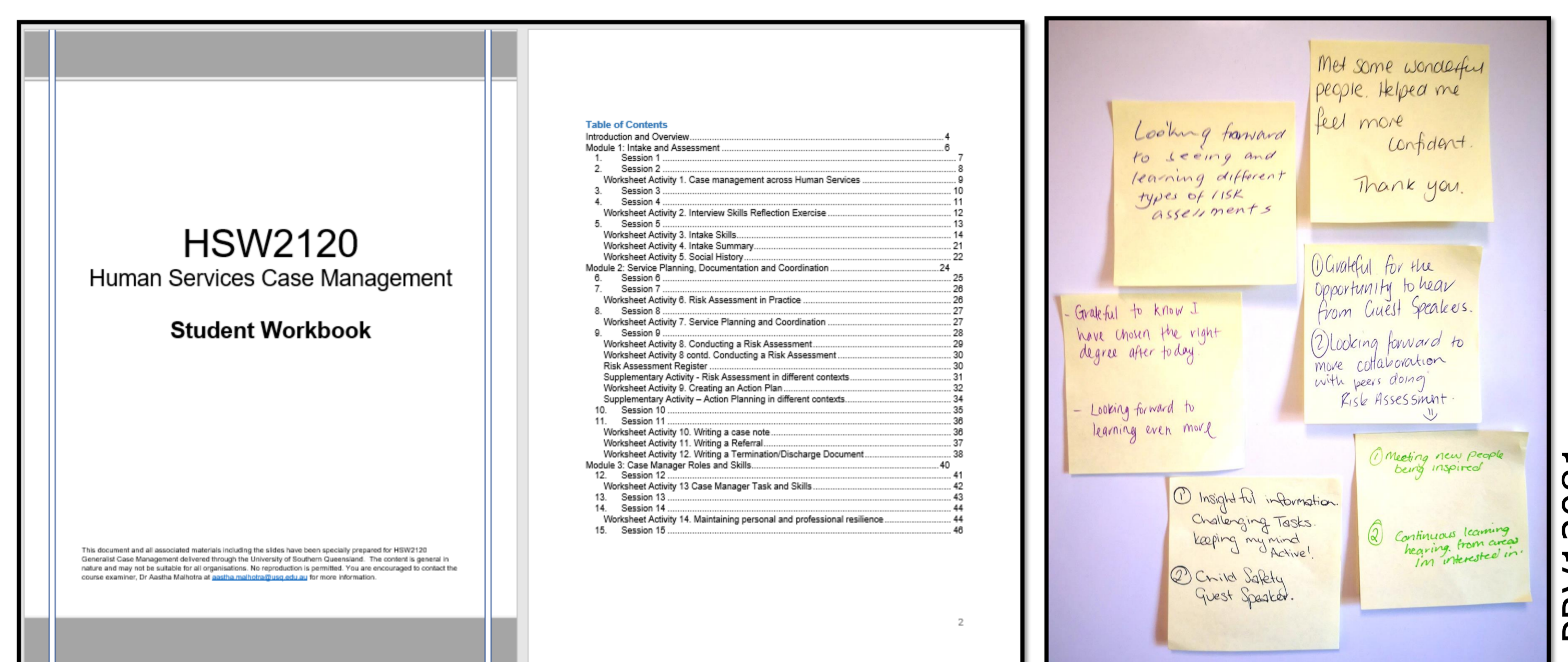
Structured learning with a sound theoretical base	Solution-focussed learning	Stakeholder engagement
• First half of the semester focusses on theory & case management models • 3 Day Residential School builds on theoretical content through practical, reflective and hands-on learning tasks • Second half of semester focuses on consolidation of content	Role-plays videos which follow the journey of a client Creation of Student Workbook that allows students to problem solve a case study Practice Quizzes that provided formative feedback during the semester Authentic assessments that focused on problem-solving skills	• Panel discussion focussing on Careers in Case Management • Panel representatives included current case managers and industry practitioners • Short sessions from the USQ Careers & Employability team, USQ Health & Wellness team & USQ Human Services Professional Experience & Placement Team

Figure A Key HSW2120 Learning Outcomes and Elements