INVESTIGATING UbD AS A COURSE DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR EDUCATORS TO EVIDENCE PEDAGOGICAL DECISIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A Thesis submitted by

Hendrika Tame

For the award of

Master of Professional Studies (Research)

2023

ABSTRACT

This research project investigated the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework alignment to educator practices and questioned if the UbD stages and tools could be suitable to capture educator's key pedagogical design decisions within the higher education context. The study draws upon the School of Business educator interviews, Academic Quality Unit professional staff interviews, and an analysis of the university and governance documentation, within a regional university. A correlation exists between the UbD stages, educator design practice, TEQSA intent, and selected Higher Education Threshold Standards. The educators' course design process identifies elements – learning objectives, assessment, and learning activities – similar to UbD framework processes stages and intent. A lack of clarity exists around the university and governance requirements and expectations for course design. Consequently, educators do not express an obligation or responsibility to quality standards and providing evidence of course design. This research contributes to Australian research, exploring UbD or the application to course design in HE. The findings agree with literature identifying a gap in university course design policy, procedure and guidance and the influence on educators' course design practices and attitude (Zundans-Fraser et al., 2016). Further investigation is required to adapt the UbD framework and tools to meet needs of the School of Business educators. However, due to the minimal university course design governance documentation, implementing a course design framework and tools at the course level requires further investigation to determine the potential impact on the university educators.

CERTIFICATION OF THESIS

I, Hendrika Tame, declare that the Master Thesis entitled *Investigating UbD principles and processes as a course design framework for educators to evidence pedagogical decisions in higher education* is not more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references, and footnotes.

This Thesis is the work of Hendrika Tame except where otherwise acknowledged, with the majority of the contribution to the unpublished paper presented as a Thesis by Publication undertaken by the student. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Date: 21 June 2023

Endorsed by:

Professor Karen Trimmer
Principal Supervisor

Ms Nicole Brownlie
Associate Supervisor

Student and supervisors' signatures of endorsement are held at the University.

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION

Paper:

Tame, H., Brownlie, N., & Trimmer, K. (2023). Equipping academics with tools for designing course and learning.

Hendrika Tame contributed 85% to this paper. The supervisory team contributed the remainder.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank my principal supervisor, Karen Trimmer at the University of Southern Queensland, for her encouragement and direction. I would not have made it through my Master's degree if not for your confidence in my ability to manage the work.

I would like to thank my associate supervisor, Nicole Brownlie, who guided me in such a grounded and positive manner. Nicole's support and advice provided clarity and direction throughout the Master's degree study. I also acknowledge the early input of Nicole as my associate supervisor. Nicole provided valuable guidance and encouragement through my confirmation.

I would like to express my gratitude to the university colleagues who encouragingly and willingly gave of their time and valuable research experience to provide additional mentoring and coaching through the journey.

This research has been supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABBREVIATIONS

APT: *Academic Transformation*

AQF: *Australian Quality Framework*

HESF: *Higher Education Standards Framework*

HE: *higher education*

LMS: *Learning Management System*

OALT: *Office of Advancement for Learning and Teaching*

TEQSA: *Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency*

UbD: *Understanding by Design*

VET: *Vocational Education and Training*

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Australian Quality Framework: the policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system. The policy comprises of: AQF level and qualification type, linkages, learning outcomes and student pathways, specifications for the accreditation and development of qualifications and for issuing AQF qualifications and requirements for addition or removal of qualification types in the AQF, and the definitions of the terminology.

Course: a component of study focused on a particular subject or topic. 150hours in duration over short period of study during the year. TESQA uses the words *unit* or *subject* undertaken to complete within a program.

Course of study: defined by TEQSA as coherent sequence of units of study leading to the award of a qualification often called a *program*.

Educator: used to represent an academic at a university in Higher Education

Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF): standards that Australian providers must meet and continue to meet to be registered to operate as a higher education.

higher education (HE): education beyond the secondary level, in reference to education offered by university in the form of undergraduate and postgraduate programs of study.

Learning Management System (LMS): a software application that provides the framework that handles all aspects of course that students access for learning.

Program: a qualification or award received after the successfully completion of a sequence of units, subject or *courses.* Programs vary in type and duration.

Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) is a national regulatory and quality assurance agency for higher education to ensure quality education for students.

Understanding by Design (UbD): a student-centred design framework consisting of a process and tools [templates] to help the educator to plan curriculum to enable students transfer their understanding.

Unit of study are often referred to as module or subject or course.

Vocational Education and Training (VET): delivers certificate and diploma level competency-based education and training services for individuals at every stage of their work life.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Greater expectations are being placed on university educators to produce and evidence pedagogically sound courses with quality student learning experiences and outcomes (Thomson et al., 2017) for the assurance of learning. The Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) is a national regulatory and quality assurance agency for higher education to ensure quality education for students. TEQSA guidance notes provide clarity for universities in interpreting and applying the standards but are not 'how to' guides to develop and assure quality programs or courses in higher education. It is the university's responsibility to establish institutional control and practices to ensure that the characteristics of a program, including courses, are achieved.

TEQSA does not require a degree in teaching for those teaching in higher education; however, roles of the position include the design of a unit of work with sequential learning and aligned assessment as well as pedagogical approaches. Program and course design activities and designing learning is an assumed and expected part of academic work (Goodyear, 2013). Where educators are part of a design team consisting of design specialists, using templates and tools, especially in large-scale program and course development, the academic's role and understanding of online course development and design has been challenged and almost disenfranchised (White et al., 2020). Higher education (HE) educators [Academics] felt a "lack of control was distinct from conventional production and represented an unbundling of their role of 'creator' and 'deliverer' of courses." (White et al., 2020, p. 78).

The feeling of this lack of control and, the challenge to the conventional approach to course design, HE educators possibly apply a design process with varying levels of comprehension and lack a design thinking mindset. In this research project, a design thinking mindset is defined as a set of creative skills to solve problems that places the human in the centre of the design process. Hence, educators have been found to revert to learning design taxonomies from their past experience as a student in a traditional university environment (Goodyear, 2015; McKenney et al., 2015). Research has identified that there is limited evidence on how HE educators design courses and what their levels of knowledge and practice

are (Goodyear, 2015; Laurillard, 2012; McKenney et al., 2015). They engage in the design of teaching, but often do not draw on design models or frameworks to guide the design process (Bennett et al., 2016).

Both Goodyear's (2015) and Bennett et al.'s (2016) conclusions remain relevant: further investigation is required into the development of university educators' design practice and thinking. As Bennett and colleagues (2011) stated, the challenge remains "to further develop this emerging understanding of academic's design practice, and bring this understanding to bear on the development of tools and strategies that can support and advance current practice" (p. 165). This research study investigated Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) Understanding by Design (UbD) framework to determine whether the same processes and tools could be used within the HE context, to assist educators in producing high quality courses.

This chapter outlines the background to the research (section 1.1) as it relates to the research problem (section 1.2) and explains why the research is needed. The purpose of the research (section 1.3) outlines the research objectives. Section 1.4 includes the scope of the research to provide clarity on the study and the gap in the literature. Section 1.5 provides a background of the researcher as a practitioner.

1.2. Statement of the research problem

Some smaller tertiary institutions typically do not use course design frameworks or software and have limited human resources dedicated to course design and development. As a consequence, the manual task of evidencing and documenting course design falls to full-time, part-time and casual staff. Educators need a course design framework that provides clearly defined processes and tools for designing courses to ensure quality learning experiences.

Adding to the complexity, courses are offered in multiple modes of delivery, e.g., online, offline, blended, and on-campus. Therefore, a need exists for a course design framework, process or tool which is generic, robust, and flexible enough to accommodate not only the diversity of educator pedagogical decisions but also to enable building the course in multiple modes of delivery across different disciplines and schools. The project focussed on identifying whether UbD aligned with educators' design practices and could be suitable for use within the HE context to enable educators to produce quality courses. UbD is a conceptual framework for planning, consisting of a process and design templates. The template act as a set of

design standards during development, review and quality control. (Wiggins and McTighe, 2015). The process and templates guide teachers to design and plan in detail units of curriculum or modules for courses to ensure alignment of curriculum within the broader context of programs. (Wiggins, 2005)

1.3. Purpose of research

This research project was a qualitative exploratory investigation. The purpose of the investigation was to identify elements of the UbD framework processes and tools that aligned with educators' practices and whether the templated documentation could capture the educator's key design decisions, personal meaning-making, and interpretations of their learning design taxonomy (e.g., pedagogical decisions, assessment design, learning activities and resources within the HE context). The project also set out to determine whether the UbD process and tools would meet the TEQSA requirements to evidence Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) Standard 3.1 Teaching, Course design, section.1- 5 (HESF Standard 3.1) (Department of Education, Skills and Employment, 2021).

1.4. Scope of research

The research project took place at a regional university in Queensland, Australia. As an Educational Designer I am employed within the university in which I have access to the university systems and operations, and business educators. Currently, the university has no identifiable electronic storage system for course design documentation that is retrievable to evidence HESF Standard 3.1. Although on limited budgets and facing strategic changes, the regional university is still required to deliver quality learning and teaching, continuous improvements to assure learning, and adhere to external standards for registration. The research project drew upon educators from the university School of Business. These educators were less likely to have educational training or qualifications than educators from a School of Education. Although business educators possibly lack in pedagogical training, they are still expected to evidence course design. This situation falls upon full/part-time and casual educators to draw upon their own methods, processes, and tools to fulfil the expectations. Therefore, research is required to determine a resource-effective process to support educators in achieving these standards.

The exploratory investigation consisted of two stages. Stage 1 analysed documentation from the university, TEQSA and HESF. Stage 2 involved semi-structured interviews with two participant groups. During the life of the project, the university divisions, from which participant groups were drawn, changed. The School of Commerce and the School of Management combined to become the School of Business. The Office for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (OALT) was dissolved and replaced by the Academic Transformation Portfolio (ATP). The interview groups were drawn from the university educators within the School of Business and the professional staff drawn from the Academic Quality Unit within the ATP.

1.5. Researcher as practitioner

As an insider/outsider researcher, I bring to this project a range of experience and insight into learning and teaching theory and praxis. I trained and practiced as a secondary teacher and Leading Vocational Teacher in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector undertaking significant planning and development of programs and courses, as well as mentoring and coaching teachers. As a Leading Vocational Teacher, I was also responsible for the quality assurance of programs and courses to comply with governing agency and legislative requirements. I now work in the role of an Educational Designer at the regional university, assisting HE educators to design, develop, and improve courses and programs. In this position I have gained an intimate knowledge of the university systems, policy and procedures and apply them on a regular basis to assist the educator to design courses. I have witnessed first-hand educator responses and reactions to the university systems, policy, procedures and expectations. I work collaboratively with HE educators across a number of schools, but in particular, have been involved heavily with the School of Business and the various discipline groups. I assist them to design and develop courses with a focus on student quality outcomes and assurance of learning.

Conducting research while in this position has provided valuable insights into School of Business educators' perceptions and attitudes towards course and learning design, the varying levels of experience and confidence, and the impact of the limited range of assistance and availability of purposeful tools. I am familiar with the culture and politics of the School of Business and have established working relationships with the educators. I am aware of the educators' prior experiences, predilections, and

knowledge of designing courses. I have seen educators call upon traditional tried and tested past practices which has given them a sense of security and success. Therefore, this resulted in the research to further explore the theoretical basis of School of Business educator praxis and particularly their course design processes.

1.6. Summary

This chapter has briefly introduced the quality agenda driving the HE sector, the implications to universities and the impact on educators to produce quality courses. A problem for the university and educators has been identified. The purpose and scope of the research project address the need to investigate a course design framework for educators within the context of the regional university. Furthermore, the position of insider researcher (Yin, 2016) and relationship to the research project has been acknowledged.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the literature, positioning the need for a course design framework to design quality courses. Section 2.2—Assurance of learning, provides a broad context of the quality agenda driving program and consequently course design. Section 2.3 further narrows to the university sector context, and their responses to the quality agenda for programs. Teacher as designer (Section 2.4) discusses the shift of the educators' role to designers of courses to meet the quality agenda. Finally, Section 2.5 presents Understanding by Design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), a framework for planning and designing courses as a possible solution to address the quality agenda for course design which leads to Section 2.6. research questions.

2.2. Assurance of learning

TEQSA (2017) and Australian Government (2017) refers to characteristics for assuring learning and quality through the design of a program or course including activities such as learning outcomes, assessment, resources content, and learning activities, and the extent of the student achievement of learning outcomes.

TEQSA assurance of quality focuses on the registration and accreditation of HE activities i.e., *a course of study*. At the university a course of study is referred to as *program* and units of study as *courses* and this naming convention is used throughout the document. TEQSA course design guidance notes (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017; Australian Government) provide design requirements and characteristics for a course of study to comply with HESF Standard 3.1 Teaching, Course design, Section 1-5 (HESF Standard 3.1). Quality Assurance is achieved through the design of these *c*haracteristics: alignment of learning outcomes; methods of assessment; content; and learning activities can be demonstrated—whether at program or course level. Laurillard (2012) and Goodyear (2015) refer to these activities as pedagogical decisions or design patterns used by educators as designers of teaching and courses of learning.

TEQSA imposes stringent requirements on the tertiary sector to evidence the HESF Threshold Standards for registration and accreditation, and in particular, evidencing assurance of quality through continuous improvement of course activities

and assessment. However, under the HESF, there are no mandatory education qualification requirements for HE educators to initially gain pedagogical knowledge and practice. Nicole (2012, p. 4) stated “[c]urriculum design in HE is not a formal activity and there is little support, formal or informal, provided in most HE institutions to help academics become better at designing learning activities, modules and courses”. In contrast, secondary teachers require a minimum four-year undergraduate education degree and educators in the VET sector require a minimum of a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. These qualifications provide formal training in learning and teaching theory and practice, the skills to design and develop courses, units, or modules of learning. The absence of formal training may explain why tertiary educators tend to draw upon past experiences as a learner to formulate their course design approaches (Goodyear, 2015).

2.3. University context

Over the past decade in response to the quality agenda, universities have explored rapid design processes (White et al., 2020) and the use of software and collaborative activities to design and develop programs and courses (Alammary et al., 2017; Thomson et al.,2017; Wijngaard-de Meij & Merx, 2018). Also, universities have invested in and divested of learning and teaching departments to address and support program accreditation requirements and educators to design courses. Amongst these changes, the sector has seen an emergence of design/learning specialist positions, including Educational Designers, Learning Designers, Instructional Designers, and dedicated design teams (Slade et al., 2019; Thomson et al., 2019). These specialists work collaboratively with academics and consult with industry professionals to document and translate learning designs and produce quality learning experiences to meet TEQSA requirements (Toetenel & Rienties, 2016). However, even with the assistance of design teams, the responsibility of undertaking program and course design activities lies with the university educator.

2.4. Educators as designers

The role of the educator in HE is changing into a more complex career, meeting university research performance expectations and developing a teaching identity (Debowski, 2022). HE teaching is rapidly evolving, and the traditional teaching role is no longer simply the exposition of knowledge but involves the

creation of an environment where learning takes place through a variety of activities to help students learn (Goodyear, 2015). The traditional approach of course design, where the teacher works in isolation with an emphasis on content rather than the student, is no longer a viable approach according to some theorists (Reynolds & Kearn, 2017; Thomson et al., 2019).

University educators, as part of their role, are required to undertake program and course design activities (The University, 2022). They tend to apply a design process with varying levels of comprehension and as a result, habitually revert to traditional teaching (Goodyear, 2015) and design practices. They engage in the designing of teaching and courses, but often do not draw on design models or frameworks to guide the design process (Bennett et al., 2016). There is limited evidence on how teachers design courses, what their level of knowledge and practices are (Goodyear, 2015; Laurillard 2012; McKenney et al., 2015), what effects are placed on university teachers' workload (Sridharan et al., 2015), and how student performance is assessed (Nguyen et al., 2018). Studies in learning analytics and course design provide insights into the implications of educators' pedagogical choices that inform the course learning design and learning activities and the influence on student engagement in the Learning Management System (LMS) that impacts performance (Toetenel & Rienties 2016) and student engagement (Nguyen, 2018) and retention (Olney et al., 2018). Bennett et al. (2016, p. 143), acknowledged in their study that "significant research and practical applications are needed to advance design thinking and practice" of teachers. Educators need to develop a design thinking mind set and skills to innovate curriculum fit for the current educational challenges students face (Vallis & Redmond, 2021).

Whilst the term design is now applied to course design, the concept of design and design thinking has been traditionally associated with fields such as engineering, industrial design, and architecture. Within HE the term *design* is predominantly used in literature in conjunction with program curriculum development for the assurance of learning (Goode et al., 2018; Millear et al., 2017; Thomson et al., 2019). Since the early 2000s, there has been considerable interest in "teaching as design*",* "design of learning", and "learning design" (Bennett et al., 2011; Goodyear, 2015; Laurillard, 2012; Konnerup et al., 2019; Toetenel & Rienties, 2016). The notion of teachers as designers (Asenio-Perez, et al., 2017; Goodyear, 2015; Jordan, 2016; Laurillard,

2012 & Mckenney et al., 2016) and designers of learning design in course design (Bennett et al., 2011; Mittlemeir et al., 2018) has emerged in literature.

Laurillard (2012) defined teaching as design as a science focusing on the designing of learning. McAndrew and colleagues (2006) drew upon architect and design theorist Christopher Alexandria's notion (1964) of design patterns to explain activities and problems associated with pedagogical design and called upon the use of a variety of learning theories approaches, processes, practices, and tools. In relation to universities, Goodyear (2015) discussed teaching as design with specific design components: good learning task; supportive physical and digital environment; and social organisation and division of labour.

With the exception of those with an Education degree, educators may not be equipped with the knowledge and skills to think and plan as designers, but they are still required to design courses and learning. The lack of a TEQSA requirement for mandatory qualifications for teaching at a tertiary level may contribute to a limited sense of the design process, a lack of a design thinking mindset, and a tendency to revert to learning design taxonomies from past experiences as a student in a traditional university (Goodyear, 2015; McKenney et al., 2015). As Bennett and colleagues (2011) stated, the challenge remains "to further develop this emerging understanding of academic's design practice and bring this understanding to bear on the development of tools and strategies that can support and advance current practice" (p. 165).

Also, both Goodyear (2015) and Bennett et al. (2016) concluded that further investigation is required into the development of university educators' design practice and thinking. Their research also identifies the need for further investigation into the "ways in which other university staff who support student learning engage in design activities" (Goodyear, 2015, p. 43) and what "appropriate training and supports will be needed" (Bennett et al., 2016, p. 143) to assist and work collaboratively with educators to create visual representation of their course design. Therefore, research is required to develop effective tools and resources that enable educators to participate in the design process and to realise and document design decisions to address standards.

2.5. Understanding by design

Wiggins and McTighe's (2005) Understanding by Design (UbD), also referred to as backward design, is a design framework that is predominantly utilised in the primary and secondary education sectors. It is a conceptual framework for curriculum planning, consisting of a three-stage process and design templates. The set of design templates align with the three stages in which the educator completes stimulus questions and sections to document decisions. The process and templates guide educators to design and plan in detail units of curriculum or modules for units or courses to ensure alignment of curriculum within the broader context of programs (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). "It is a map for how to achieve the 'output' of desired student performance, in which appropriate learning activities and assessment are suggested to make it more likely that students achieve desired results" (Wiggin & McTighe, 2005, p6). A detailed review of literature can be found in Chapter 5: Unpublished Paper literature review discussing: *What is Understanding by Design, theoretical underpinnings of UbD, constructive alignment, quality outcomes for students, and benefits to educators applying UbD.*

Strong parallels exist between UbD (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, Yurtseven & Altun, 2017) and Constructive Alignment (Biggs, 1999) such as the theoretical tenets of student learning and outcomes, teaching conception and curriculum objective and assessment alignment. Biggs and Tang's (2011) *Constructive Alignment Theory* frequently appear in literature on program or curriculum development or design as the lens for alignment and mapping, with the incorporation of other learning theories and design models for assuring learning (Goode et al., 2010; Millear et al., 2017; Toetenel & Rienties, 2016; Wijngaards-de Meij & Merx, 2018). Although frequently used for quality learning and teaching outcomes it is not a design framework or process. Although a parallel exist between UbD and Constructive Alignment theoretical concepts of learning and teaching, this research project did not investigate the validity of UbD framework through investigating the theoretical underpinning and principles aligned to the context of HE.

2.6. Research questions

The purpose of the research project was to investigate if the UbD framework processes and tools are suitable to design courses within HE. Therefore, the overarching research question was:

Which UbD design framework processes and tools (if any), may be suitable for the development of a course design framework for the University School of Business disciplines?

The sub research questions were used to breakdown and further explore the main research question. Research sub-questions:

- (RSQ1) What are the TEQSA requirements and is there an alignment with UbD design framework processes and tools?
- (RSQ2) What are the university School of Business educators' course design practice and perceptions of TEQSA requirements?
- (RSQ3) To what extent does the School of Business educators' design practices and TEQSA perceptions align with UbD design framework processes and tools?

2.7. Summary

This chapter has outlined the literature which highlights a gap and need for a design framework that will provide the educator with guidance and structure to design courses and respond to the quality agenda. The following chapter outlines the methodology to explore the research questions presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology and rationale for the approaches selected. Following this introduction, a foreward is provided of the wider context of the university which contributes to the rationale for the chosen research methodology. Section 3.2 explains the research paradigm adopted for the study, section 3.3 outlines and explains the research design stages. Sections 3.4 and 3.5 describe the two participant groups and the method and criteria for selection. The data collection process (section 3.6) and the data analysis reflexive approach (section 3.7) is described, with explanation of the derivation of emergent themes. Section 3.8 describes the ethical considerations undertaken to conduct the project.

Recent strategic changes to the wider context of the university have resulted in significant challenges to the educator participants,' their learning and teaching praxis and educator role. The university has undergone strategic changes in response to TEQSA registration audits and compliance with HESF through the implementation of the university Academic Plan 2019–2022 (the university, 2020). This has resulted in program rationalisation, redesign and re/accreditation, the revision and introduction of new policy and procedures, the introduction of quality course improvement processes, and learning and teaching initiatives and directives to ensure quality learning and positive student experiences.

3.2. Research paradigm

A constructivist paradigm of research was adopted for the research project exploratory investigation. This approach was appropriate as the constructivist approach constructs meaning with actions and outcomes situated within a specific context, culture, organisation, and time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The rapid succession of changes to the wider context of the university could influence both educator and professional participants' reality, perspectives, and perceptions, and therefore shaped their interpretations (Creswell, 2009). Being an insider/outsider researcher, having existing relationships with targeted participants and an in-depth understanding of the university policies and procedures, has placed me within a unique position to explore both the educators' and university's paradigm of course design. As the researcher, I explored the interpretations of the educators'

perceptions of course design within the university context and social construct of the School of Business. I was able to gain insights into the participants' subjective experiences and attitudes toward course design, the university's wider perceptions and UbD processes and tools for designing a course to inform the extent in which it can meet both educator and the university needs (Yin, 2016).

The qualitative methods of document reviews and semi-structured interviews are predominant within a constructivist paradigm (Martens, 2019). A review of documentation, and Academic Quality Unit professional staff [the university wider context and construct] interpretation of educators' course design, allowed the researcher to draw meanings from multiple interpretations for results, rather than on the assumptions drawn as an insider researcher.

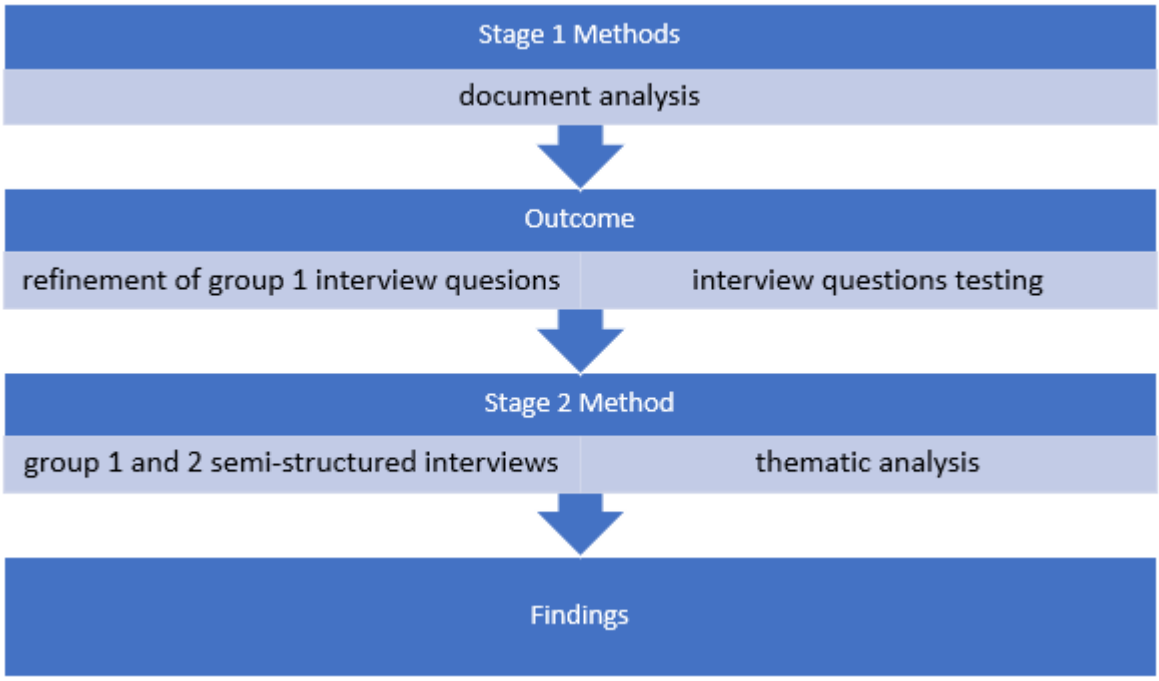
3.3. Research design

A qualitative approach to the research project's exploratory investigation aligned with the constructivist paradigm as it enabled the university educator and professional staff participants to draw and construct meaning from their learning, prior experience, and knowledge (Churchill, 2013). The use of semi-structured interviews and open-ended questions provided the opportunity for both participant groups to reflect on their worlds, lived experiences, and opinions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Also, the conversational mode of the semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to follow up on responses important to the participant and the direction of the project, which structured interview questions and a prescribed place and time schedule cannot afford (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The research design consisted of two stages, as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Conceptual Diagram of Research Design



The Stage 1 investigation consisted of an analysis of documentation authored and endorsed by the University and available through the official Policy Library. A search was conducted of the University Policy Library [category Programs and courses], including University policies, procedures, schedules, and definitions. The search terms included: course, course design, curriculum, curriculum design with cross references to development, processes, tools or guidelines, which rendered a number of results. Also relevant TEQSA documentation, as well as the HESF, which informs the University's learning and teaching and influences the participants' operating environment, were identified. Other authorised learning and teaching university documents were identified that were not in the Policy Library. The examination and interpretation of the university policies and procedures, along with learning and teaching documentation, TEQSA guidelines and resources, and HESF threshold Standards provided insight into university and governing bodies perspective of course design requirements and expectations (Bowen, 2009). The insights garnered from the document analysis enabled the researcher to refine the interview questions for the participant groups (Yin, 2016) in Stage 2. Further, the review and evaluation of the documentation confirmed generalised themes that were compared with the participants' responses (Creswell, 2018).

Stage 2 consisted of semi-structured interviews for two groups and a reflexive thematic analysis. The two interview groups were the university educators of the School of Business [Group 1] and the university Academic quality unit professional staff [Group 2]. Prior to conducting educator interviews, a pilot of the questions was conducted to ensure validity and rigour (Mikuska, 2016). This pilot group of two Law educators provided feedback on the question construction and interpretation. The feedback was used to refine the semi-structured interview questions further for use in Stage 2.

The university educator interviews were conducted first, which provided insight into university educators' level of knowledge and interpretation of course design and explored their awareness and knowledge of the UbD framework principles and processes, the university expectations, TEQSA requirements, and HESF Standards to identify similarities and differences. A reflexive thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019) was applied to the analysis of the educator interview responses. The researcher utilised the insights gained from the knowledge generated through the educator responses and used this information to re-focus and refine the interview questions for the professional staff (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The professional staff interviews provided insights into the university's interpretation of the course design requirements and the expectations and perceptions of educators' course design practices. A separate reflexive analysis of the interview responses was conducted to identify the emergent themes.

The themes resulting from the thematic analysis of the Group 1 and Group 2 responses were collated and compared. From the comparison, the overall emerging themes were identified that responded to the research questions.

3.4. Group 1—university educator participants

Five participants from the School of Business were interviewed. I had deep knowledge of the school context and an established working relationship with some staff in the school. Also, I was aware that for a high number of School of Business educators, English was their second or third language. Therefore, for the educators that participated in the project, it may have bearing on the expression used in their responses and influence the interpretation of the data. As an insider researcher, I was aware that this could influence the participants' responses and the integrity of

the study (Yin, 2016). The participants who were identified and invited satisfied the preferred inclusion criteria:

- Each educator came from a different disciplinary group within the School.
- The researcher had no or very little prior interaction with the participant in designing or redesigning a course.

Participants were drawn from the Finance, Politics, Computer Information Systems, Management, and Marketing disciplines. Drawing university educator participants from a variety of disciplinary groups provided diverse insights into meaning-making and decisions in course design, and their interpretation of HESF compliance. It was anticipated that participants drawn from the School of Business would possibly not have formal graduate or post -graduate education qualifications like that of the School of Education. From the interview responses, it was found that one participant had postgraduate formal training in course design, one had no formal training, and the three others had extensive years of teaching within the University sector only.

3.5. Group 2—university professional participants

Two university professional staff from the Academic Quality Unit, within the Academic Transformation Portfolio were interviewed. These participant's duties focused on course improvement conducted through curriculum conversation activities to ensure compliance with the TEQSA improvement requirements. Curriculum conversations were conducted with educators to address student feedback flagging issues arising from student feedback regarding anything within the course, such as assessment, content navigation, teaching, etc. The participants were able to provide an organisational perspective of educator expectations and responsibilities to fulfil compliance requirements for course design and the University's expectations and documentation requirements.

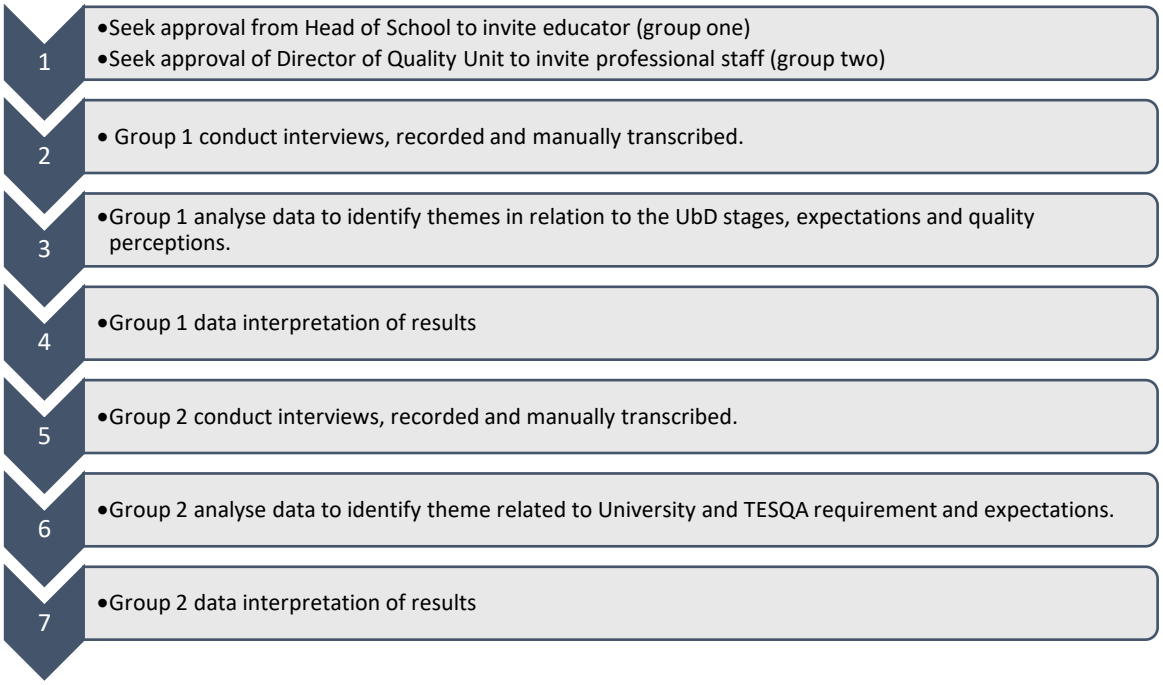
These participants were recommended by the Director of Academic Quality due to the correlation between the project intent and professional staff work focus across various schools, educators, and courses. Although recommended by the Director, participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the project. Participants were made aware that their interviews were conducted after the educator interviews, and all information was confidential and de-identified.

3.6. Data collection

The following step of data collection was undertaken to gain insights into the suitability of the UbD framework for use in the HE context. Figure 2 outlines the data collection process for Stage 2 research design.

Figure 2

Conceptual Diagram of Data Collection Process Stage 2 Research Design



After gaining relevant approvals for the research project, the two participant groups were interviewed. For participants in both Group 1 and Group 2, individual one-hour semi-structured interviews were conducted online at a time and day nominated by the participant, with the interviews both audio and video recorded. Group 1 interview questions were framed around the three stages of UbD:

1. Have you heard of Understanding by Design? Or backward mapping? *If yes* – Can you describe what it is?
2. How do you go about designing/planning your course/curriculum? What documentation do you keep when you design or redesign your curriculum?
3. How do you decide what the student will need to achieve as outcomes from the course?

4. What type of assessment evidence do you collect to document and validate student learning and achievement? How do you determine the type of assessment evidence used in the modules/topic for the course?
5. Do you have learning activities? *If yes* – How do you select learning activities to use for the modules/topics in the course?
6. What documentation do you keep of your designing/planning of the course?
7. Have you heard of TEQSA? *If yes* – what are the requirements for course design?

Group 2 interview questions were:

1. At the course level of curriculum design, what are the requirements or expectations from TEQSA?
2. What type of documents or evidence are academics expected to keep for course curriculum design work? Either by the university or to satisfy TEQSA?
3. What does the University expect academics to know or do about TEQSA and HESF?
4. Does the university use any frameworks, tools, or systems that is used to evidence TEQSA standard around course design?

3.7. Ethical considerations

The researcher acted in accordance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (2018) and the *National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2018). Institutional ethical approval was obtained from the university Human Ethics Committee (H20REA313) (see Appendix A) before commencement of the project.

After approval was granted, the researcher recruited participants for the Group 1 [educators] and Group 2 [professional] interviews. Group-specific Project Information Sheets and Consent Forms were sent to each participant (see Appendix B). The Group 1 Participant Information Sheet addressed the perceived psychological risk in disclosing aspects of their experience and attitudes to course design and course evaluation for performance purposes and identified the opportunity for the participant to verify and edit interview transcripts and meeting documentation. Immediately after the interviews, transcripts were generated. The transcripts were sent to the participants, who were given two weeks for verification, prior to the data being analysed. In accordance with ethics requirements, the data

was not shared or made openly or publicly available to the University or school staff to assure participant's confidentiality and privacy.

The Group 2 Participant Information Sheet addressed the psychological risk of disclosing information of specific courses and educators' practices (see Appendix C). The data had the potential to contain details and evaluative information that could directly identify both the educator and professional participant, in conjunction with the course and interview data. To ensure confidentiality, participants were provided with the opportunity to verify and edit interview transcripts. Immediately after the interviews, transcripts were generated. The transcripts were sent to the participants and given two weeks for verification. During the interview introduction, the participants were made aware that any educator names and course codes within the transcripts would be de-identified or substituted with a non-identifying code.

Both participant groups were advised that they could leave the project at any time prior to conducting the interviews, but withdrawal after interviews would compromise the data. Group 1 and Group 2 participant data were de-identified for protection and privacy. Both participant groups Participant Information Sheets and Consent forms are stored in data storage and security in accordance with the *Human Ethics Data Management Procedure* (The university, 2020).

3.8. Data analysis

The researcher used a reflexive thematic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2019) to analyse data for both interview group data sets. This approach was suited to the constructivist research paradigm and included both deductive and inductive analytical methods of data analysis (Braun & Clarke 2020). It could also encompass both a semiotic level of thematic development, i.e., looking at surface meanings of data, evolving from description and latent level that identifies as well as examine the underlying ideas and conceptions that form the semiotic data content (Braun & Clarke 2006).

The data analysis broadly followed the process as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. Data familiarising
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes

5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

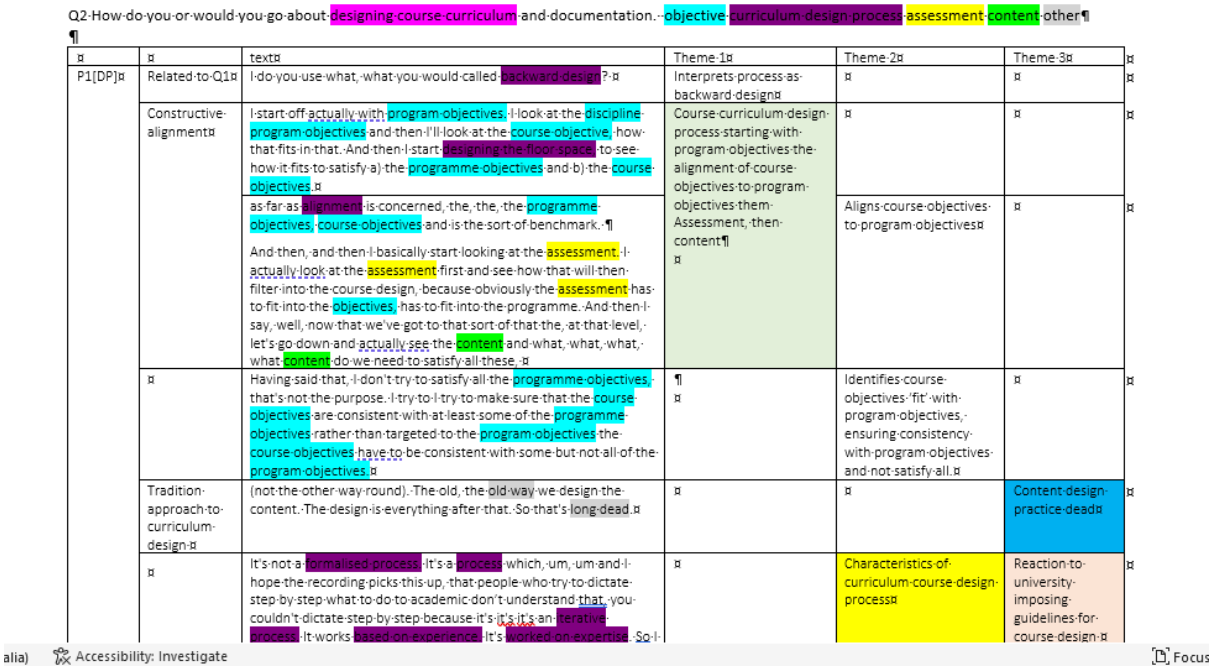
The same approach to data familiarisation of the interview data set was taken for both interview groups. The first pass of familiarisation began with the transcribing of the individual interview data, each of the individual data was read and reread, noting any initial similarities or common ideas, categories, or similar, that arose. In the second pass of familiarisation, the individual interview data was separated and collated under the relevant questions. Again, data was read and reread, noting commonalities and differences that arose.

The researcher applied both an inductive and deductive approach to the initial analysis of both interview group data sets to generate codes and develop broad patterns and themes (Creswell, 2018). During this process, each group's data set was categorised, colour-coded, and relevant data extracted. Each interview group's data set was initially analysed independently.

Both an inductive and deductive approach was initially taken to the interview group one data set. A deductive approach was taken to questions 2- 5. These questions were based on the UbD stages: 1) identify desired results, 2) determine acceptable evidence, and 3) plan learning experiences and instruction. These UbD stages functioned as preconceived codes against which the data was analysed. An inductive approach was taken to questions 1, 6 and 7. These questions were discrete and each with a unique focus and no preconceived codes to test or compare responses against (Creswell, 2018). After the initial coding of group data sets, the themes were generated and collated. The themes from questions 2 – 5 were generated and collated under the UbD stages. For questions 1, 6 and 7, the themes were collectively identified. Relevant data extracts were then collated under the themes. See Figure 3 for an example of generating the initial codes and themes.

Figure 3

Example of Generating Initial Codes and Searching for Themes.



Q2·How·do·you·or·would·you·go·about·designing·course·curriculum·and·documentation.··objective·curriculum·design·process·assessment·content·other¶

¶

¤	¤	text¤	Theme·1¤	Theme·2¤	Theme·3¤	¤
P1[DP]¤	Related·to·Q1¤	I·do·you·use·what,·what·you·would·called·backward·design?·¤	Interprets·process·as·backward·design¤	¤	¤	¤
	Constructive·alignment¤	I·start·off·actually·with·program·objectives,·I·look·at·the·discipline·program·objectives·and·then·I'll·look·at·the·course·objective,·how·that·fits·in·that.·And·then·I·start·designing·the·floor·space,·to·see·how·it·fits·to·satisfy·a)·the·programme·objectives·and·b)·the·course·objectives.¤	Course·curriculum·design·process·starting·with·program·objectives·the·alignment·of·course·objectives·to·program·objectives·them·Assessment,·then·content¶ ¤	¤	¤	¤
		as·far·as·alignment·is·concerned,·the,·the,·the·programme·objectives,·course·objectives·and·is·the·sort·of·benchmark.·¶ And·then,·and·then·I·basically·start·looking·at·the·assessment.·I·actually·look·at·the·assessment·first·and·see·how·that·will·then·filter·into·the·course·design,·because·obviously·the·assessment·has·to·fit·into·the·objectives,·has·to·fit·into·the·programme.·And·then·I·say,·well,·now·that·we've·got·to·that·sort·of·that·the,·at·that·level,·let's·go·down·and·actually·see·the·content·and·what,·what,·what,·what·content·do·we·need·to·satisfy·all·these,·¤		Aligns·course·objectives·to·program·objectives¤	¤	¤
	¤	Having·said·that,·I·don't·try·to·satisfy·all·the·programme·objectives,·that's·not·the·purpose.·I·try·to·I·try·to·make·sure·that·the·course·objectives·are·consistent·with·at·least·some·of·the·programme·objectives·rather·than·targeted·to·the·program·objectives·the·course·objectives·have·to·be·consistent·with·some·but·not·all·of·the·program·objectives.¤	¶ ¤	Identifies·course·objectives·'fit'·with·program·objectives,·ensuring·consistency·with·program·objectives·and·not·satisfy·all.¤	¤	¤
	Tradition·approach·to·curriculum·design·¤	(not·the·other·way·round).·The·old,·the·old·way·we·design·the·content.·The·design·is·everything·after·that.·So·that's·long·dead.¤	¤	¤	Content·design·practice·dead¤	¤
	¤	It's·not·a·formalised·process·It's·a·process·which,·um,·um·and·I·hope·the·recording·picks·this·up,·that·people·who·try·to·dictate·step·by·step·what·to·do·to·academic·don't·understand·that,·you·couldn't·dictate·step·by·step·because·it's·it's·it's·an·iterative·process.·It·works·based·on·experience·It's·worked·on·expertise.·So·I·	¤	Characteristics·of·curriculum·course·design·process¤	Reaction·to·university·imposing·guidelines·for·course·design·¤	¤

alia) Accessibility: Investigate Focus

An inductive approach was only used for the Group 2 interview data set. These questions were discrete, with each having a unique focus, and there were no preconceived codes against which to test or compare responses. As Group 2 interview questions differed from those used in Group 1, separate themes were generated and collated.

The themes generated for both Group 1 and Group 2 interviews were reviewed and verified in relation to the coded extracts, and also to the entire data set. A conceptual map synthesising the codes across Group 1 interview questions was produced to identify the relationships that align with the UbD stages and contribute to themes (see Appendix B). Ongoing refinements were made to narrow and refine the themes. The Group 1 themes and data extracts were continuously compared against the UbD stages and specific process stages to refine the themes. A conceptual map for the Group 2 themes was not produced as the themes were distinct and discretely derived from the questions within the data set analysis.

On completion of the reflexive thematic analysis, the generated themes and selected data extracts from both groups were compared and collated to identify overlapping coherent themes in order to justify overall emergent research themes

that responded to the research questions (Creswell, 2018). Throughout the data analysis the insider research was aware of the bias due to the familiarity and close proximity to the participants. To reduce the potential bias of the finding the insider researcher compared the data and findings against other data sources such are research projects. She also checked for alternative finding explanations through discussion with fellow researcher peers.

3.9. Summary

This chapter outlined the methodological approach to generate emergent themes to answer the research question. An account of the qualitative approach is described to investigate the UbD framework processes and tools, educator practices and if the templated documentation could capture the educator's key course design decisions. From the data collection method, the document analysis and the interviews, the research set out to determine whether the UbD process and tools would satisfy TEQSA, HESF, and University requirements. The following chapter outlines the findings of the data collection.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the document analysis including an introduction to the sub sections and a summary of findings (Section 4.2). Section 4.3 introduces the Semi-structured interview and presents the findings and themes of Group 1 (Section 4.3.1) and Group 2 (Section 4.3.2).

4.2. Document analysis findings

4.2.1. Introduction

A document analysis was conducted across three different document sources. The researcher gained insight into university and governing bodies perspectives of course design requirements and expectations. Section 4.2.2 identifies the university documentation drawn from the Policies Library, Learning and Teaching sites, and documentation focusing on related 'course' terminology. Section 4.2.3 identifies the relationship of course to TEQSA documentation of guidance notes and program characteristics. Section 4.2.4.—HESF Standards identifies the relevant standards based on the program intent and characteristics that align to the UbD stages.

4.2.2. The university documentation

A search was conducted of the university Policy Library [category Programs and courses], including University policies, procedures, schedules, and definitions. The search terms included: course, course design, curriculum, curriculum design with cross references to development, processes, tools or guidelines, which rendered a number of results. In the university Policy library, *course* is defined as a discrete element of a program. The only reference to course design is included in the definition of *curriculum design* as "intentionally crafting the architecture of the entire suite of learning activities and experiences to successfully complete a program, courses or study component to achieve the stated learning outcomes." (The university, 2021. n.p)

Table 1 identifies these policies, procedures, and schedules and describes the content in relationship to search terms. Note: The university Policy Library does not contain guidelines.

Table 1

Policies, Procedures, and Schedules Related to Course.

Policies, Procedures, Schedules	Relationship
Academic Programs and Courses Quality Policy	Standards underpinning the development, accreditation and quality assurance of Academic Programs and Courses
Course	**Definition overview**
Course Management Procedure Course Nomenclature and Coding Schedule Course Specifications Requirements Schedule	Administration, codification and systematisation of the course
Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Procedure Coursework Curriculum Design and Structure Schedule	Curriculum design structure related to programs requirements to meet accreditation
Coursework Curriculum Design Policy	Relationship to program structure, clustering, course type, unit value, conditions
Coursework Quality Assurance - Evaluation Procedure	Curriculum quality assurance framework and initiative for program assurance
Program Accreditation Procedure	Course outline and synopsis as part of program accreditation
Program Development Team Schedule	Roles identified to assist in course curriculum development

Little official and current university Learning and Teaching documentation was found. No single Hub site storing documentation related to course, course design, development, processes, tools, or guidelines was found. A single internal Learning and Teaching Intranet SharePoint site *Academic Development* was identified. Though the site contained various links, the university Learning and Teaching priorities document directed related to course: 11 Minimum Requirements for online learning and teaching. This document identifies the good practice elements present for online courses but not a process, guideline or tool for the design or development of a course.

As an insider researcher, I had the advantage of accessing and sourcing documentation from legacy learning and teaching sites that educators had access to previously. The learning and teaching documents appraised did not address the designing of courses or learning, but administrative information to enact program

characteristics, policies and the university learning and teaching directives, and the associated elements of learning and teaching such as assessment design, rubrics development, and LMS ‘how to’ documents. No processes, guidelines or tool for course design or a framework for development were found. From the documentation examined, a generalised theme emerged: There are no specific university process, guidelines or tools for course design and development to guide the educator.

4.2.3. TEQSA documentation

TEQSA provides guidance notes and other resources to universities. The guidance notes express the nature of the topic, the underlying intent of those standards, the risks to the quality of education and the evidence that TEQSA is likely to look for. In the TEQSA documentation, course is referenced as a unit of study within the program to ensure program quality. Table 2 identifies TEQSA guidance notes and program characteristics translatable to course [unit of study].

Table 2

Identification of TEQSA Guidance Notes and Program Characteristics Translatable to Course.

Guidance Notes	Relationship to Course*
Guidance note: Course design (including learning outcomes and assessment)	Characteristics of a program • content, duration and sequencing of the elements (units) of a course study. • detail on the nature of the content required of a HE course • address accreditation of the course of study by a professional body, • specify the learning outcomes for a course • Methods of assessment also need to provide students with timely feedback on their progress towards achieving course learning outcome standards
Guidance note: Staffing, learning resources and educational support	Quality of learning resources to be: • relevant to the expected learning outcomes • appropriate to the level of study; and • authoritative, and up to date.

Note: *Course as defined by TEQSA as a unit of study

4.2.4. HESF standards

The HESF Standards were compared against the three stages of the UbD framework. The program-related characteristics of the standards were mapped to the details unpacked in the UbD stages process. The two standards identified as directly related to *course* were Standard 3.1— Course Design, and Standard 1.4—Student Participation and Attainment. Table 3 identifies the alignment of UbD stages to HESF Standards.

Table 3

UbD Stages Alignment to HESF Standards

UbD Stages	HESF Standards
1. Determining desired outcomes	HESF 1 Student participation and attainment–1.4 Assessment and outcomes no. 1 and 2 expected and specific learning outcomes to course HESF 3 Teaching–3.1 course design, no.2 and no.3 pertaining to teaching, content and learning activities and no.5 professional accreditation of a course of study
2. Determine acceptable evidence	HESF 1 Student participation and attainment–1.4 Assessment and outcomes no 3. methods of assessment and no 4. demonstrate the learning outcomes
3. Plan learning experiences	HESF 3 Teaching–3.1 course design, no.3 pertaining to teaching and learning activities and no 4. achievement of expected learning outcomes

4.3. Interview findings

The following section presents the findings and themes of the group 1 and group 2 semi-structured interview. Samples of all interview data extracts can be found within Appendix 3: Emergent themes.

4.3.1. Group 1—university educator interviews

A detailed summary of the findings from the Group One interview questions 2—5 data set thematic analysis category and the resultant themes can be found in Chapter 5: Unpublished Paper. Other themes that emerged from the Group 1 interview questions 1, 6 and 7 were: 1) university imposing or dictating learning and teaching, and 2) a lack of knowledge of and responsibility to TEQSA and HESF.

Participants expressed a strong reaction to the university environment and its impact on them as educators. One participant expressed annoyance at the University dictating and imposing guidelines.

> that people who try to dictate step by step [course design] what to do to, academics don’t understand that, you couldn't dictate step by step; It's, it's just insane. It's, it's, it's dictated by people haven’t designed anything in their lives. It's dictated by people who think everything can be mapped exactly (P1)

Two participants commented on difficulty with the University's processes and procedures: "my difficulty at [the university]. It's not a complaint, it's the level of approval that is needed for us to make any changes" (P2); and:

> I do find quite a lot of limitation in terms of the technology. I know [the university] has a lot of technology but allocation of that and, and time to develop activities is difficult also. in the last couple of years…that structure of, the discipline has almost been completely taken away from us. (P4)

The second theme emerged around the educators' knowledge or awareness of TEQSA and the HESF. Participants demonstrated a varying level of awareness and perception of TEQSA as a governance agency and the HESF Standards. One participant expressed a vagueness about TEQSA and the HESF. "Yeah, I've heard of them, to satisfy some internal pilots, um, they need to add quality, but yeah, no, um, but I really don't understand what they do really" (P3). A participant was aware of TEQSA but did not perceive it as an imposition: "Well, TEQSA is just the government, the government imposing what they believe is minimum required standards and they've got every right to." (P1)

Participants confused TEQSA with the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF): "Are you talking about that, AQF levels thing? [shakes head to indicate no] … I seen those words, those acronym'' (P2); and

> Well, the, the TEQSA one you talk. Hang on a second. You're not talking about AQF? … no, sorry that I was getting that confused. No not as totally familiar with the TEQSA one and the other one then in that sense. I had been using the AQF [Australian Qualification Framework] levels. (P5)

Participants expressed vagueness of the HESF: "I'm, I'm aware of them [HESF], … Just heard about them, but not a lot, probably very little." (P5); "Yes, that's ah, I don't understand. I, I'm sorry. I'm not familiar with the actual details. I know the overall, yep" (P1). When asked for further details the participant stated: "Not currently no because… wasn't it updated recently or didn't it get revamped?" (P1).

Participants expressed a lack of obligation or responsibility towards both TEQSA and the HESF. “I don't feel any particular responsibility to them [TEQSA], I don’t feel any responsibility to that, I just making sure students do well” (P3); and “So I think, I think things like TEQSA and the HES framework, that they're admirable, you know, they're necessary. I think the operationalisation of that at our level [the university] is really poor.” (P4)

4.3.2. Group 2—university professional interviews

The analysis of interview data of the professional staff revealed the following themes: 1) TEQSA/HESF expectations and requirements are vague, 2) the University expectations or requirements are vague, 3) educators have little knowledge of or sense of responsibility towards TEQSA/HESF, and 4) a lack of expectations or tools to evidence course design.

This first theme addressed TEQSA’s and the University’s expectations and requirements. Participants agreed that the TEQSA expectations and requirements are vague: “I find the threshold standards and all of the TEQSA guidance notes just far too vague and I don't know why they feel like they need to be so vague.” (P7); and

> threshold standards, they're not that extensive really. And they're not, they’re kind of more high level … they aren't meant to be kind of, overly prescriptive and that they do want universities to have a certain amount of leeway in terms of how they, implement things or not. And So I think, in terms of what does TEQSA expect? it's hard to say, really, at that course level. (P6)

Participants expressed ambiguity around the documentation that determined the University expectations or requirements: “referring back to those overall values of the, you know, respect integrity, excellence as well. …, the minimum requirements [the university online requirements]” (P7); and

> Whatever policy document is in vogue at the time around, learning and teaching, that's to me what would be encapsulating the university's perspective so or expectations…the Academic Plan. … first year experience, embedding those

> principles into curriculum, workplace integrated learning and employability principles. … assessment policy and procedures in place at the time in terms …I feel like the University's expectations, … tend to be articulated in those types of documents. (P6)

One participant expressed a lack of university clarity of course expectations: “I think that things like what does the University expect at that level [course] is pretty badly articulated.” (P6)

The third theme addressed educators’ knowledge of or responsibility towards TEQSA and HESF as communicated by the University. Both participants were in agreement that educators had little awareness of TEQSA, and they felt no sense of responsibility to enact the requirements. “I don't think that they [educators] see that connection”, ”…people just don't understand the bigger context.” (P7); and

> People [educators] have no idea about that stuff. In the main, I would say that most people have, you know, absolutely no clue, about...even like the basic, like I guess, they might have some inkling that HE is regulated, like some kind of inkling, but how that is relevant to what they do know - no idea. (P6)

Both participants expressed their perception about the educators’ awareness of TEQSA and HESF expectations and requirements: “the vast majority think they're, you know, they're being interrogated by the police.”, “the vast majority of people consider it an enormous waste of their time.’ (P7); and

> And they see a lot of the initiatives, to kind of move in that direction as being the university, being overly prescriptive or taking away their freedom to be creative in their own courses or whatever…. you start using words like quality or, you know, the regulator or whatever, people think that it's like talking about a performance or whatever. (P6)

A participant commented on the educators’ discontent with the university imposing expectations and requirements: “… we've [educators] got all this stuff suddenly we have to do. And it's more like, no, no, these are the minimum requirements. This is

what is minimally expected, like most people [educators], should be going well and truly above this." (P7)

Both participants identified that the University could offer capacity building to increase educator awareness of TEQSA and the HESF: "But I think there's a very large kind of educative piece that is missing as well and, um…kind of really developing staffs capacity to understand and execute, um, good curriculum design" (P6); and "it wouldn't be an unreasonable expectation that, you know, some sort of little, you know, online course on that wouldn't be out of the ordinary.' (P7)

The fourth theme was around expectations or tools to evidence course design documentation kept by educators for course curriculum design work. Both participants agreed that TEQSA requirements around course design are not clear. "TEQSA are not actually specific in what they require in that area, and I would say none." (P7) Also, requirements that are prescribed at the program level: 'Well, my understanding of that threshold standards are, that they talk about course design, but of course…I mean program design. Yes. So I don't think they go down, to what we call the course level." (P6)

One participant expressed doubt regarding course curriculum documentation existence: "I would say most people would have no idea, what's expected of them, and people just make it up. And in terms of actually documenting decisions, the decision-making process would be seriously surprised if people did that.' (P6) But both participants agreed that clarity of expectation of evidencing is more likely around the institute and program level and, is strongly driven by TEQSA requirements.

but we've been quite specific in terms of what we [the university] require. Mostly because of the TEQSA accreditation … that was pointed out in our conditional registration that we needed more evidence around curriculum change … [HESF improvement or maintenance standards] I would argue that that's probably at the program level. (P7)

"I still think this is framed as being at the program level", 'All I can really go on is what's in the threshold standards and I guess like the guidance notes, but again a lot of those guidance notes are more institutional level." (P6)

Both participants acknowledged that the university has no software, framework or tools that could be used to capture program or course design work to evidence TEQSA requirements. “I think they're [frameworks or tools or systems] coming” (P7), and

> There's not really like a systematic approach to that as far as I'm aware…a kind of template or something to fill out. And I think as we move towards a curriculum management system and, um, I'm talking more here about core specifications rather than like really putting the meat on the bones to courses. (P6)

One participant commented on the reliance of people to fill the systems gap.

> we do have resources in the form of people. … currently what we have around curriculum design is more that we have people rather than systems who can help with that. So, the Ed. designers is, to me, are key folk in that picture. (P6)

4.4. Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the research methods. Across the individual data sets similar themes have been generated. As a result of the examination of all themes generated across the data sets of the analysis, four themes emerged. In later chapters, these emergent themes are discussed and addressed in relation to the research questions.

CHAPTER 5: UNPUBLISHED PAPER EQUIPPING ACADEMICS WITH TOOLS FOR DESIGNING COURSES AND LEARNING

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the unpublished paper that addresses the research sub question (RSQ3): To what extent does the School of Business educators' design practices and TEQSA perceptions align with UbD design framework processes and tools? The unpublished paper particularly discussed the findings of the educator interview findings regarding the course design practice alignment to the UbD stages and processes.

The unpublished paper was submitted on 21 June 2021 to the *Journal of University Learning and Teaching Practice*. A confirmation of the submission can be found in Appendix 4 Unpublished Paper Submission confirmation. Embedded below is a copy of the Unpublished paper as submitted to the publisher.

Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

Manuscript 3334

Equipping Academics with Tools for Designing Courses and Learning

Author #1

Author #2

Author #3

Equipping Academics with Tools for Designing Courses and Learning

Abstract

This study explores the alignment of academics course design practice and documentation to Understanding by Design (UbD) process and tools, within higher education. UbD is a student-centred design framework consisting of three stage process and templates for academics to design and plan courses or modules for student learning. COVID has highlighted the challenge to academics to adjust learning and teaching practices, identifying a gap in course and learning design capabilities in responding to assuring quality outcomes. Compared to other Australian educational sectors, the majority of academics are equipped with little or no pedagogical training and have no certification requirement to teach, design and plan courses. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with academics from different disciplines to discuss course design process, assessment, learning activities and documentation. A reflective thematic analysis was conducted comparing their design process and documentation to UbD process and tools to identify any alignment. The analysis found that the academics' course design process were not dissimilar to aspects of UbD process stages, but little documentary evidence or tools for designing were identified. Notably academics exhibited a content-centred design focus, particularly of assessment and learning activities rather than a student-centred focus. Based on the findings, further investigation into the UbD design framework is needed to equip higher education academics to plan and design learning experiences for students and capture pedagogical decisions to ensure quality outcomes.

Practitioner Notes

1. Understanding by Design (UbD) is a process and set of templates, that provides guidance for planning and designing learning for courses and modules that could ensure alignment of curriculum.
2. The UbD templates can act as a set of design standards during development, review, and quality control of new and existing course.
3. UbD has reported positive effects on student behaviour, increased alignment with desired outcomes, rigour of the assessment, student engagement and participation and, effect students' perceptions and understandings of knowledge.
4. The application of UbD process can, facilitate a shift from content-centred to student-centred course design, increase confidence in course planning, deepen understanding of learning activities, and enhance the role as the facilitator of knowledge.
5. Academics' course design processes are not dissimilar to the UbD processes, applying the UbD framework will require a shift to thinking like a designer, but may present challenges to current academic design practices.

Keywords

Understanding by Design, course design, learning design, academics, higher education

Introduction

Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) places stringent requirements on universities to evidence the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) threshold standards. Greater expectations are being placed on Australian academics to produce and evidence pedagogically sound courses and learning designs with student learning experiences and outcomes (Thomson et al., 2017) for the assurance of quality learning (*Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth)). Teaching is no longer simply the exposition of knowledge but the creation of an environment where learning takes place through a variety of activities to help students learn (Goodyear, 2015). Furthermore, the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) swift switch to the online learning environment has exacerbated problems faced by universities to remain viable in an ever-increasingly competitive market (EDUCAUSE, 2021). This new context has highlighted issues of academics' ability to adapt to the significant use and integration of technology and the reconfiguration of student learning (Karam, 2021). The challenge to recalibrate learning and teaching practices highlights gaps in course and learning design capabilities that have left academics grappling with assuring quality outcomes (EDUCAUSE, 2021).

There is clearly a need to further understand this academics' course and learning design practice. An exploratory study was undertaken to investigate using the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), the three-stage process and tools, for planning and designing learning for course modules and topics within the higher education sector. Could the UbD framework be utilised in such a way that alignment with TEQSA requirements was documented, while still fore fronting both the learner's journey and needs in a course within a larger program?

Empirical research on the application of UbD to course planning and designing learning has been predominately conducted in K-12 schools in America (Florian & Zimmerman, 2015; Kantorski et, al., 2019), and internationally in the primary and secondary school sectors (Acar et al., 2019). A growing body of international research has recently been conducted in the higher education sector applying UbD to the course design level (Joe & Lee, 2020; Lumbreras & Rupley, 2020; Michael & Librakin, 2016; Minbiole, 2016; Reynolds & Kearn, 2017). Although in Australia, the application of UbD has become widespread within the F-12 education sector for unit planning, the uptake in the higher education sector has been slow. A paucity of literature exists around research projects applying UbD to course design and planning of learning in Australian universities.

As a result, there is a clear need in the higher education sector for more alignment to required standards at a course level, not just a program level, and an exploratory study to be undertaken, considering the overarching research questions:

How do university academics' practices align to UbD processes? and
What tools are used in the higher education context?

Literature

Course Design

Learning design research has emerged since 2000 in response to the discourse within learning and teaching, as well as the need to produce quality experiences for students to assure quality outcomes in the changing higher education environment (Lockyer et al., 2013). A theme of learning design research explores the theoretical basis of the *teacher as designer* (Goodyear, 2015) and the *science of design* - the pedagogical pattern, and learning patterns (Laurillard, 2012) with the focus on quality teaching as a design activity to create effective learning. The second theme of existing research are studies focused on practice and the process of course design using software technology as a tool to design courses, as well as to map programs in conjunction with collaborative systematic approaches (Alammary et al., 2017; Thomson et al., 2017; Wijngaard-de Meij & Merx, 2018). But there is a scarcity of research investigating and theorising academics' practice within the learning design space (Goodyear, 2020), identifying processes, frameworks, and tools (Bennett et al., 2011), as well as what as designers of learning actually do (Goodyear, 2020).

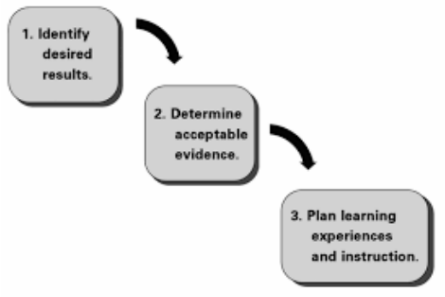
The way academics design their courses for learning has an influence on the time students spend in the virtual learning environment (Nguyen et al., 2018). In the past decade, research into learning analytics and learning design has emerged to address the changing university environment and, to respond to the growing need for data to assurance quality learning. Learning analytics highlights the key role of academic learning design in influencing student outcomes (Rienties & Toetenel, 2016). By capturing online data in real time and context of student interaction within the Learning Management System (LMS), the acdemics can evaluate pedagogical intent and the success of learning activities (Lockyer et al., 2013). Such studies have provided insight into academic learning design practices, student engagement and retention (Olney et al., 2018) in the LMS and impact on student performance (Nguyen et al., 2018; Rienties & Toetenel, 2016).

Understanding by Design

Since the 2000s, Understanding by Design (UbD) by Wiggins and McTighe, also known as Backward Design, has been used as a conceptual framework for planning, consisting of a process and design templates. The templates act as a set of design standards during the development, review, and quality control phases (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). The process and associated templates guide teachers in designing and planning in detail, units of curriculum or modules for courses to ensure alignment of curriculum within the broader context of whole programs (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). The framework consists of three stages: Stage One – Identifying desired results, Stage Two – Determine assessment evidence and Stage Three – Plan learning experience and instructions (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1

Understanding by Design: Stages of Backward Design (p. 18)



*Note. (*Wiggins & McTighe, 2015, p.18)

"Backward Design is goal directed" (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005, p. 56). Stage One identifies the key ideas and concepts for the student to understand. These concepts are reframed into either questions or outcomes, which will be demonstrated at the end of the course of learning as evidence of their understanding. Stage Two focuses on how the student will evidence these desired understandings. This allows for an alignment of 'valid, reliable, fair, authentic and flexible assessment methods (Brownlie et al., 2023) to demonstrate student understanding of Stage One. In a higher education context, Stage One would include course objectives, (understandings), topics (key concepts) already prescribed on the course specification document and possibly other university or professional accreditation standards or requirements. For Stage Two, this would be the course assessment details (summative) also prescribed on the course specification document, as well as formative or diagnostic assessment. Finally, Stage Three focuses on the designing and planning of learning activities and lessons aligned with Stage One key understandings, as well as Stage Two demonstration of these understandings through assessment. Within Stage Three, the educator determines and identifies the scope of knowledge, skills and processes and developing engaging and effective learning experiences. In a higher education context, this would be a list of course topics or module books with key theories, concepts and processes, readings, resources, tasks, and textbook content and activities.

Theoretical underpinnings of UbD

Backward design as an effective curriculum planning process has been supported by the curriculum design theories of Gagne (1977), Mager (1988) and Tyler's (1948) theories and ideas of curriculum and instruction. McTighe and Seif (n.d) identified that the UbD principles and processes, theoretical underpinnings to learning, have been grounded in cognitive psychology and validated by studies on student achievement. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) drew upon Bruner's (1972) ideas around transferability as learning and Dewey's (1933) work on the ideas and concepts of understanding, by students constructing meaning. "The goal of student understanding" is central to Backward Design (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005, p. 8), and" UbD instructional approaches call for the student to construct meaning through disciplinary inquiry" (p. 308).

A determination of the validity and suitability of UbD for learning and teaching within the Australian higher education sector has not been found, due to a paucity of literature examining the UbD in practice across sectors and, falls outside the scope of this paper. It is important to note, however, that the conceptual framework UbD, also referred to as Backward Design, strongly correlates to Biggs and Tang's (2011) constructive alignment theoretical framework and principles. The constructive alignment theoretical framework has been applied as a lens in higher education for alignment and mapping for assuring learning, although predominantly in the areas of design and development at the program, rather than course, level (Goode et al., 2018; Millear et al., 2017; Toetenel & Rienties, 2016; Wijngaards-de Meij & Merx, 2018). Acknowledging that strong parallels exist between UbD (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005; Yurtseven & Altun, 2017) and constructive alignment (Biggs & Tang, 2011), based on student learning and outcomes, teaching conception and curriculum objective, and assessment alignment suggests a suitability for Australian higher education application to course design.

Quality outcomes for students

International studies applying the three stages of UbD to design a course and modules have reported positive effects on student behaviour and achievement (Minbole, 2016; Ozyurt et al., 2021; Shaker & Nathan, 2018; Yurtseven & Altun, 2017). By modifying lectures and rewriting exams to align with desired outcomes, Minbole (2016) experienced an increase in student exam success, despite the increased rigour of the assessment. In addition, engagement in class activity increased and from evaluations, students felt that the instruction fostered engagement. Yurtseven and Altun's (2017) study of secondary pre-service teachers applying the UbD process stated that identifying big ideas piqued student interest and increased participation in lessons and identified a correlation to increased achievement. Shaker and Nathan's case study (2018) reported several positive results. The identification of intended results and the intentional planning of the modules were associated with student improvement and achievement of the learning objectives. By the end of the course, students' perceptions and understandings of the subject were nuanced and broadened, and they were challenged to think critically. In addition, the variety of assessments aligned with learning objectives met with positive student feedback and contributed to their success. Students also responded positively to the organisation of authentic learning experiences and instruction aligned to learning objectives and comment on the benefit to the course. Could the introduction of UbD into Australian academic design practice meet the need for recalibration of learning and teaching practices to assure quality outcomes for the student (EDUCAUSE, 2021)?

In international case studies applying Backward Design or the UbD process in course design, a number of positive outcomes were identified to the preservice educators' practice, as well as a shift of focus from teacher-centred design to student-centred learning (Lumbreras & Rupley, 2020; Michael & Librakin, 2016; Minbiole, 2016; Shaker & Nathan, 2018; Yurtseven & Altun, 2017). These could benefit university acdemics if trained in UbD. One study identified that by mentoring and training new instructors (postdoctoral fellow) through the three stages of Backward Design provided them with confidence in course planning, and the knowledge of developing a student's journey to achieve the desired goals (Michael & Librakin, 2016). In Lumbreras & Rupley' (2020) study of preservice K-12 teachers' training, a deeper understanding of the intentional manipulation of learning activities to increase student cognitive engagement was reported. In addition, a shift

in the participants' understanding of the role of transmitter of facts to facilitator of knowledge was reported. Yurtseven and Altun's study (2017) investigated professional training of secondary preservice teachers and found that the UbD process of designing units supported the desire to improve and use different methods and techniques, as well as to renew teaching practices from the traditional teaching practices. Overall, the Backward Design approach to learning had improved college instructors' facilitative authority and planning processes Reynolds & Kearns (2017) and teacher's professional development (Ulucinar, 2021).

The benefits identified to course design practice and the mind shift to student-centred learning and teaching suggest that there is a clear need to investigate the UbD design framework for academics within the Australian higher education.

Method

This exploratory study investigated university academics' course design practice and the alignment to the Understand by Design (UbD) framework, in an attempt to answer the research questions: How do university academics' practices align with UbD processes, and what tools do they use in the higher education context? The constructivist approach to the investigation sought to understand University academics' meaning-making and decisions in course design, and their design practice alignment to UbD. The researcher acknowledges that this relationship and circumstance had the potential to influence and therefore shape the participants' interpretations (Creswell, 2009) and that the school context, university learning and teaching culture, organisational change, and time of the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) may influence participants' construction and reality of course design. At the time of the study, the university initiated widespread strategic change, resulting in significant program structure rationalisation, redesign and re/accreditation, course design and development changes which may have affected academics' course design perceptions.

The study took place at a university in Australia. Participants were invited from the School of Business. The recruitment drew on academics from different discipline groups and possibly possessed minimal, if any, formal teaching or educational training. The participant selection was purposive, based on the limited contact with the researcher, who is also the Educational Designer for the School. The Educational Designer's role is to provide theoretical and pedagogical support and instruction in designing and developing courses. Prospective participants were provided with a research information sheet and consent form. Consent was obtained prior to conducting and recording the 40 – 60 minute semi-structured interviews.

In the interviews, each participant was asked a set of questions about their course design process, course outcomes, assessment and designing learning activities. These questions were aligned with the UbD framework's three stages. Prior to conducting interviews, a pilot of the questions was conducted with a group of Law academics to gain feedback on the question construction and interpretation to ensure validity and rigour (Mikuska, 2016). The interview questions were open-ended to encourage participant discourse. The researcher hoped to gain insights into participants' subjective experiences and attitudes, as well as to take advantage of potential knowledge generated through the dialogue and other information that could have arisen and be related to the study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

An initial reflexive thematic analysis broadly following the process as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019) was conducted by hand of the responses. An inductive and deductive approach to the analysis of the interview data was applied to generate codes and develop broad patterns and themes (Creswell, 2009).

Results

The participant responses were compared with UbD's three stages as outlined by Wiggins and McTighe (2005). The predominate themes from coding the interviews were divided into two parts: 1) alignment to UbD stages and 2) course design.

Alignment to UbD stages

The study interview questions were framed around the three stages of UbD. The analysis of interview data on academic design practices resulted in the responses identified in the categories and themes in Table 1. Categories 1—3 were intentionally aligned with the three stages of the UbD process.

Table 1

Interview Categories and Themes

Stage	Category	Theme
1	Identify desired results	Course objective and learning outcomes as standards Content and skills as the focus Defined student understandings
2	Determine acceptable evidence	Objectives as evidence for student achievement Varied comprehension of formative summative
3	Plan learning experiences and instruction	Purpose of learning activities Student cohort consideration

UbD Stage 1—Identifying desired results

Participants were asked how they decided what the students needed to achieve as outcomes for the course modules and topics. Topics are defined at the University as the broad overarching themes that can consist of multiple modules. Three themes emerged: 1) course objectives and learning outcomes as standards, 2) content and skills as the focus; and 3) defined student understanding.

In relation to unpacking standards,[course objectives, learning outcomes] participants focused on the course objectives or the course learning outcomes to determine student outcomes: "But I

guess it's a process of just thinking about what the overall course objective are" (P3); "I'll start with the course objectives … the course specification … course objectives and the rationale and synopsis …" (P5) and also, the course learning outcomes; "Well, it gets back to the learning, learning outcomes really specifically. So, you know, the learning outcomes say reflect and apply some kind of knowledge to particular case" (P5); So that would be the number one thing because … that I suppose what we are saying is the learning outcomes" (P4).

All participants use the term 'content' as the primary focus for determining student achievement, and this term reoccurred in the descriptions of participants' curriculum course design process: "First, to content theme [*sic*] of the course, the knowledge that content being adopted rather that the academic skills." (P3); "What is specific content, knowledge …. And then sometimes I will work backwards and say, right, I will, here's the content that I think is must have here. Here are the different components of content." (P5); "let's go down and actually see the content and what content do we need to satisfy all these [program, discipline, course objectives], not the other way round." (P1).

Participants did, however, acknowledge 'skills and attributes' in determining student achievement: "But then in terms of those graduate skills and attributes" and "I definitely think about the academic skills we want to develop" (P3); "technical skills that we do need to get them to learn, and sometimes they cover very abstract concepts." and "that would be very, very useful transferable skills [teamwork] that they have." (P2); "and trying to achieve some sort of key skills, adaptability, communication, whatever." (P1).

One participant defined 'understandings' from the learning outcomes identifying Bloom's Taxonomy's (Bloom, 1956) cognitive verbs to determine student outcomes to modules and guided the creation of learning activities: "I often go back to Bloom's Taxonomy, … knowledge, comprehension, you know, the [*sic*] kind of stuff, application…" and "… module one scaffolding knowledge related to the course learning outcomes so that if learning outcome one is defined and explained … than objective two and three starts talk about apply and develop a different leadership theories or change management theories." (P5).

UbD Stage 2—Determining acceptable evidence

Participants were asked how the educator determined the type of assessment items they would use to collect and validate the student achievement from the course modules or topics. Two themes emerged: 1) learning/course? objectives as evidence for student achievement and 2) a varied comprehension was demonstrated of formative and summative assessment. Three participants identified that objectives determined student achievement but did not address the depth or breadth of assessment such as types, weighting, marks, or alignment to objectives: "because obviously the assessment has to fit into the objectives" (P1); "But the challenge would be to work on the assessment [developing assessment] so we can achieve the outcome." (P2); "the assessment then is designed specifically to be able to address this [module content], course outcomes as well." (P5).

There appeared to be varying participant comprehension of the difference between formative and summative assessment when determining assessment types. The formative and summative assessment was mentioned in relation to content not student achievement: "So I basically just

make a call on, on this particular component of the content would be ideal, for formative assessment. This particular component would be ideal for summative, you know, and not ideal for formative because it's a bit more complex and it needs to be teased out more." (P5); "And then having sort of an earlier summative assessment item … now we're down into a specific sort of an analysis of a particular reading or something along those lines. … formative assessment throughout the course in terms of a low short stakes, weekly activities throughout the course as well." (P3); "And then the big part [learning outcomes] and, which is the problem solving and summative." (P2).

UbD Stage 3—Planning learning experiences and instruction

Participants were asked about learning activities in the course and what guided their selection of learning activities for modules or topics. Within each module should be learning activities or tasks that engage students in learning to achieve intended outcomes. Two themes emerged: 1) purpose of learning activities and 2) student cohort consideration. Interestingly, when responding to the question, only one participant referred to the different types of tasks as learning activities: "reading activities", "revision questions and tutorial activities", "summarising a piece of research and reading research paper", "outlining an argument". The other participants did not refer to tasks but used 'learning activities' as a generic term and claimed they were a part of the course: (P3); "I have a lot of learning activities all through the modules." (P5); "The learning activities is an integral part of the R.E.A.D approach [module structure]." (P1); "which is to have all of those learning activities, just be the assessment." (P4).

Participants' selection of learning activities was based on a number of purposes: 1) enhance learning; 2) develop assessment; and 3) develop knowledge and skills. The first purpose was to enhanced student learning: "The assessment [A of R.E.A.D module structure] is, that's where the learning activities go, that should actually be enhancing the learning of the students." (P1). The second purpose to develop assessment: "the learning activities as a whole, are doing that link [with assessment] and if they are, that's the focus of them." (P1); "which I think are going to develop those skills and the design [learning activities] that will help them [students] with those assessment items." (P3). The third purpose to develop knowledge: "what things I'd like them to know about knowledge and what things I'd like them to know about comprehension, and the other aspects of that taxonomy [Blooms]." (P5); "which [learning activity] is normally directed at specific, you know, academic skill as well, like tasks and academic skills and scope of the content for the week?" (P2).

Participants expanded on the learning design structures incorporated within the course design rather than describing the selection:

> And that R.E.A.D file, is listed to every module, which is Read [R]- that tells you what your readings are for the module … The extra [E] [extra readings] means where it supplements the readings with extra material that I think is relevant … The assessment is [A], that's where the learning activities go, that should actually be enhancing the learning of the students and the 'Digest' [D] is basically where I asked students to review the concepts that were done and to tick how they are going through that course topic. (P1)

> workbook activities every week that they fill out [*sic*]. But then at the end, so assignment one, an assignment two are those workbook activities. So, assignment one is the first three weeks of work. And assignment two is that the second three weeks of those activities that they do along the way. … what they were working on is clearly and explicitly the assessment. (P4)

Participants did identify the student cohort characteristics of learning style and employment needs, as considerations to select learning activities. Two participants identified a relationship of the cohort characteristics to the course: “And I also look at the cohort, … it can be a very hands-on technical programme [course] or it can be a more on the management side … and that's [also] for programs. (P3); “We have such a varied profile of students and how a school leaver, for example, wants to interact with your material is hugely different than how an executive wants to interact with your material.” (P4)

Two participants referred to student learning styles: “I believe it's what the cohort need and what they [*sic*] used to, what they, … their learning style is. And for me, I think I try to be as flexible and adapt, adapt to their learning style.” (P3); “And so, I try to mix and match the kind of activities that I think would be suitable for: a) different learners and how they learn” (P5)

For one participant the students’ future work skills and technology needs was a strong consideration: “They want to learn something like write a programme collaboratively and I get them to use the tools to help them to get their work done.” (P2)

Course design

Participants were then asked about their course design process and perception of UbD. The first theme related to the participants’ knowledge of the terms UbD or Backward Design. Three participants claimed to have not heard of either term UbD or Backward Design. Two participants had heard of the terms from other sources: “the information sheet you sent around, the first time I came across that term.” (P1). One participant described Backward Design in general terms as: ‘Well backwards design I assume means that you started from that essentially … overriding objectives, statements … and you work backwards and design the course around that” (P1). One participant referred to the more conventional way of designing courses to fit all in: “I definitely think about the academic skills we want to develop and sort of backwards map … assessment tasks … thinking about the particular readings … that we'd need from there. Um, … specific knowledge that we can use to a specific content … just a more conventional course design of finding a way to fit it [specific knowledge or content] in, I guess.” (P3)

The second theme related to the documentation or templating of the participants' design process, to evidence of the designing process or decision-making. No participant provided evidence of concrete documentation or use of templates for the course curriculum design. The most common location was in “the head”: “The records are kept here [points to head]” (P1) and “I would say mostly up in my head.” (P2). One participant cited whiteboard visualisation was used as a result of the educator’s iterative course curriculum design conceptualisation: “I do maps on whiteboards … Until I rub it out … I don't take a picture of the whiteboard, I don't, I don't copy down.” (P1).

Two participants stated reasons for the lack of documentation: “No, … that’s not how I tend to do things. … it's sort of something that I've discovered … through trial and error. So, if it works and

learning from other people you know." (P3) and "No. … I'm actually a qualified teacher, … I kind of do it almost naturally. … I honestly just jot it down. I got knowledge, I guess, from previous learnings and stuff like that." (P5).

Discussion

Academic knowledge of UbD

From the varying responses of the participants, the study revealed several insights. Firstly, from participants' responses and literature, it is suggested that there is a need for a greater focus on expanding academics' knowledge of frameworks, processes and tools to enable quality course level design. Most participants had not heard of the UbD framework. The interpretation offered by participants of Backward Design had similarities to UbD but lacked details of the stages or the intent of the process. It seems more likely that they were referring to the principles of constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang, 2011). In the higher education sector, these principles are widely known and accepted, and they are applied to the development and design of program-level curriculum (Goode et al., 2018; Millear et al., 2017; Wijingaard-de Meij & Merx, 2018). In addition, academics would be more familiar with constructive alignment principles as these are embedded within the learning and teaching culture (Kandlbinder, 2014), driven by program accreditation, and reinforced through TEQSA guidelines and principles to ensure quality student outcomes (*Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth)).

Shifting from content-centred to student-centred design approach

Secondly, other course design frameworks, theories or models were not mentioned, apart from the recognition of, or defaulted to, the "conventional", "traditional" curriculum alignment, content-centred approach to course design. Curriculum alignment privileges the design of the curriculum elements: assessment, objectives, content, and learning activities over the student learning. By aligning these curriculum elements, the academic can ensure the student has achieved the planned learning and fulfill the objectives evidenced by the assessment (Anderson, 2002, Crowell & Tissot, 1986) and to justify "a more conventional course design of finding a way to fit it [specific knowledge or content] in, I guess." (P3). UbD student-centred approach places the student at the centre of the design process, focusing on the student understanding, what the student needs to learn and demonstrate to validate the understandings and achievement. Objectives are clarified, unpacked, and give explicit meaning to determine the required content and coverage. The selection of teaching and learning activities are devised to engage students in the cognitive level of the objectives, and the objectives are aligned to assessment for the academic to determine if the students' learning has been successful.

Academics are challenged to make the shift from content-centred to student-centred learning design. In Minbiole's (2016) study, college instructors struggled to transition from "content expert disseminating knowledge" to student-centred learning and held the belief that everything in the course was important and that their job as an educator was to address every topic. This traditional approach to course design, where the academic works in isolation with an emphasis on content rather than the student, is no longer a viable approach (Reynolds & Kearn, 2017; Thomson et al., 2017). The views of the participants aligned with literature, indicating that academics tend to revert to learning design taxonomies from past experiences as a student in a traditional university,

content-focused environment (Goodyear, 2015; McKenney et al., 2015). Alternative student-centred design frameworks, processes, and tools like UbD need to be made available to academics to enable course designing and planning of course to ensure student learning and outcomes (Davis et al., 2021) for the assurance of quality learning.

Shifting assessment comprehension

Thirdly, responses suggest a varying comprehension of assessment purpose and types, when determining assessment to evidence student learning. The main focus of assessment appears to be evidencing the mastery of content rather than student learning. Summative assessment evidence the outcomes of the course, with planning the learning sequence to ensure content and its coverage for assessment. This notion appears to align with curriculum alignment rather than UbD. UbD Stage 2 calls for the educator to create learner-centred summative assessment, and design evidence for the transferability of student understanding to be demonstrated. The student demonstrates the capability to transfer knowledge learning and to apply learning to diverse contexts and within situated problems and not to solely evidence course outcomes, objectives or content. UbD requires the academic to think like an assessor and determine assessment tools that gather evidence focusing on student transferability of learning, not simply the recall of content (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005).

Shifting focus of learning activities

Participants appear to have varying comprehension of the purpose of learning activities and the planning process. No participants offered evidence of planning of modules, topics, learning activities, or the use of planning tools to evidence designing or planning processes. Activities for learning were seen as separate or detached from the planning process and student learning and understanding but attached to content skills and knowledge achievement. The “focus of teaching is to optimise student learning of what is worthy -not just ’cover’ the book, nor to ’teach, test and hope for the best’ irrespective of results’ (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005, p. 314). For university academics, course design activities and designing of learning is an assumed and expected part of academic work (Goodyear, 2013). Research has identified that there is limited evidence on how academics design courses, and what their level of knowledge and practices are (Goodyear, 2015; Laurillard, 2012; McKenney et al., 2015). It remains clear that further research in academic course design practice and professional development in applying design frameworks like UbD is required.

Lack of pedagogical training

One can only posit another possible reason for participants varying comprehension or knowledge could be explained by Australian academics in higher education are initially equipped with little or no pedagogical training and no certification requirement to teach (*Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021* (Cth)), compared to secondary teachers, who require an undergraduate education degree (QCT, n.d) or Vocational Education and Training (VET) teachers, who must hold a minimum of a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (*Standards for VET Regulators 2015* (Cth)). Course development and assessment creation are amongst the most complex responsibilities of a teacher in their role (Fives & Barnes, 2020). In fact, three out

of the seven Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011) are devoted to planning, aligning curriculum and assessment. It is therefore, completely understandable that those teaching in higher education without a teaching degree would struggle without support and explicit instruction in this area. Although course design, assessment design and planning of modules and topics are not required by TEQSA for accreditation, it is a common expectation of universities to facilitate transparency and evidence alignment of program objectives down to the course level.

TEQSA assumption of knowledge and skills of academics without a teaching degree, clearly suggests a need to rethink training and certification requirements, or university professional development activities focused on course design frameworks, processes, or tools like UbD to meet the greater expectation for pedagogically sound courses and learning designs with student learning experiences and outcomes (Thomson et al., 2017) for the assurance of quality learning (*Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011* (Cth)).

Conclusion

The exploratory study set out to identify if academics' course curriculum design practice alignment to Understand by Design (UbD) framework within the higher education context. The results of the interviews revealed some interesting themes which can be used as a basis for future studies implementing.

It is acknowledged that there are limitations to this study. This was an exploratory study sampling a small number of participants, of which the researcher has a previous working relationship, and these constraints could affect the reliability of the data and results. If other educators were interviewed and the sample size was larger, the results may have been different. This exploratory study only focused on one School within one university, investigating UbD processes and tools for Australian academics to use for course design within a university context.

Overall, academic course design practices are not dissimilar to the UbD design framework processes and stages**.** As Bennett et al. (2011) stated: "to further develop this emerging understanding of academic's design practice and bring this understanding to bear on the development of tools and strategies that can support and advance current practice" (p. 165). This challenge remains relevant today. Research is needed into Australian educator design practices and further investigation in applying UbD design framework to recalibrate learning and teaching practices to enable academics to design courses to assure quality outcomes for the student.

Conflict of Interest

The authors disclose that they have no actual or perceived conflicts of interest. The authors disclose that they have not received any funding for this manuscript beyond resourcing for academic time at their respective university.

References

Acar, A., Bahar, E., & Altun, S. (2019). Teaching probability through understanding by design: An examination on students' achievement, attitudes and views. *Education and Science, 44*(198), 115-147. https://doi.org/10,15390/EB.2019.7168

Alammary, A., Carbone, A., & Sheard, J. (2017). Curriculum transformation using a blended learning design toolkit. In R. Walker, & S. Bedford (Eds.), *Research and Development in Higher Education: Curriculum Transformation Volume 40: Refereed papers from the 40th HERDSA Annual International Conference* [Paper]. Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Anderson, L. (2002). Curricular Alignment: A Re-Examination. *Theory Into Practice*, *41*(4), 255-260. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4104_9

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. (2011). *Australian professional standards for teachers.* https://www.aitsl.edu.au/standards

Bennett, S., Thomas, L., Agonstinho, S., Lockyer, L., Jones, J., & Harper, B. (2011). Understanding the design context for Australian university teachers: Implications for the further of learning design. *Learning, Media and Technology*, *36*(2), 151-167. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439884.2011.553622

Biggs, J., & Tang, K. (2011). *Teaching for quality learning at university.* Society for Research into Higher Education.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health, 11*(4), 589-597 .https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Brownlie, N., Burke, K., & van der Laan, L. (2023). Quality indicators of effective teacher-created summative assessment. *Quality Assurance in Education.*

Bruner, J. (1972). Understanding: Ideas and meaning. In A. Gil (Ed.), *The relevance of education.* Allen & Unwin.

Creswell, J. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches,* (3thed.). SAGE

Crowell, R., & Tissot, P. (1986). *Curriculum Alignment*. Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED280874.pdf

Davis, N., Gough, M., & Taylor, L. (2021). Enhancing online courses by utilizing "Backward Design", *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism, 21*(4), 437-446. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2021.1924922

Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2018). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (5th ed.). SAGE

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think. A restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Houghton Mifflin Company.

EDUCAUSE. (2021). *2021 EDUCAUSE Horizon Report Teaching and Learning Edition.* EDUCAUSE. https://library.educause.edu/-/media/files/library/2021/4/2021hrteachinglearning.pdf?la=en&hash=C9DEC12398593F297CC634409DFF4B8C5A60B36E

Fives, H., & Barnes, N. (2020). Navigating the complex cognitive task of classroom assessment. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 92*, 103063. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103063

Florian, T. P., & Zimmerman, J. P. (2015). Understanding by Design, Moodle and blended learning: A secondary school case study. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 11*(1), 120-128. https://jolt.merlot.org/vol11no1/Florian_0315.pdf

Gayne, R. (1977). *The conditions for learning. (3rd ed.)* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston

Goode, C., Hegarty, B., & Levy, C. (2018). Collaborative curriculum design and the impact on organisational culture. *TechTrends*, *62,* 393-402. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-018-0268-7

Goodyear, P. D. (2013). In medias re: reframing design for learning. *Research in Learning Technology, 21*. https://doi.org/10.3402/rlt.v21i0.19909

Goodyear, P. D. (2015). Teaching as design. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education, 2*, 27-50. www.herdsa.org.au/herdsa-review-higher-education-vol-2/27-50

Goodyear, P. D. (2020). Design and co-configuration for hybrid learning: Theorising the practices of learning design spaces. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 51*(4), 1045-1060. https://doi.org/10.3402/rlt.v21i0.19909

Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (Cth) (Austl.)

Joe, J., & Lee, W. (2020). Using understanding by design to create a university orientation class grounded in information literacy. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Innovative Pedagogy. 2*(6), 81-92. http://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/sotl_ip/vol2/iss1/6

Kantorski, B., Camellia W., Sanford-Dolly, C. W., Commisso, D. R., & Pollock, J. A. (2019). Backward design as a mobile application development strategy. *Educational Technological Research and Development,* 67, 711–731. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-019-09662-7

Kandlbinder, P. (2014). Constructive alignment in university teaching. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education, 1*, 5-6. https://search.informit.org/doi/pdf/10.3316/informit.150744867894569

Karam, M., Fares, H., & Al-Majeed, S. (2021). Quality assurance framework for the design and delivery of virtual, real-time courses. *Information. 12*(2), 93. https://doi.org/10.3390/info12020093

Laurillard, D. (2012). *Teaching as a design science: Building pedagogical patterns for learning and technology*. Routledge.

Lumbreras, R., & Rupley, W. H. (2020). Pre-service teachers' application of understanding by design in lesson planning. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education. 9*(3), 594-599. https://doi.org/10.11591/ijere.v9i3.20491

Lockyer, L., Heathcote, E., & Dawson, S. (2013). Informing pedagogical action: Aligning learning analytics with learning design. *American Behavioral Scientists* 57(10), 1439-1459. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764213479367

Mckenney, S., Kali, Y., Markauskaite, L., & Voogt, J. (2015). Teacher design knowledge for technology enhanced learning: An ecological framework for investigating assets and needs. *Instructional Science 43*, 181-202. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-014-9337-2

McTighe, J., & Seif, E., (n.d.). *A summary of underlying theory and research base for Understanding by Design*. [PDF] McThighe & Associates Consulting, UbD Research Base. https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.29/4ba.49d.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/UbD-Research-Base.pdf

Mager, R., F. (1988). *Preparing instructional objectives: A critical tool in the development of effective instruction* (3rd ed.). CEP Press.

Michael, N. A., & Librakin, J. C. (2016). Understanding by Design: Mentored implementation of backward design methodology at the university level. *Perspectives 44*(2), 44-52. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1126353.pdf

Millear, M. R., Greenaway, R. R., & Schmidt, J. R. (2017, June 27-30). Using curriculum design principles to renew teaching and learning in developmental psychology. In R. Walker, & S. Bedford (Eds.), *Research and Development in Higher Education: Curriculum Transformation Volume 40: Refereed papers from the 40th HERDSA Annual International Conference* [Paper] Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Minbiole, J. (2016). Improving course coherence & assessment rigour: Understanding by Design in nonmajor Biology courses. *The American Biology Teacher 78*(6), 463-470. https://doi.org/10.1525/abt.2016.78.6.463

Mikuska, E. (2016). The importance of piloting or pre-testing semi-structured interviews and narratives. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473977754

Nguyen, Q., Huptych, M., & Rienties, B.(2018, March 7-9). Linking student's time of engagement to learning design and academic performance. *LAK '18: International Conference on Learning Analytics and Knowledge,* [Paper]. Association for Computing Machinery. https://doi.org/10.1145/3170358.3170398

Olney, T. Rienties, B., & Toetenel, L. (2018). Gathering, visualising and interpreting learning design analytics to inform classroom practice and curriculum design: A student-centred approach from the Open University. In: J. M. Lodge, J. C. Horvath,and L. Corrin,(Eds), *Learning Analytics in the Classroom: Translating Learning Analytics Research for Teachers*. (1st ed., pp. 71–92). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351113038

Ozyurt, M., Kan, H., & Kiyikci, A. (2021). The effectiveness of Understanding by Design model in science teaching: A quasi-experimental study. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 94*, 1-24. https://doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2021.94.1

Queensland College of Teachers. (n.d.). *Types of Teacher Registration—Teaching Registration Status | QCT*. Retrieved 28 May 2023, from https://www.qct.edu.au/registration/types-of-registration

Reynolds, H., & Kearn, K. (2017). A planning tool for incorporating backward design, active learning, and authentic assessment in the college classroom. *College Teacher*, *65*(1), 17-27. https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2016.1222575

Rienties, B., & Toetenel, L. (2016). The impact of learning design on student behaviour, satisfaction and performance: A cross-institutional comparison across 151 modules. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *60,* 333-341. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.02.074

Shaker, G. G., & Nathan, S. K. (2018). Teaching about celebrity and philanthropy: A case study of backward course design. *Journal of Non-Profit Education and Leadership, 8*(4) 403-421. https://doi.org/10.18666/JNEL-2018-V8-14-9233

Standards for VET Regulators 2015 (Cth) (Austl.)

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (Cth) (Austl.)

Thomson, E. A., Auhl, G., Hicks, K., McPherson, K., Robinson, C., & Wood, D. (2017). Course design as a collaborative enterprise: Incorporating interdisciplinarity into a backward mapping systems approach to course design in Higher Education. In R. Walker, & S. Bedford (Eds.), *Research and Development in Higher Education: Curriculum Transformation Volume 40: Refereed papers from the 40th HERDSA Annual International Conference* (pp. 356-367). [Paper 85] Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Tyler, R. W. (1948). *Basic principles of curriculum and instruction*. University of Chicago Press.

595 Toetenel, L., & Rienties, B. (2016). Learning design – creative design to visualise learning
596 activities. *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning*, *31*(3), 233-
597 244. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2016.1213626

598 Ulucinar, U. (2021). Findings of qualitative studies on Understanding by Design: A meta-
599 synthesis. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instructional Studies, 11*(2), 167-194.
600 https://doi.org/10.31704/ijocis.2021.009

601 Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Association for
602 Supervision & Curriculum Development.

603 Wijngaards-de Meij, L., & Merx, S. (2018). Improving curriculum alignment and achieving
604 learning goals by making the curriculum visible. *International Journal for Academic*
605 *Development*, *23*(3), 219-231. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2018.1462187

606 Yurtseven, N., & Altun, S. (2017). Understanding by Design (UbD) in EFL teaching: Teacher's
607 professional development and student's achievement. *Educational Science: Theory and*
608 *Practice*, *7*(2), 437-461. https://doi.org/10.12738/estp.2017.20226

5.2. Summary

This section presented the Unpublished paper which only addressed Research Sub-question 3—Identifying a need to investigate educator course design practice and UbD as possible solution to meet this need. In the following chapter, the other research sub question and main research question are discussed, addressing the emergent themes.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the emergent themes (Section 6.2) generated across the data sets. Section 6.3 presents the discussion of the three research sub-questions (Subsections 6.3.1., 6.3.2., and 6.3.3.). The sub-questions seek to clarify and contribute to the main research question. The final sub-section 6.3.4 presents a summary of key discussions to answer the research question.

6.2. Emergent themes

The themes that addressed the overall research, the document analysis and the two interview groups were collated (see Appendix B). The examination of the themes across the data sets resulted in four major themes. The emergent themes are addressed with the discussion of the main research question and sub-questions: RSQ1, RSQ2, and RSQ3. The four themes that emerged from the research project were:

1. An alignment exists between UbD stages and the Higher Education Threshold Standards.
2. Educator design practices exhibit similarities to UbD processes.
3. There seems to be a lack of clarity around requirements, expectations, and obligations.
4. No evidence or documentation exists or seems to be required for course design.

6.3. Discussion

6.3.1. Research sub-question 1

This discussion addresses the research sub question: *What are the TEQSA requirements, and is there an alignment with UbD design framework processes and tools?*

Technically no alignment exists between the TEQSA requirements and UbD design framework as they address two different levels of outcome. The UbD framework articulates processes or tools (set of templates) targeted at the course level to design and plan modules. TEQSA requirements and intent target the design of a program to ensure quality of student outcomes and to protect Australian

universities reputations. Guidance notes and resources provide advice and characteristics to inform systems, policies and procedures and are not intended specifically to address the individual course level. In general, the Guidance notes express the intent for a program, not a course, and provide no processes or tools.

If the program elements and characteristics expressed in the TEQSA Guidance notes are taken into consideration, a relationship can be identified between the two. UbD could be seen as actions and processes of these conceptualisations enacted through the templates to guide the course design. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) also identify a relationship and purport that the overarching elements of the framework could be applied to the level of programs and courses to serve as a blueprint for alignment.

Breaking this view down further, according to TEQSA (2017), program content and learning activities should be at the level and fit for HE and discipline. UbD ideas of level and fitness places the student cohort at the centre of: determining the extent and level of curriculum; prioritising content and learning; and considering the choice of resources and activities to evidence outcomes (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). The nature, quality, and level of learning outcomes fit and assessed at the course level appropriate to the program (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017; Australian Government). When compared, the UbD Stage 1 and template requires standards, usually overarching, such as course objectives, graduate outcomes etc. to be demonstrated through summative assessment. These need to be identified and provides a framework to determine teaching and learning priorities and guide design of learning activities, content and assessment (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005) appropriate to the course.

TEQSA (2017) and Australian Government (2017) and UbD agree that all methods of assessment should include measures of validity, appropriateness, fitness for purpose and effectiveness (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005.). UbD achieves this through the Assessment task blueprint [UbD template], by anchoring assessment to the learning outcomes and curriculum, authentic performance-based task, identifying product, performance and outcomes. Assessment is also evidenced through the use of rubrics and exemplars and to ensure reliability and validity for fairness (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). It is evident that these important TEQSA program elements and characteristics are echoed in the intent of UbD and achieved through the process and tools to ensure quality content, learning activities and assessment.

6.3.2. Research sub-question 2

This discussion addresses the research sub question: *What are the university School of Business educators' course design practice and perceptions of TEQSA?*

The educator's design process tended to be similar to a curriculum alignment approach, which privileges the design of the course elements over the student learning (Anderson, 2002). Educators mentioned the 'traditional approach' or 'conventional approach' which focuses on content-centred design. In curriculum alignment, student learning is the result of the design of the course elements, rather than the driver for designing and aligning of the course elements (Anderson, 2002). The curriculum alignment approach ensures knowledge [disciplinary], skills and module outcomes are aligned directly to course specification, rationale, and synopsis. Educators expressed the importance of ensuring student acquisition of knowledge and "…to be able to address this [module content], [and] course outcomes as well." (P5) is reflective of what students achieved as an outcome of studying the course. The design of course elements such as content, assessment, and course objectives were the educators' main driver to evidence student learning and outcomes rather than placing the students' learning as the starting point for designing the course elements.

Summative assessment of learning arose as the dominant paradigm (Harrison, et al., 2017) that synthesised and validated course content and as an outcome student competence reinforcing a content-centred approach to course design. Assessment was devoid of student learning but designed "to satisfy a) the programme objectives and b) the course objectives" (P1) to ensure the fulfilment of educators' responsibility to stay consistent with program objectives and university course specifications. The final assessment was designed to validate content acquisition and validated students' or graduates' competence of course materials and content, so the assessment," actually provided them [educator] with evidence that they [student] had, in fact, achieved in that area or mastered that skill or learnt that content." (P4) Assessment provided the evidenced that "…a graduate or a person who that leaves the course, is actually competent in that course." (P1)

Educators struggled with the notion of formative assessment (Bennett et al., 2011; Schellekens, et al., 2021), presenting mixed ideas. Assessment for learning (formative assessment) activities focused mainly on building students' underpinning

skills to scaffold content for summative assessment, rather than monitoring student progress to improve student learning outcomes and achievement (Ninomiya, 2016; Poortman, 2016). Educators confused graded assessment, as final evidence of student learning, with formative assessment as a tool for the students to improve the learning process (Dann, 2014). Formative assessment which assessed content [marked or graded], was low stakes and consisted of weekly activities throughout the course. Further discussion of the educators' varying comprehension of assessment purpose and types can be found in Chapter 5: Unpublished Paper.

The role of learning activities in the course design was not clear and possibly a consequence of minimal university learning and teaching direction, or policy and guidelines associated with course design available. Learning activity was mainly expressed as assessable items that contribute and form part of, or as the summative assessment at the end of the course. Learning activities focused on developing and scaffolding skills for the assessment rather than learning activities that were active, constructive, or interactive (Chi, 2009) enhancing student learning (Streveler & Menekse, 2017). Further discussion of the educators' purpose of learning activities within course design process can be found in Chapter 5.

Perhaps the minimal requirements of TEQSA teaching qualifications for the HE sector contributes to the diverse course design knowledge and practices. Further discussion of this point can be found in Chapter 5 Discussion, highlighting the disparity of pedagogical training of HE educators (Michael & Librakin, 2016; Ulucinar, 2021) and perspectives of training and professional development requirements.

University procedures, guidelines, design framework or supporting tools establish educator expectations or sense of responsibilities for implementing course design (Zundans-Fraser et al., 2016) or evidencing of the process or outcome of the activity. Perhaps the unclear university expectations and guidance of course design has contributed to educators' attitudes to the university. When "whatever policy document is in vogue at the time around, [for] learning and teaching," (P5) in response to TEQSA intent and program characteristic are implemented, educators perceived the university as hindering creative course design, unresponsive to implement change, and restrictive in implement new technologies.

TEQSA provides high level advice for evidencing programs, leaving the responsibility for the interpretation of this advice to evidence the requirements and satisfy the governing body for registration to the universities. Educators assign the

responsibility of compliance and the operationalisation of TEQSA requirements to the university to enact through the school or other structures. This absolves the educators of their responsibility or obligation toward the TEQSA and the HESF Standards. Participation within these structures equates to fulfilling the requirements for their job. Possibly this is why educators exhibit a limited comprehension and perception of TEQSA as *minimum standards, imposing*, *admirable*, but *necessary*. If the University provided clearer guidance addressing course design, framework, or tools, this may instigate a change in behaviour or perception of responsibility and produce a more consistent and coherent course design practice amongst educators (Zundans-Fraser et al., 2016).

6.3.3. Research sub-question 3

This discussion addresses the research sub question: *To what extent does the univeristy School of Business educators' design practice and TEQSA perception align with UbD design framework process and tools?*

The discussion of the educators' interpretation of UbD can be found in Chapter 5. Further to the discussion in Chapter 5, the results indicated that educator design practice exhibit similarities to UbD stages but lacked detail and intent of the process.

Educators' process of course design and the application of the course element align with a content focus design approach. UbD design framework and process is a student-centred approach. Student understanding is the driver that underpins the content coverage, the design of learning, and the development of assessment and rubrics. UbD processes and templates focus on capturing the educators' decisions and designs, and act as a set of design standards during development, review, and quality control (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). The lack of concrete documentation or tools to evidence course mentioned in the educators, interviews reinforce the fact that "there's not really like a systematic approach to that [evidencing course design] as far as I'm aware, a kind of template or something to fill out [document]". (P5) In absence of expectations and guidance, educators seek out guidance from other educators and call upon their own personal experiences to design courses (Goodyear, 2015; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) they perceive as providing quality experience for the students.

Although educators didn't intentionally cite UbD, elements identified in the course design process; learning objectives; assessment; learning activities; and cohort requirements were discussed that are also inherent within the UbD design process. Although this alignment may have been to UbD, the knowledge and application of these course design elements can also be identified in constructive alignment principles and are more likely a result of the University's acculturation of constructive alignment principles (Biggs, 1999). These principles underpin TEQSA intent and requirement for accreditation and program development to ensure quality programs (Kindlbinder, 2014) rather than design at a granular level of pedagogically sound courses. The introduction of the UbD framework and process to educators' design practice will be challenging (Ulucinar, 2021). The application of the process will be provocative and counterintuitive to their ideas of learning, teaching, assessment, and planning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

The educator may struggle to maintain their hold on the traditional role and perception of being the sources of all content and knowledge for their discipline (Reynolds & Kearn, 2017; Thomson et al., 2019, Yurtseven, 2017) as they implement a student-centred approach based on student learning not the content for course design. The educators' idea of teaching the content and ensuring the breath of coverage for student mastery may also be challenged (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). This could be especially difficult for courses that heavily rely on textbooks, for the educator who teaches to the textbook or where the textbook content is the course. The use of the UbD templates, requires the educator to rethink and clarify course or discipline content priorities, identify big ideas and core tasks to facilitate student learning to achieve desired outcomes to address the coverage dilemma. The process and templates of UbD would provide guidance to support this shift.

Educators will possibly struggle with ownership of assessment and the burden of ensuring alignment to course learning outcomes as the University course specifications already define the summative assessment approach and type and course learning outcomes alignment. Educators already identify an important characteristic of assessment alignment to ensure quality, an inherent requirement in the UbD process to determine acceptable evidence of student learning. Applying the UbD Assessment task blueprint template to assessment development will incorporate specifications requirements and then further extend educators' thinking

of authentic assessment and product and performance evidence and to assess the reliability and validity of the assessment for fairness.

The use of the UbD Stage 3 Plan Learning Experience template could enable the educator to adopt a student-centred approach to the design of modules within a course. The Plan Learning Experience template follows the WHERETO instructional planning; where and why; hook and hold; equip; rethink, reflect and revise; evaluate; tailored and organised. It is used to guide the sequencing of teaching and learning experiences that are both engaging and effective for learning. Adopting a student learning approach to designing will require the educators to take the role of designer of learning to create engaging and effective learning environments (Goodyear, 2015; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), by considering teaching methods, resources and learning activities to facilitate student learning to achieve desired outcomes. This Plan Learning Experience can provide a guideline for not only designing modules but with adaption, the ideas and concept could be applied to the designing of a course.

Further discussion of design frameworks, theories or models impacting educator course design practice can be found in Chapter 5: Unpublished Paper, Discussion. The UbD design tool structure and questions embody all these aspects and intended “to support educators to produce high-quality designs” (p29) and, focus and guide the designer thinking mindset (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

6.3.4. Research question

The sub questions discussion (Sections 6.3.1, 6.3.2, and 6.3.3) sought to clarify and contribute to the main research question discussion. This discussion addresses the main research question: *Which UbD design framework processes and tools (if any), may be suitable for the development of a course design framework for the university School of Business disciplines?*

A tangible relationship can be identified between the educators’ design process and elements, the intent and characteristics of selected TEQSA Guidance notes and standards statement which suggests that the UbD framework could be suitable as a course design framework for the School of Business disciplines and possibly the HE sector.

The description of the educators’ design processes has minimal association with the UbD processes or templates. Their design process tended to align to a curriculum alignment, content-centred approach which privileges the design of the

course elements over the student learning (Anderson, 2002). Educators course design prioritise the alignment of learning objectives, assessment over learning activities and student learning. The student and learning are placed at end of the design process rather than at the beginning, as in a student-centred approach. This content-centred approach conflicts with UbD design framework and process which Wiggins and McTighe (2005) advocate as a student-centred approach to design through UbD. It is possibly a positive point that, the University's acculturation of constructive alignment principles (Biggs, 1999) for accreditation and program development, educators are familiar with the course design elements of assessment and learning activities. This familiarity can assist in a smoother introduction to UbD processes and tools to provide a guidance in design student-centre courses.

Upon examination of the educators' design process, applying the UbD process and specifically the tools could shift educators from a content approach to student centred approach to design. Educators may possibly struggle with ownership of assessment and the burden of ensuring alignment to course learning outcomes due to university course specifications already defining assessment perimeters. Summative assessment was the dominant paradigm (Harrison, et al., 2017) focusing on validating student content acquisition rather than a tool for learning. The educators struggled with the notion of formative assessment (Bennett, 2011; Schellekens, et al., 2021) for student learning rather than as a tool to ensure student acquired knowledge for final assessment. Applying the UbD Assessment task blueprint template could shift educators' thinking to focus on the student, to create assessment that is authentic, effective, valid, reliable and fair.

The role of learning activities in the course design was not clear but related directly to the ensuring the student development of assessment and validation of course content learning. The UbD Stage 3 Plan Learning Experience template follows the WHERETO instructional planning, used to guide the sequencing of teaching and learning experiences, would require the educator to place the student at the centre of plan and the module of learning. This tool could also be adapted to provide guidance to design the course.

TEQSA requires the university to evidence quality programs. As a program consists of courses, it is logical to conclude that the same expectation of quality would be applied to courses. The university needs to provide procedures, guidelines, design frameworks or supporting tools to meet this quality course expectation. In the

absence of this expectation, educators may tend to relinquish responsibility and place this responsibility for compliance and the operationalisation of TEQSA requirements solely upon the university. Without any definitive direction or guidance educators typically call upon past knowledge, experience, and colleagues to guide practice in order to fulfil the expectation of their job (Goodyear,2015; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Therefore, consideration should be given to introducing a design framework with prescribed processes and tools, and embed this within university policy and procedures. The availability of, direction and guidance, and the assertion of these expectations could enact in the educators a sense of responsibility for implementing course design (Zundans-Fraser et al., 2016) for the university.

6.4. Summary

In this chapter a relationship has been established between educator course design practices, the UbD design framework and TEQSA requirements. Educators design process and UbD share identifiable key elements of learning outcomes, assessment and learning activities but the design approach and intent differs. Overall, TEQSA and UbD share the same characteristics and intent; that learning outcomes are taught, practised and assessed, (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017; Australian Government), or desired output and means [activities and assessment] are achieved (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) through assessment and designing or learning. This relationship presented warrants further research into UbD as a course design framework which is presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the limitations to the research project (Section 7.2) and the triple dividend benefit and contribution of the research project to the organisation, profession and self as researcher (Section 7.3). Further research recommendations (Section 7.4) are presented from the project findings. The conclusion (Section7.4) summarises context and key take aways from the research project.

7.2. Limitations of research

The research project results must be interpreted with caution due to the limitation of one setting, one school, and limited sample sizes. The research project study was undertaken with one school from the university and if the study included several other schools across the university, the interview data may have produced other results and themes due to the range of educator and learning and teaching experience. It is acknowledged, as an inside researcher, that working in close proximity with one school could bias participants' interview responses and my interpretation of data. The educators could adjust their responses to meet what they believe are the expectations of the interviewer or be guarded, being unsure about giving an incorrect response. Primarily the Academic Quality unit professional staff were interviewed, but it is acknowledged that other university stakeholders deal with TEQSA requirements and if interviewed, may have provided different perspectives to the university operationalisation and educator perception resulting in less generalised themes.

The sample size of both interview groups consisted of limited numbers. Group 1 educator participants sample size was small, but a richness of diverse responses was collected and only generalisations to the School of Business context could be concluded. The diversity of response data aligns with literature that recommends that further research is required into educator design practice to understand why they do what they do (Goodyear, 2015). Also, the results from the small sample size of Group 2, quality unit professional staff cannot be construed as represented of the wider quality stakeholder community within the university.

Although some aspects of the UbD theoretical underpinnings are identified within parts of this research project, the investigation focused on the suitability of the

UbD processes and tools. To validate UbD as a course framework for consideration to embed within university policy and procedure would require further research examining the theoretical basis and learning and teaching principles aligned to the HE sector to ensure quality outcomes.

7.3. Contributions of the study

The purpose of the research project was to investigate the suitability [if any] of UbD framework processes and tools to design courses within HE. The project investigated educator design practices aligned with UbD framework processes and tools [templates] to capture the educator's key design decisions, personal meaning-making, and interpretations of their learning design taxonomy.

This research contributes to the growing international body of literature exploring UbD as a framework to design courses within HE. In particular, it contributes to Australian research where the uptake of UbD in HE is slow and, minimal research exists exploring UbD or the application to course design in HE. The document analysis findings agree with literature identifying a gap in university course design policy, procedure and guidance. The research substantiates the influence this gap has on educators' course design practices and attitude (Zundans-Fraser et al., 2016), highlighting the gap between the educator course design practices and university expectations that has resulted in negative educator perceptions or disinterest in the university needs for compliance to regulatory requirements.

A range of benefits were anticipated as a result of the research project from the Master of Professional Studies (Research) contributing to the triple dividend to the organisation, the profession and the individual (Fergusson, et al. 2018). The following sub sections outline the benefits and contribution addressing the triple dividend.

7.3.1. Organisation

The project set out to determine whether the UbD could meet the TEQSA requirements. The research project document analysis identified a gap in the university policy and procedures library that did not specifically address course design, guidelines, resources and tools for educators to guide their planning, designing and evidencing of pedagogical decision for course design. The findings association between the UbD framework consisting of processes and tools and

TEQSA intent of the standards and program characteristics had been identified through this research. This association suggested that UbD could be considered as a design framework used in HE enacted through policy and procedure as guidelines and tools to design courses.

7.3.2. Profession

The findings have contributed to the literary discourse highlighting the changing role of the educators designing courses to meet the quality agenda (Debowski, 2022) and, the need to investigate educator design practice to understand what they do (Goodyear, 2015; Laurillard 2012; McKenney et al., 2015)

7.3.3. Individual

Through the Master of Professional studies (Research) program and conducting the research project, the researcher has gained benefits. The researcher has gained invaluable skills and knowledge and increased the researcher's creditability amongst professional colleagues and educator staff

1. As an outcome of participating in all aspect of the research journey the researcher has developed the knowledge and skills of rigorous research approach. Ongoing collaboration and consultation with early and mid-research educators reinforced this knowledge and skills. During the research project the opportunity to participate in ongoing research group activity has provided insight into the nuances of research activities. During the project duration the researcher has been invited to participate in research project and writing papers.
2. The acquisition of research knowledge and skills based in the field of study has enhanced the researchers' scholarly practice which is applied to the day-to-day practice working with the educators.
3. Through the research project the researcher has gained a deeper understanding of UbD and the relationship to TEQSA requirements. This knowledge has been applied the university program development initiatives and educators for designing new and existing courses.
4. The researcher has gained greater insight into the nuances of TEQSA requirement. This insight has been shared with educators to develop quality program and course.

7.4. Future research

This research project investigated the Understanding by Design suitability for the HE context to document educator course design. UbD by Wiggins and McTighe, is a conceptual framework for planning, consisting of a three-stage process and design templates. The relationship between the UbD framework processes and stages and the TEQSA requirements intent of Standard 3 Teaching, no.1 Student participation and attainment, and educator course design processes suggests a suitability for use within HE.

It is evident that further investigation is required into a course design framework to design sound pedagogical courses that contribute to quality programs. The educators' inadvertent knowledge and application of the course design elements aligned to UbD stages, reinforces the recommendation to investigate UbD as that course design framework and, to investigate adaptation or modification of the UbD framework (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2021) to meet the needs and purpose of HE, to advance the quality agenda.

Although the research involved a small sample of participants from a specific school it is possible that the finding could be indicative of other educators across the university. Therefore it may be prudent to further explore the impact on educators of introducing any course design framework consisting of tools for course design and development. Implementing a framework like UbD is not common in HE institutions (Michael, 2016). Educator issues, problems (Minbiole, 2016; Yurtseven, et al, 2016) and impacting external factors (Ulucinar, 2021) will need to be investigated, as the traditional teacher/content focus driven pedagogy is challenged and behavioural changes will need to be enabled (Reynold & Kearns 2017; Ulucinar, 2021). Whilst outside the scope of this project, based on the literature professional development opportunities focused on UbD could be provided to enhance educators' pedagogical practices of teaching and assessment methods (Natkin, 2016).

7.5. Final conclusion

In the past 20 years, within a rapidly changing HE environment educator design practice has been challenged (Debowski, 2022). In the past three years, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified this situation. The environment in which universities operate is constantly changing. Universities are facing increasing

pressures to fulfil the Higher Education Threshold Framework Standards and to satisfy TEQSA regulatory requirements for registration, to assure quality programs for students. The challenge for educators to recalibrate learning and teaching practices, highlighted gaps in course and learning design capabilities has left educators grappling with assuring quality outcomes (EDUCAUSE, 2021). Course design work is expected in HE but minimal university policy, procedure and guidelines for course design or development has inadvertently caused a barrier, resulting in educators' negative perceptions of university expectations and guidance. The fact remains universities place expectation on educators to produce and evidence pedagogically sound courses, with quality student learning experiences and outcomes (Thomson et al., 2017) for the assurance of learning.

The aim of the research project was to gain insight into educators' experiences of course design, the alignment to UbD processes and tools and, the attitude towards governance expectations, to inform the extent to which UbD processes and tools, if any, could meet both HE educator and organisational needs. The project has provided insights into educators' perception of course design practice and elements, and establishes a tangible relationship to UbD process and tools that requires further investigation as a possible framework that could address this gap.

REFERENCES

Alexander, C. (1964). *Notes on the synthesis of form.* Harvard University Press.

Asensio-Pérez, J., Dimitriadis, Y., Francesca Pozzi, F., Hernández-Leo, D., Prieto,L., Persico,D.,& Villagrá-Sobrino, S. (2017). Towards teaching as design: Exploring the interplay between full-lifecycle learning design tooling and Teacher Professional Development. *Computers & Education*, *114*, 92-116. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2017.06.011.

Bennett., R. (2011) Formative assessment: A critical review. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 18(1),* 5-25. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2010.

Bennett, S., Agostinho, S., & Lockyer, L. (2016). The process of designing for learning: Understanding university teachers' design work. *Education Technology Research Development, 65,* 125-145. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-016-9469-y

Biggs, J. (1999). What the student does: Teaching for enhanced learning. *Higher Education Research & Development, 31*(1), 39-55. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2012.642839

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9*(2), 27-40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027)

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2020). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *18*(3),328-352. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238

Chi, M. T. H. (2009). Active-constructive-interactive: A conceptual framework for differentiating learning activities. *Topics in Cognitive Science, 1*, 73– 105. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1756-8765.2008.01005.x

Churchill, R. F. (2013). *Teaching: Making a difference,* (2nd ed.). John Wiley & Sons Australia, Ltd.

Creswell, J. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches,* (5thed.). SAGE

Dann, R. (2014). Assessment as learning: Blurring the boundaries of assessment and learning for theory, policy and practice. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 21(2)*, 149-166. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2014.898128

Debowski, S. (2022). Shifting sands: Navigating being academic in an evolving sector. *Higher Education Research & Development, 41*(1), 7-20. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2021.2008327

Fergusson, L., Allred, D. and Dux, T. (2018). Work-based learning and research for mid-career professionals: Professional studies in Australia. *Interdisciplinary Journal of eSkills and Lifelong Learning, 14,* 1-17. https://doi.org/10.28945/3930

Guidance note: Academic quality assurance V2.2. (2017, October). Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency. Retrieved February 23, 15 C.E., from https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/guidance-notes/guidance-note-academic-quality-ass

Harrison, C.J., Könings, K.D., Schuwirth, L.W.T. Wass, V., & van der Vleuten, C.P.M. (2017). Changing the culture of assessment: the dominance of the summative assessment paradigm. *BMC Medical Education 17*(73) https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-017-0912-5

Jordan, M. (2016). Teaching as Designing: Preparing pre-service teachers for adaptive teaching, *Theory Into Practice*, *55*(3), 197-206. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1176812 Konnerup, U., Ryberg, T., & Sørensen, M. T. (2019). Designs for learning as springboards for professional development in higher education. In A. Littlejohn, J. Jaldemark, E. Vrieling-Teunter & F. Nijland (Eds.), *Networked Professional Learning. Research in Networked Learning (pp. 111–127).* https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18030-0_7

Konnerup, U., Ryberg, T., & Sørensen, M. T. (2019). Designs for learning as springboards for professional development in higher education. In A. Littlejohn, J. Jaldemark, E. Vrieling-Teunter & F. Nijland (Eds.), *Networked Professional Learning. Research in Networked Learning (pp. 111 – 127).* https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-18030-0_7

McAndrew, P., Goodyear, P., & Dalziel, J. (2006). Patterns, designs and activities: Unifying descriptions of learning structures. *International Journal of Learning Technology*, *2*(2-3), 216–242. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJLT.2006.010632

Martens, D. (2019). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (5th ed). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Mittlemeir, J., Long, D., Melis Cin, F., Reedy, K., Gunter, A., Raghuram, P., & Rienties, B. (2018). Learning design in diverse institutional and cultural context: Suggestions from a participatory workshop with higher education professionals in Africa. *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning*, *33*(3), 250-266. https://doi.org/10.1080/02680513.2018.1486185

Natkin, L. W. (2019). Education for sustainabiltiy: Exploring teaching practices and preceptions of learning associated with a general education requirement. *Journal of General Education: A Curricular Commons of the Humanitites and Sciences, 645*(3-4), 216-240. https://doi.org/10.5325/jgeneeduc.65.3-4.0216

Nicole, D. (2012). *Transformational change in teaching and learning: Recasting the educational discourse (viewpoints evaluation report).* Retrieved April 13, 2020, from https://www.reap.ac.uk/Portals/101/Documents/PEERToolkit/VIEWPOINTS%20EVALUATION_Final_dn.pdf

Ninomiya, S. (2016). The possibilities and limitations of assessment for learning: Exploring the theory of formative assessment and the notion of 'Closing the learning gap'. *Educational Studies in Japan, 10*, 79–91. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1130292

Poortman, C., & Schildkamp, K. (2016). Solving student achievement problems with a data use intervention for teachers, *Teaching and Teacher Education, 60*, 425-453. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.06.010

Schellekens, L., Bok, H., de Jong, L., van der Schaaf, M., Wim D. J. Kremer, W., & van der Vleuten, C. (2021). A scoping review on the notions of Assessment as Learning (AaL), Assessment for Learning (AfL), and Assessment of Learning (AoL). *Studies in Educational Evaluation, 71*, 101094. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2021.101094

Schwieger, D., & Ladwig, C. (2021). Using a modified understanding by design framework to incorporate social media tools in the management information systems curriculum for generation Y and Z students. *Journal of Information Systems Education, 32*(3), 166-175. https://jise.org/Volume32/n3/JISE2021v32n3pp166-175.html

Slade, C., Parker, J., McGrath, D. & Greenaway, R. (2019, July 2-5) Learning designers as capacity builders in Australin universities. In E. Heinrich & R. Bourke (Eds.) Research and Development in Higher Education: Next Generation, Higher Education: Challenges, Changes and Opportunities. *Volume 42: Refereed papers from the 42nd HERDSA Annual International Conference* [Paper]. Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Sridharan, B., Leitch, S., & Watty, K. (2015). Evidence learning outcomes: A multi-level, multi-dimensional course alignment model. *Quality in Higher Education*, *2*(20), 171- 188. https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2015.1051796

Streveler, R. & Menekse, M. (2017). Taking a closer look at active learning, *Journal of Engineering Education, 106*(2), 186-190. https://doi.org/10.1002/jee.20160

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. (2017). *HESF Domain 3*. Australian Government, https://www.teqsa.gov.au/hesf-domain-3

Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. (2017). *Guidance note: Course design (including learning outcomes and assessment) Version 1.3*. Australian Government. https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/guidance-note-course-design-including-learning-outcomes-and-assessment

Thomson, E., Auhl, G., Uys, P., Wood, D., & Woolley, D. (2019). Towards best practice in course design: A case study of flexibility and collaboration between users and developers in supporting process with technology. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning*, *16*(1), 57-69. https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol6/iss1/6

Toetenel, L., & Rienties, B. (2016). Analysing 157 learning designs using learning analytic appraoches as a means to evaluate the impact of pedagogical decision making. *Brittish Educational Research Association*, *47*(5), 981–992. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12423

The University (2019). *Academic plan*. Available from the author upon request.

The University (2020). *Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure*. Available from the author upon request.

The University (2021). *Curriculum Design.* Available from the author upon request.

The University (2022). *Staff expectations*. Available from the author upon request.

Vallis, C., & Redmond, P. (2021). Introducing design thinking online to large business education courses for twenty-first century learning. *Journal of University*

Teaching & Learning Practice, 18(6), 213-234. https://doi.org/10.53761/1.18.6.14

White, S., White, S. & Borthwick, K. (2020). MOOCs, learning designers and the unbundling of educator roles in higher education. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology, 36*(5), 71–84. https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.6111

Yin, R. (2016). *Qualitative research from start to finish.* (2nd ed.).The Guliford Press.

Zundans-Fraser, L., & Bain, A. B. (2016). How do institutional practices for course design and review address areas of need in higher education, *Higher Education Research & Development, 35(4),* 841-853. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2015.1137883

APPENDIX A–ETHICS APPLICATION

ResearchMaster

Human Ethics Application

Application ID :	20006219
Application Title :	Assurance of Learning: Investigating UbD principles and processes to develop a course design framework for educators to evidence pedagogical decisions in higher education. A qualitative exploratory investigation.
Date of Submission :	N/A
Primary Investigator :	Mrs Cathy Tame; Principal Investigator
Other Personnel :	Prof Karen Trimmer; Principal Supervisor
	Ms Nicole Brownlie; Associate Supervisor

2.9 Military veterans?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.10 People who would not usually be considered vulnerable but would be considered vulnerable in the context of this project?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.11 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.12 Hospital patients?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.13 People in other countries?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.14 People who would consider English to be their second language?*
○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***2 Potential Participant Group***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

3 Proposed Procedures

Does this project include...

3.1 Any physical, psychological, social, economic, and/or legal risks greater than inconvenience or discomfort, in either the short or long term, resulting from participation in, or use of data in this project?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.2 The collection and/or analysis of any biological material obtained from a person (e.g. tissue, blood, urine, sputum, or any derivate of these such as cell lines) in laboratory based research?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.3 Generating, gathering, collecting, conveying or using genomic data, information, or biological materials (such as germline/germ cells or somatic cells) that has **hereditary implications** and/or **is predictive of future health** in research involving participants, relatives and other family members?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.4 Research intended to study and/or expose illegal activity?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.5 Radioactive substances and/or ionising radiation?
*(e.g. DXA, X-ray)**
○ Yes ◉ No

3.6 Sensitive and/or contentious issues? *(e.g. suicide, eating disorders, body image, trauma, violence, abortion, etc.)**
○ Yes ◉ No

3.7 Toxins, mutagens, teratogens or carcinogens?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.8 Deception of participants, concealment or covert observation?*
○ Yes ◉ No

3.9 Seeking disclosure of information which may be prejudicial to participants?*
○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***3 Proposed Procedures***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

4 Operational Requirements

Does this project involve...

4.1 collection or use of information or data from or about **USQ Students**?*

○ Yes ◉ No

4.2 collection or use of information or data from or about **USQ Staff**?*

◉ Yes ○ No

If your project seeks to collect or use ANY information or data from or about a USQ Staff, ensure you have:

a. appropriate authority to do so (i.e. your role within the University that may provide access to the information or data about the USQ Staff would also permit your access to the information or data for research purposes);
b. sought and secured the permission from the authorised delegate at the University of Southern Queensland to collect, access and use the information or data
c. reflected on the ethical considerations associated with your role as a researcher in the conduct of this research project and your relationship (current, past, and future) to the USQ Staff as a participant and identified and managed any risk of harms.
d. declared and managed any perceived, potential, or actual conflicts of interest.

4.3 International travel for data collection purposes?*

○ Yes ◉ No

4.4 Collecting data in a rural and remote setting?*

○ Yes ◉ No

4.5 The collection, use or disclosure of IDENTIFIABLE personal information (eg, names and contact details on consent forms)*

◉ Yes ○ No

4.5.1 Will this IDENTIFIABLE information be collected or used **WITHOUT** the consent or knowledge of the individual whose information is being used?*

○ Yes ◉ No

4.6 The collection, use or disclosure of RE-IDENTIFIABLE personal information (eg, when identifying details are replaced by codes, pseudonyms, etc)*

◉ Yes ○ No

4.6.1 Will this RE-IDENTIFIABLE information be collected or used **WITHOUT** the consent or knowledge of the individual whose information is being used?*

○ Yes ◉ No

4.7 The collection of information by observing participants **WITHOUT** their knowledge?*

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***4 Operational Requirements***

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Application Detail

5 Project Title and Summary

Researchers are encouraged to read Chapter 3.1 of the National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 (updated 2018). A critical feature of good research is clarity regarding how the research project will meet the ethical requirement that research has merit, as described in paragraph 1.1 of the National Statement. **The Elements of Research**, outlined in this chapter, offer advice and guidance about meeting this obligation and will assist you in completing this application across the following sections:

Element 1: Research scope, aims, themes, questions and methods

Element 2: Recruitment

Element 3: Consent

Element 4: Collection, use and management of data and information

Element 5: Communication of research findings or results to participants

Element 6: Dissemination of research outputs and outcomes

Element 7: After the project.

5.1 Project Title*

Instructions

Instructions

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Pre Application

1 Application Type

Ethics category*

Human Research Ethics Application

1.1 Has this application been reviewed and approved by another Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)?

Select "Yes" if your project has already been approved by a human research ethics committee (HREC) that is not operated by the University of Southern Queensland, (i.e. you wish to register your ethics approval with USQ).
Select "No" if the University of Southern Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee will review and approve your proposed research.

*

○ Yes ◉ No

1.2 Does this research project involve?
Tick all that apply.
*

- ☑ Direct recruitment and/or observation of human participants
- ☐ Use and/or disclosure of existing data sets and/or archival data
- ☐ Use and/or disclosure of existing biospecimen collections
- ☐ Any form of genetic testing or analysis of genetic material
- ☐ Clinical trial

Review outcome comments for ***1 Application Type***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

2 Potential Participant Group

Does this project involve (a) the direct recruitment of participants that specifically targets, and/or (b) the use of existing data and/or tissue of participants from a project that specifically targeted...

2.1 Women who are pregnant, the human foetus, or human foetal tissue?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.2 Children or young people under the age of 18 years?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.3 People with a cognitive impairment, an intellectual disability, or a mental illness?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.4 People considered to be a forensic or involuntary patient?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.5 People with impaired capacity for communication?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.6 Prisoners or people on parole?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.7 People highly dependent on medical care, including a person who is unconscious?*
○ Yes ◉ No

2.8 Military personnel?*
○ Yes ◉ No

Assurance of Learning: Investigating UbD principles and processes to develop a course design framework for educators to evidence pedagogical decisions in higher education. A qualitative exploratory investigation.

5.2 Using plain language, provide a succinct description of the background and the potential significance of the research project.*

Teaching and the role of the university educator is changing. Educators now require a design thinking mindset and apply design processes to produce and evidence pedagogically sound courses and to produce quality student learning experiences, and outcomes for the assurance of learning. Universities are also under pressure to provide, for registration for TESQA, evidence of HESF (Threshold) Standards specifically - Teaching, part 3.1 Course design, section 31.1- 5, which this research project focuses upon. [redacted] has limited human resources dedicated to course design and development, no specialist design team, E.g. One educational designer for three schools, also no specific framework or software to capture course design. Therefore, full/part-time and casual educators draw upon their own methods, processes and tools or to revert teaching/learning design from past experience as a student in a traditional university environment. This research is significant as it aims to address this gap by develop a framework consisting of a process and evidencing tool that university educators can used either individually or collaboratively to evidence course design and assure learning.

5.3 Clearly state (a) the project aims; and (b) the research questions and/or hypotheses.*

The aim of the project is to investigate UbD framework processes and principles, analyse literature and [redacted] TEQSA and HESF documentation, interviews [redacted] educators, and OALT Program and Course Enhancement staff dealing with program accreditation and registration to develop of a course design framework suitable for higher education to satisfy the evidencing requirements of TESQA - HESF (Threshold) Standard Teaching, part 3.1 Course design, section 31.1- 5.

The research project will seek to answer the following research questions and sub questions:
Research question:
1) Which UbD design framework principles and processes (if any), may be suitable for the development of a course design framework for [redacted] Commerce or Management and Enterprise interdisciplines?
Research sub-questions:
a) What are the TESQA requirements and is there an alignment with UbD design framework principles and processes?
b) What are [redacted] Commerce or Management and Enterprise educators¿ course design practice and perceptions of TESQA requirements?
c)To what extent does the Commerce or Management and Enterprise educators¿ design practices and TESQA perceptions align with UdB design framework principles, processes, and theoretical underpinnings?

Review outcome comments for ***5 Project Title and Summary***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

6 Investigators

6.1 Enter the Academic Organisation Unit (AOU) (six-digit project code) that will be aligned to this project.

Search for the AOU by entering a portion of your school or centre (e.g. eng, health, psy, edu, sci) in the text box, then clicking on the magnifying glass. Choose the appropriate AOU code from the list returned and tab out of the text box. Attempt to select AOU that reflect school-level units rather than broader faculty-level units.

If the Principal Investigator for this project is NOT affiliated with the University of Southern Queensland, enter "EXTERNAL".

*

Adv of Learning & Teaching

6.2 Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator (PI) of this project will hold ultimate responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research project in accordance with the University's Research Code of Conduct Policy, The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018,and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 (updated 2018).

The PI must ensure that all investigators involved in the conduct of this research project understand and accept their roles and responsibilities.

To complete this section...

Click on the hyperlinked investigator's name and complete all required fields (indicated with *). Ensure the "Primary Contact" is checked to "Yes". Click on "OK".

1	Order	1
	RIMS Code	0000220814
	Position	Principal Investigator
	Title	Mrs
	First Name	Cathy
	Last Name	Tame
	Full Name	Mrs Cathy Tame
	Student Researcher?	Yes
	Primary Investigator?	Yes
	Primary Contact?	Yes
	ORCID ID (if known)	0000-0002-8897-0460
	Email Address	Cathy.Tame@usq.edu.au
	Secondary Email	
	Mailing Address Address Line 1	
	Address Line 2	
	Address Line 3	
	Address Line 4	
	Suburb/City	
	State	
	Postal Code	
	Country	Australia
	Contact Phone	
	Mobile Phone	

6.3 Other Investigators

List all investigators associated with this project and their role (including supervisors of student research projects).

To complete this section...

Enter the investigator's first name in the text box and click on the magnifying glass. Choose the correct investigator from the list returned. Repeat this step to add all investigators.

For each investigator listed, click on the hyperlinked investigator's name and complete all required fields (indicated with *). Ensure the "Student Researcher" question has been answered and that the Primary Contact is checked to "No".

Click on OK.

To add an External Collaborator, click on the "Add External Person" button and complete all required fields (indicated with *) and OK.

1	Order	1
	RIMS Code	0000170820
	Position	Principal Supervisor
	Title	Professor
	First Name	Karen
	Last Name	Trimmer
	Full Name	Prof Karen Trimmer
	Student Researcher?	No
	Primary Contact?	No
	Person Type	Internal
	ORCID ID (if known)	
	Email Address	Karen.Trimmer@usq.edu.au
	Secondary Email	
	Mailing Address Address Line 1	
	Address Line 2	
	Address Line 3	
	Address Line 4	
	Suburb/City	
	State	
	Postal Code	
	Country	Australia
	Contact Phone	
	Mobile Phone	
2	Order	2
	RIMS Code	0000169547
	Position	Associate Supervisor
	Title	Ms
	First Name	Nicole
	Last Name	Brownlie
	Full Name	Ms Nicole Brownlie
	Student Researcher?	No
	Primary Contact?	No
	Person Type	Internal
	ORCID ID (if known)	
	Email Address	Nicole.Brownlie@usq.edu.au
	Secondary Email	
	Mailing Address Address Line 1	
	Address Line 2	
	Address Line 3	
	Address Line 4	
	Suburb/City	
	State	
	Postal Code	
	Country	Australia
	Contact Phone	
	Mobile Phone	

Review outcome comments for ***6 Investigators***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

7 Benefit and Risk

7.1 Outline the benefits to participants and/or to the community as a result of this research being conducted. *

The organisational benefit to the workplace will be the identification of a course design framework that can be used in collaboration with professional staff to assist participants and other educators in designing course. The documentation produced by the educator can be used to address requirement of the HESF (Threshold) Standard Teaching, part 3.1 Course design, section 31.1- 5 by TESQA for registration purposes. The participants provided and utilising the framework to design course would gain insight into course design and enhancing their learning teaching practice. The possible flow on benefit is that the participants will share the use of the framework with course team members to assure learning.

7.2 Define the risks, in either the short and/or long term, of participation in this project
*(e.g. physical, psychological, social, economic or legal risks greater than inconvenience or discomfort)**

It is anticipated that there is minimal risk to participants beyond those associated with day-to-day duties, and beyond the inconvenience of participating in interviews and meetings that would be perceived as part of the normal working process and practices. The project meets the description for low risk projects provided in the USQ website (https://www.usq.edu.au/current-students/academic/higher-degree-by-research-students/conducting-research/human-ethics/review). The project participation is entirely voluntary and there are no consequences associated with potential participants' decision to participate or not participate in the work based project. No physical, social, psychological, economic or legal risks are envisaged. However, participants may perceive a psychological risk in disclosing aspects of their experience and attitudes to course design and course evaluation for performance purposes. It is estimated that participation in each interview will take no longer than 60 minutes, and it is not expected to cause anyone any stress.

7.3 Are all of these risks outlined in the Participant Information Sheet or within the explanatory statement at the beginning of a data collection instrument, and (where relevant) on the consent form?*

◉ Yes ○ No

7.4 Outline the arrangements planned to minimise the risks involved in this project.*

No arrangements are in place as there are no risks to participants beyond those associated with day to day living, or the inconvenience of participating in an interview. In order to minimise the potential inconvenience of participating in the interview: 1. Interview will take place at a time that is convenient to participants; 2. Efforts will be made to restrict the interview to maximum one hour in duration. To minimise perceived psychological risk, participants will have the opportunity to verify and edit their interview transcripts and meeting documentation before they are used in the work based project. Participants will have two weeks to provide feedback on their transcript. If they do not respond in this period, the transcript will be used as is. Participants will also be made aware that they can leave the project prior to conducting the interviews. Withdrawal after interviews would compromise results of the thematic analysis.

7.5 What will you do in cases where unexpected events or emergencies occur as a result of participation in this project?
For example, what facilities or services are available to deal with events such as adverse drug reaction, revelation of child abuse, illegal activities, participant becomes distressed during or after data collection.*

It is not expected that any data collection activities will raise any issues before or after as a result of participation in the project.

7.6 Is an appropriate list of referral services available within the Participant Information Sheet or explanatory statement?*

○ Yes ○ No ◉ Not applicable

7.7 Outline the strategies that you have in place to reduce any risks to the researchers.*

There are no risks to the researchers beyond those associated with day to day living and the regular conduct of our roles as USQ OALT staff member.

Review outcome comments for ***7 Benefit and Risk***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

8 Type of Research

Type of research - 1

8.1 Are you, as the Principal Investigator, a current USQ employee or student?*

◉ Yes ○ No

8.1.1 Will this project be undertaken **predominately** in a student capacity?*

◉ Yes ○ No

8.1.1.1 Program level:*

- ○ Honours
- ◉ Masters
- ○ Doctoral
- ○ Other

8.1.1.2 Program name:*

Master of Professional Studies (Research) (MPSR)

8.1.2 Will this project be undertaken as a **USQ Course project**?*

○ Yes ◉ No

8.2

Type of research - 2

Tick all that apply.

*

- ☐ Action research
- ☐ Clinical research
- ☑ Qualitative
- ☐ Social science
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Epidemiological
- ☐ Mental health
- ☐ Public health and safety
- ☐ Quantitative
- ☐ Case study
- ☐ Clinical trial / use of drug or therapeutic device
- ☐ Medical research
- ☐ Oral history / biographical

Review outcome comments for ***8 Type of Research***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

9 Conflict of Interest

9.1 Do any of the investigators on this project have an actual, perceived, or potential personal or financial conflict of interest in the outcomes of this research, or in any of the organisations involved with, or funding this project?*

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***9 Conflict of Interest***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

10 Funding

10.1 Has funding been obtained for this project?*

○ Yes ◉ No

10.1.1 Are you applying for funding for this project?*

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***10 Funding***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

11 Data Access and Security

11.1 Outline the minimum recommended Research Data storage options (i.e. 1 x primary and 2 x back-up) that you will utilise for the duration of your research project and beyond. Refer to the University's Research Data Management Policy and Research Data Management Procedure to ensure your proposed practice is suitable.*

Data storage and security will be in accordance with USQ guidelines. Primary data storage will be on one of the USQ recommends of USQ MS OneDrive, Cloudstor or ReDBank Cloud - USQ MS OneDrive for research data storage as they align with USQ's research data management policy and procedure. All investigators will have access to the information.

11.2 Will any individual or organisation external to the University of Southern Queensland (i.e. a third party) have access to the Research Data during the conduct of this research?*

○ Yes ◉ No

11.3 Do you plan to make available (or share) all, or part, of the Research Data via open access, restricted access, mediated access or as metadata only?
Note: It is recommended that unless your data can not be shared for ethical, privacy or confidentiality matters, that you incorporate the future use of data in your research design and include a statement within the participant information sheet/explanatory statement to this effect.*

◉ Yes ○ No

11.3.1 Outline the research data to be openly or publicly available and the strategy of how this will be shared (e.g. open access, restricted or mediated access, metadata only).*

Open access to data from Semi Structured interviews of participants. No elements for the thematic analysis and evaluative data should be able to identify participants.
The research may wish to access pre-existing secondary data set (interviews) generated from another project- ethic application H19REA176.

11.4 Are the data access and security arrangements detailed in the Participant Information Sheet or explanatory statement?*

◉ Yes ○ No

11.5 Will the Research Data be securely retained indefinitely for future use?*

○ Yes ◉ No

11.5.2 Outline the process of how the research data will be confidentially disposed a fter the minimum retention period has elapsed.

Note: Different Research Data items may be required to be retained for different retention periods, e.g. general research data versus signed informed consent documentation. Refer to the Queensland Government General Retention and Disposal Schedule (GRDS) for further information.*

Data will be retained for 5 years after project completion and consent forms for 15 years per USQ requirements. Once we are no longer required to retain the data, it will be deleted.

Review outcome comments for ***11 Data Access and Security***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

12 Communication of Research Findings to Participants and Dissemination of Project Outputs

12.1 Indicate in which format/s the research findings will be communicated to participants and research outputs disseminated
*Tick all that apply.**

- ☐ Thesis
- ☑ Journal article
- ☐ Book / book chapter
- ☑ Conference
- ☐ Dataset
- ☐ Reports to participants
- ☐ Report to organisation
- ☐ Report to community or group
- ☐ Other

12.2 How will the identity of participants be disclosed in the dissemination of research outputs?*

- ☑ non-identifiable data
- ☐ re-identifiable data
- ☐ individually identifiable data
- ☐ other

12.3 Describe how participants and/or other interested stakeholders will be able to access the research findings and/or request a copy of a summary of the results

Note: Provision of a theses/dissertation/exegesis to a participant is not considered to be timely and appropriate summary of the research findings or results.

*

It is intended to publish journal article/s on the results of this research and possibly present at a conference where the findings will also be accessible.

12.4 Will participants be subjected to any physiological or psychological testing during this project? *

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***12 Communication of Research Outcomes***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

No. of Human Participant Groups

Participant Group Recruitment

PG - How many groups of participants will you be recruiting and/or observing for this research project?*

2.00

This question is asking you to think about how many groups of participants you are likely to recruit as part of this project. The method of participant recruitment and how they will provide consent may change depending on the participant's age and how you propose to conduct that part of the project.

For example:

- If you are conducting an online survey, followed by interviews with some of the survey participants, it is likely that you will recruit "2" groups. This will be the "survey group" and the "interview group".
- If you are conducting multiple focus groups with the same focus group questions, it is likely that you will recruit "1" group, but offer the same content multiple times. This can be conveyed in the next section.
- If you are conducting interviews with different groups, for example, students, teachers and school principals, then it is likely that you will recruit "3" groups.

The number of groups of participants you enter here will provide specific questions in the next section relevant to that group. That is, Group 1 = G1, Group 2 = G2, Group 3 = G3, and so on.

Sufficient space has been provided for up to **five** participant groups. If you propose to use more than five participant groups in your research, contact the Ethics Officer for further advice.

Review outcome comments for ***Participant Group Recruitment***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Group 1 - Participant Recruitment and/or Observation

G1 - Participant Overview

PG1.1 Participant group 1 working title. *(e.g. student focus group; teacher survey)**

Educators

PG1.2 How many participants are expected to be recruited in this group?*

5.00

PG1.3 Describe who the participants in this group are.*

[redacted]course examiners

PG1.4 Where will this group of participants be recruited from?*

From either the School of Management and Enterprise or School of Commerce from the Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts (BELA)

PG1.5 Are the participants in this group likely to be under 18 years of age?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.6 Is there a pre-existing (unequal) relationship between the participants and anyone involved in recruiting and/or collecting data from this group of participants? *(e.g. teachers and/or lecturers/students, doctors/patients, employers/employees, etc.)* *

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.6.1 Describe the nature of the pre-existing relationship and whom this involves.*

The researcher is a professional staff member in which the School of Management and Enterprise or School of Commerce falls within the remit of their current position. The relationship has been developed through previous educational design services and course support by the researcher provided within the boundaries of their current position. The researcher is familiar with the culture and politics of the schools and has established working relationship, prior experience and predilections of educators and knowledge of courses. It was felt that due to the trust and respect that the researcher has for the participants and vica versa it would facilitate the recruitment of participant. Neither researcher or participant is in any position of power nor are they able to influence the other party or their decision.

PG1.6.2 Outline what special precautions have been implemented to preserve the rights of those participants who decline to take part or withdraw from the research once the project has begun.*

Engagement with the research by participants is voluntary. Participation in the project will not affect future work undertaken as part of `business as usual' with current position. Participants will be advised both verbally and in the Participant information statement that they can withdraw for the research at any time prior to data being analysed. Withdrawal after this point would be difficult as it is will be collated and not allow identification of data belonging to specific participants.

PG1.7 Do these participants have any cultural needs? *(e.g., specific consent arrangements or sensitivites, etc.)**

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G1 - Participant Overview***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G1 - Recruitment Method

PG1.8 Do you have any criteria for the selection, inclusion or exclusion of participants for this group to take part in the research? *(e.g. minimum age requirements)**

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.8.1 Describe the criteria for selection, inclusion or exclusion and outline why you require this for your research design.*

Intention is to recruitment participants from either the School of Management and Enterprise or School of Commerce from the Faculty of Business, Education, Law and Arts. It is likely that the participants within these schools possess minimal, if no, teaching or educational training. The framework is intended to be generic in nature suitable for educators of varying levels of scholarship in learning and teaching and praxis to evidence pedagogy design decisions. Also the following preferred inclusion criteria for participants will be considered, but are not exclusive for invitation to participate in the investigation: drawn from the same school; across different disciplinary groups; and currently involved in designing a new or redesigning a course. The data analysed will be used to develop a design framework process and evidencing document.

PG1.9 Indicate which method/s you will use to recruit these participants:*

- ☑ Email
- ☑ Personal contacts
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Advertisement
- ☐ Mail out
- ☑ Snowballing
- ☐ Participants from another study
- ☑ Participants approached in person by research team
- ☐ Participants will NOT be actively recruited - they will be observed without their knowledge
- ☐ Other

PG1.10 Indicate how you will obtain the contact details of these participants.
*

- ☑ From the participants themselves
- ☐ From a public domain source
- ☐ From a private or third party source
- ☑ Other

PG1.10.2 Clarify how you will obtain these contact details.*

The researcher will meet with the Heads of School to provide details of the exploratory investigation and seek permission to issue the invitation to school academic staff. The Head of school may recommend names of potential participants.

PG1.11 Explain who will invite these participants to be involved in this project.*

The researcher will contact participants. The nature of the project will be explained, invitation issues with a Participant information sheet and consent form.

PG1.12 Will you be offering payment or any other incentives to this group of participants?*

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G1 - Recruitment Method***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G1 - Data Collection Methods

PG1.13 Will you collect data via questionnaires / surveys?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.14 Will you collect data via interviews or focus groups?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.14.1 Provide further detail about the **interviews or focus groups**, including: how many sessions will be held; where and at approximately what time (or timeframe) will the sessions be held; who will be present from the research team; how many participants will be present at each session; who will conduct or facilitate the session; will there be a debriefing process (and if yes, what will this involve)?

Attach a copy of your interview or focus group questions (if known) or broad topics in the document upload section.*

1 semi-structured interview will be held with educators at a time and day of their choice. The interview will be between 30 - 45 minutes. Each interview will be individually conducted by the researcher.

PG1.14.2 Will your interview or focus group session be audio or video recorded?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.14.3 Will you arrange for transcription of the audio or video recording?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.14.3.1 Provide detail on how you will handle the transcription process of the audio or video recording, including who will be involved in transcribing the data, whether the participants will be provided an opportunity to review and/or edit the transcribed document, and how you will safely manage the data transfer process.*

Transcription of the data will be undertaken by the researcher to provide a first draft. Educators will be provided with the draft transcriptions for review and amendments within two weeks of receipt to ensure accurate details of the interview. The educator will be sent a link via an email link to a password protected folder to view the transcript.

PG1.15 Will you collect data via observation?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.16 Will you collect data via photography / videography?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.17 Will you collect data via psychological inventories or any other published, standardised test?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.18 Will you collect data via collection of human biospecimens?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.19 Will you collect data via responses to tasks, stimuli or simulations?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.20 Will you collect data via administration of a substance?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.21 Will you collect data via any other procedure not outlined above?*

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G1 - Data Collection Methods*** .

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G1 - Data Collection Procedure and Competence

PG1.23 Provide details about what you are asking participants in this group to do or what is to be done to them. Include a step-by-step description of what participants will experience if they choose to take part in this project.*

1. Participants will be interviewed regarding their knowledge and practice of course design, perceptions of course design, TESQA and HESF standards.
2. Review and amend interview accuracy of transcripts

PG1.24 How much time are you asking of participants in this group and when will this time be required? *(e.g. 30 minutes after class).**

1. 30-45 minutes for interview only
2. 30 minutes - time to review and amend accuracy of interview transcripts

PG1.25 Where will the data be collected (venue and geographical location)? *(e.g. front of 'venue')**

USQ campus - Toowoomba or Springfield, depending on the educator location or video conferencing if participant is not within these locations. The researcher will organise a time and day to travel to where the educator is located.

PG1.26 Does the research involve the administration of any tests or procedures that require particular qualifications?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG1.27 Does the research involve measures or procedures that are **diagnostic** or **indicative** of any **medical** or **clinical** condition, or any other situation of concern? *(e.g. anaemia, bulimia, anorexia, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, aggressive behaviours, etc.)**

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G1 - Data Collection Procedure and Competence***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G1 - Consent Method

PG1.28 Are these participants able to consent for themselves?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.29 Will you use a written Participant Information Sheet or Explanatory Statement to inform participants about this project?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.30 Will these participants be fully informed about the true nature of the research?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG1.31 Indicate how you will obtain consent from this group of participants.*

- ○ Implied consent
- ◉ Consent form (must be attached with this application)
- ○ Opt-out consent
- ○ Other

Consent may be expressed in a number of ways. **A signed consent form** has traditionally been the accepted method of documenting a participant's consent to participate in a research project. Where used, information about the research project is generally presented in a participant information sheet, explanatory statement, or similar document that a participant retains. The process of communicating information to participants and seeking their consent should not be merely a matter of satisfying a formal requirement. The aim is mutual understanding between researchers and participants. This aim requires an opportunity for participants to ask questions and to discuss the information and their decisions with others if they wish.

PG1.31.2 Outline the process by which the participants will give consent and how they return the consent form to the researchers.*

The Participation Information statement and consent form will either emailed or handed to the prospective participant. A signature will be required on the consent form. The signed consent form will be scanned and sent to the participant for there records and the original retained and stored as per the data storage plan.

Review outcome comments for ***G1 - Consent Method***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Group 2 - Participant Recruitment and/or Observation

G2 - Participant Overview

PG2.1 Participant group 2 working title. *(e.g. student focus group; teacher survey)**

Professional staff participants

PG2.2 How many participants are expected to be recruited in this group?*

2.00

PG2.3 Describe who the participants in this group are.*

Program development consults from the Program and course enhancement team (PCE)

PG2.4 Where will this group of participants be recruited from?*

[redacted] Office of Advance of Learning and Teaching (OALT), Program and course enhancement team (PCE)

PG2.5 Are the participants in this group likely to be under 18 years of age?*

○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.6 Is there a pre-existing (unequal) relationship between the participants and anyone involved in recruiting and/or collecting data from this group of participants? *(e.g. teachers and/or lecturers/students, doctors/patients, employers/employees, etc.)* *

◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.6.1 Describe the nature of the pre-existing relationship and whom this involves.*

The researcher is a professional staff member of the Program and Course Enhancement team within the Office of Advancement of Learning and Teaching. The prospective participants position and remit focuses on program level where as the researchers position and remit focuses on courses. The relationship has been developed through supporting and engaging in program related activities within the boundaries of their current position. Also the research has an existing research relationship working collaboratively with prospective participants as a member of a current research project group. Neither researcher or participant is in any position of power nor are they able to influence the other party or their decision.

PG2.6.2 Outline what special precautions have been implemented to preserve the rights of those participants who decline to take part or withdraw from the research once the project has begun.*

Engagement with the research by participants is voluntary. Participation in the project will not affect future work undertaken as the project focus does not sit within the remit of their current position. Participants will be advised both verbally and in the Participant information statement that they can withdraw for the research at any time prior to data being analysed. Withdraw after this point would be difficult as collated data will not allow identification of data belonging to specific participant.

PG2.7 Do these participants have any cultural needs? *(e.g., specific consent arrangements or sensitivites, etc.)**

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G2 - Participant Overview***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G2 - Recruitment Method

PG2.8 Do you have any criteria for the selection, inclusion or exclusion of participants for this group to take part in the research? *(e.g. minimum age requirements)**

○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.9 Indicate which method/s you will use to recruit these participants:*

- [x] Email
- [x] Personal contacts
- [ ] Telephone
- [ ] Advertisement
- [ ] Mail out
- [ ] Snowballing
- [ ] Participants from another study
- [x] Participants approached in person by research team
- [ ] Participants will NOT be actively recruited - they will be observed without their knowledge
- [ ] Other

PG2.10 Indicate how you will obtain the contact details of these participants. *

- [x] From the participants themselves
- [ ] From a public domain source
- [x] From a private or third party source
- [ ] Other

PG2.10.1 Provide details about this source and its terms of use. *Please note that obtaining identifiable personal information without consent may constitute a breach of Queensland and Australia privacy legislation.* *

The researcher will meet with the Associate director of Program and Course Enhancement team to provide details of the exploratory investigation and seek permission to issue the invitation. The Associate director may recommend participants from within the team.

PG2.11 Explain who will invite these participants to be involved in this project. *

The researcher will contact participants. The nature of the project will be explained, invitation issues with a Participant information sheet and consent form.

PG2.12 Will you be offering payment or any other incentives to this group of participants? *

○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G2 - Recruitment Method***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G2 - Data Collection Methods

PG2.13 Will you collect data via questionnaires / surveys? *

○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.14 Will you collect data via interviews or focus groups? *

◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.14.1 Provide further detail about the **interviews or focus groups**, including: how many sessions will be held; where and at approximately what time (or timeframe) will the sessions be held; who will be present from the research team; how many participants will be present at each session; who will conduct or facilitate the session; will there be a debriefing process (and if yes, what will this involve)?

Attach a copy of your interview or focus group questions (if known) or broad topics in the document upload section. *

1 semi-structured interview will be held with PCE participant at a time and day of their choice. The interview will be between 30 - 45 minutes. Each interview will be individually conducted by the researcher.

PG2.14.2 Will your interview or focus group session be audio or video recorded? *

◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.14.3 Will you arrange for transcription of the audio or video recording? *

◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.14.3.1 Provide detail on how you will handle the transcription process of the audio or video recording, including who will be involved in transcribing the data, whether the participants will be provided an opportunity to review and/or edit the transcribed document, and how you will safely manage the data transfer process. *

Transcription of the data will be undertaken by the researcher to provide a first draft. PCE participant will be provided with the draft transcriptions for review and amendments within two weeks of receipt to ensure accurate details of the interview. The participants will be sent a link via an email link to a password protected folder to view the transcript.

PG2.15 Will you collect data via observation? *

○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.16 Will you collect data via photography / videography?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.17 Will you collect data via psychological inventories or any other published, standardised test?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.18 Will you collect data via collection of human biospecimens?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.19 Will you collect data via responses to tasks, stimuli or simulations?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.20 Will you collect data via administration of a substance?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.21 Will you collect data via any other procedure not outlined above?*
○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G2 - Data Collection Methods*** .

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G2 - Data Collection Procedure and Competence

PG2.23 Provide details about what you are asking participants in this group to do or what is to be done to them. Include a step-by-step description of what participants will experience if they choose to take part in this project.*

1. Participants will be interviewed regarding their knowledge and application of TSQA, HESF standards pertaining to course design for [redacted]
2. Review and amend interview accuracy of transcripts

PG2.24 How much time are you asking of participants in this group and when will this time be required? *(e.g. 30 minutes after class).**

1. 30 -45 minutes for interview only
2. 30 minutes - time to review and amend accuracy of interview transcripts

PG2.25 Where will the data be collected (venue and geographical location)? (e.g. front of 'venue')*

USQ campus - Toowoomba and/or video conferencing depending on the PCE member location. The researcher will organise a time and day to conduct the interviews.

PG2.26 Does the research involve the administration of any tests or procedures that require particular qualifications?*
○ Yes ◉ No

PG2.27 Does the research involve measures or procedures that are **diagnostic** or **indicative** of any **medical** or **clinical** condition, or any other situation of concern? *(e.g. anaemia, bulimia, anorexia, anxiety, suicidal tendencies, aggressive behaviours, etc.)**
○ Yes ◉ No

Review outcome comments for ***G2 - Data Collection Procedure and Competence***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

G2 - Consent Method

PG2.28 Are these participants able to consent for themselves?*
◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.29 Will you use a written Participant Information Sheet or Explanatory Statement to inform participants about this project?*
◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.30 Will these participants be fully informed about the true nature of the research?*

◉ Yes ○ No

PG2.31 Indicate how you will obtain consent from this group of participants.*

- ○ Implied consent
- ◉ Consent form (must be attached with this application)
- ○ Opt-out consent
- ○ Other

Consent may be expressed in a number of ways. **A signed consent form** has traditionally been the accepted method of documenting a participant's consent to participate in a research project. Where used, information about the research project is generally presented in a participant information sheet, explanatory statement, or similar document that a participant retains.

The process of communicating information to participants and seeking their consent should not be merely a matter of satisfying a formal requirement. The aim is mutual understanding between researchers and participants. This aim requires an opportunity for participants to ask questions and to discuss the information and their decisions with others if they wish.

PG2.31.2 Outline the process by which the participants will give consent and how they return the consent form to the researchers.*

The Participation Information statement and consent form will either emailed or handed to the prospective participant. A signature will be required on the consent form. The signed consent form will be scanned and sent to the participant for their records and the original retained and stored as per the data storage plan.

Review outcome comments for ***G2 - Consent Method***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Supporting Documentation

Supporting Documents

17

Below is a list of documents that may be required with this application. Upload each applicable item against the matching document name. If you require more than one document to be uploaded per item please use the 'Add New Document' button .

****Note**** there are multiple pages in the grid below, use the change page buttons at the bottom of the grid to browse each page.

Allowable file extensions are pdf, doc, docx, xls, xlsx, msg, jpg, ppt, pptx.

Description	Reference	Soft copy	Hard copy
Consent form (as required, for each participant group)	Consent Form G1&2.docx	✓	
information sheet interview Group 2	Information Sheet Interview G2.docx	✓	

Review outcome comments for ***Documents (1)***.

This question is not answered.

Review outcome comments for ***Documents (2)***.

This question is not answered.

Review outcome comments for ***Documents (3)***.

This question is not answered.

Review outcome comments for ***Documents (4)***.

This question is not answered.

Review outcome comments for ***Documents (5)***.

This question is not answered.

Click the green arrow to go to the next page.

Declaration

Declaration

USQ Principal Investigator Declaration

I the undersigned declare that I:

- have considered engaging with the peer review of this ethics application, in accordance with the USQ Statement on Peer Review;
- accept ultimate responsibility for the ethical conduct of this research project in accordance with the principles outlined in USQ's Research Code of Conduct Policy, the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018), and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 (updated 2018);
- have ensured that all people involved in this research project understand and accept their roles and responsibilities;
- undertake to conduct this research project in accordance with the protocols and procedures outlined in the proposal as approved by USQ's Human Research Ethics Committee (USQ HREC);
- inform the USQ HREC of any changes to the protocol after the approval of the Committee has been obtained using the USQ HREC Amendment Application procedure AND inform all people involved in this research project of the amended protocol;
- have read and agree to comply with USQ's Research Data Management Policy and pursuant policies and procedures and have a plan for managing and/or sharing Research Data securely; and
- understand and agree that project files, documents, research records, and data may be subject to inspection by USQ HREC, a research integrity officer, the sponsor or an independent body for audit

18 USQ Principal Investigator Declaration

1	Full Name	Mrs Cathy Tame
	Position	Principal Investigator
	Declaration signed?	No
	Signoff Date	

APPENDIX B-EXAMPLE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET(GROUP TWO)

University of Southern Queensland

Participant Information for USQ Research Project Interview

Project Details	
Title of Project:	Assurance of Learning: Investigating UbD principles and processes to develop a course design framework for educators to evidence pedagogical decisions in higher education.
Human Research Ethics Approval Number:	H20REA313

Research Team Contact Details

Principal Investigator Details
Mrs Hendrika Tame
Email: Cathy.Tame@usq.edu.au
Telephone:+61 74631 1635
Mobile:+61 457 126 024

Principle Supervisor
Prof. Karen Trimmer
Email: Karen.Trimmer@usq.edu.au
Telephone: +61 74631 2371

Associate Supervisor
Ms Nicole Brownlie
Email: Nicole.Brownlie@usq.edu.au
Telephone: +61 746312354

Description

This project is being undertaken as part of a Master of Professional Studies (research).

The purpose of this project is to investigate UbD framework processes and principles, analyses literature and [redacted], TEQSA and HESF documentation to develop a course design framework suitable for higher education to satisfy the evidencing requirements of TESQA - HESF (Threshold) Standard Teaching, part 3.1 Course design, section 31.1- 5. The research team requests your assistance to understanding course design perception and practices and [redacted] and Higher education Standards Framework requirements.

The research team requests your assistance. The information collected will assist answer the following:
1) Which UbD design framework principles and processes (if any), may be suitable for the development of a course design framework for [redacted] Commerce or Management and Enterprise interdisciplines?
a) What are the TESQA requirements and is there an alignment with UbD design framework principles and processes?
b) What are [redacted] Commerce or Management and Enterprise educators' course design practice and perceptions of TESQA requirements?
c)To what extent does the Commerce or Management and Enterprise educators design practices and TESQA perceptions align with UbD design framework principles, processes, and theoretical underpinnings?

Participation

Your participation will involve participation in an interview that will take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

The interviews will take place at a time and venue that is convenient to you, within a space of three weeks. The interviews will be undertaken via video conference e.g. Zoom at a date and time that is convenient to you.

Questions will include:

- What are the requirements for TESQA and HESF standard for teaching – course design?
- What is [redacted] expectations' for evidencing course design and course curriculum design?

The interviews will be audio recorded.

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. You will be unable to withdraw data collected about yourself after the data has been analysed. If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected about you, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Your decision whether you take part, do not take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will in no way impact your current or future relationship with the [redacted].

Expected Benefits

It is expected that this project will directly benefit you and other educator and the organisation will be the identification of a course design framework that can be used in collaboration with professional staff to assist educators in designing course. The documentation produced by the educator can be used to address requirement of the HESF (Threshold) Standard Teaching, part 3.1 Course design, section 31.1-5 by TESQA for registration purposes. The participants provided and utilising the framework to design course would gain insight into course design and enhancing their learning teaching practice. The possible flow on benefit is that the participants will share the use of the framework with course team members to assure learning.

Risks

In participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living. Should participation in the study raise any issues or concerns you can access the following services: Employee Assistance Program (EAP) https://assureprograms.com.au/services/ or Queensland government: Mental health access line: https://www.qld.gov.au/health/mental-health/help-lines/1300-mh-call

Privacy and Confidentiality

In participating in the interview, all comments and responses will be treated confidentially unless required by law.

The video conference interviews will be recorded. You will be provided with a copy of the interview transcription for review and endorsement in the project. You will be given 2 weeks to review and request any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis.

The recording will be not used for any other purpose. The research will have access to the recording and will transcribe the recording. It will not be possible to participate in the project without being recorded.

In accordance with 2.5.2 of the "Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research" research data should be made available for use by other researchers unless this is prevented by ethical, privacy or confidentiality matters. The researcher intends to publish the results of the research in journals where the findings will be accessible.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely as per University of Southern Queensland'sResearch Data Management policy.

Consent to Participate

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research Team prior to participating in your interview.

Questions or Further Information about the Project

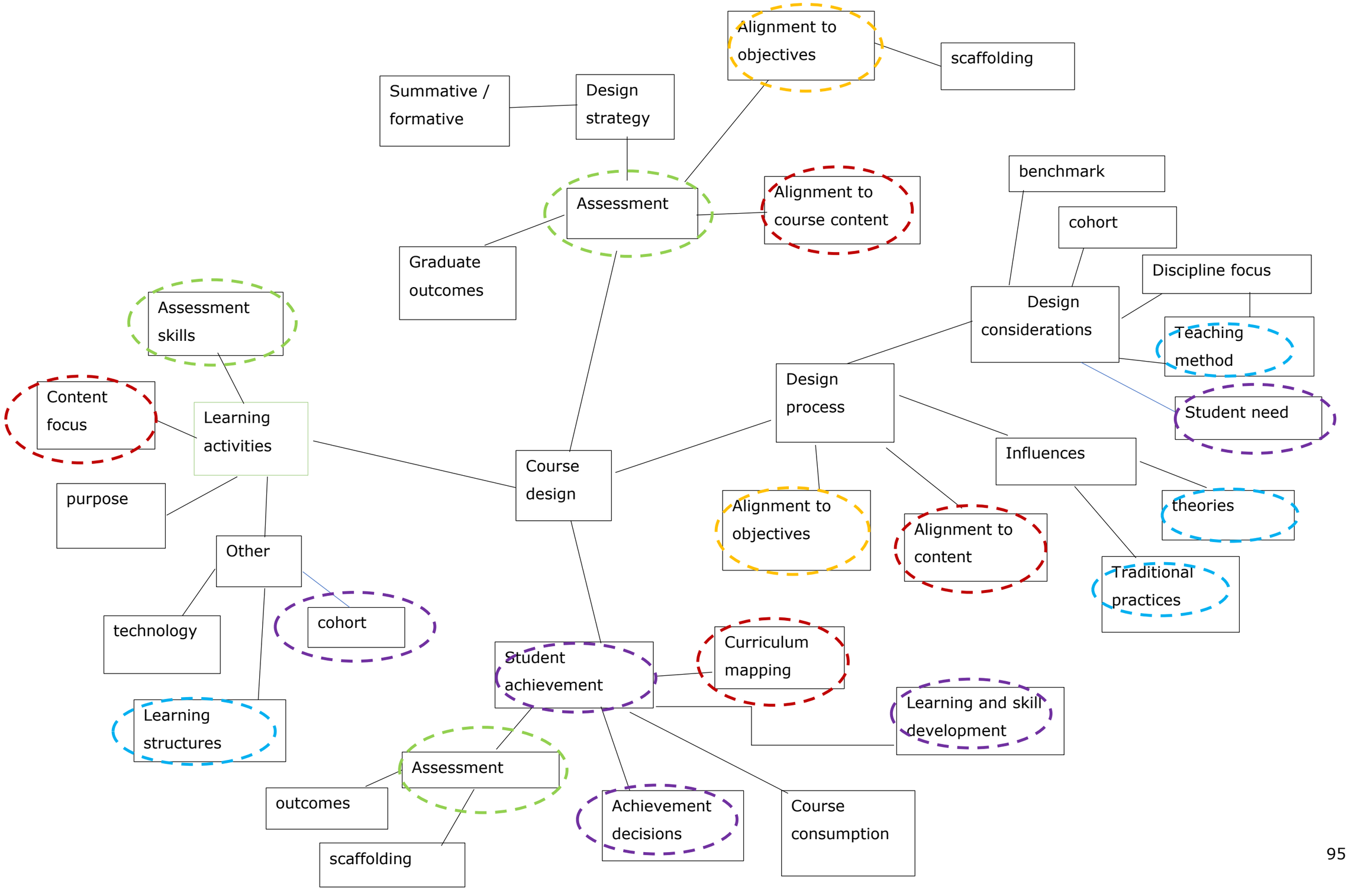
Please refer to the Research Team Contact Details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

Concerns or Complaints Regarding the Conduct of the Project

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email researchintegrity@usq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics is not connected with the research project and can facilitate a resolution to your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this sheet for your information.

APPENDIX C-CONCEPTUAL MAP FOR INTERVIEW GROUP ONE THEMES



APPENDIX D-EMERGENT THEMES

Emergent Themes No. 1. A correlation exists between UbD stages and higher Education Threshold Standards no.3		
	UbD Process Stages	*Document*
Theme	Sub theme:	Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 (HES Framework)
Identify desired results (Stage 1)	Unpacking standards (Professional Accreditation bodies/TLOs/ Program objectives/ course specs/ attributes/ Academic plan- FYI/WIL)	**HESF 1 Student participation and attainment – 1.4 Assessment and outcomes** 1.The expected learning outcomes for each course of study are specified, consistent with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and informed by national and international comparators. 2.The specified learning outcomes for each course of study encompass discipline-related and generic outcomes, including: a. specific knowledge and skills and their application that characterise the field(s) of education or disciplines involved b. generic skills and their application in the context of the field(s) of education or disciplines involved c. knowledge and skills required for employment and further study related to the course of study, including those required to be eligible to seek registration to practise where applicable, and d. skills in independent and critical thinking suitable for life-long learning. HESF 3 Teaching – 3.1 course design 5. Where professional accreditation of a course of study is required for graduates to be eligible to practice, the course of study is accredited and continues to be accredited by the relevant professional body.
	Sub theme: Clarifying content priorities identifying big ideas and core tasks (content/topics/ theories/skills/attributes)	HESF 3 Teaching – 3.1 course design 2. the content and learning activities of each course of student engage with advance knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes, including: a. current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciple, b. study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual framework of the academic disciplines of fields of education or research represented in the, and, c. emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and, where applicable, advances in practice
Theme 2: Determine acceptable evidence (Stage 2)	Sub theme: Curricular priorities and Assessment methods alignment	HESF 1 Student participation and attainment – 1.4 Assessment and outcomes 3. Methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
	Sub theme: Performance based (assessing understanding summative and formative)	HESF 1 Student participation and attainment – 1.4 Assessment and outcomes 4. On completion of a course of study, students have demonstrated the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination
	Sub theme:	HESF 3 Teaching – 3.1 course design

Theme 3 Plan learning experiences (Stage 3)	Designing/planning process (right experience)	3. Teaching and learning activities are arranged to foster progressive and coherent achievement of expect learning outcomes throughout each course of study
	Sub theme: Cohort consideration	HESF 3 Teaching – 3.1 course design 4. Each course of study is designed to enable achievement of expected learning outcomes regardless of a student's place of study or the mode of deliver

Emergent theme 2: Educator design practice exhibit similarities to UbD processes	
Category/Theme	Data extracts - Group 1 educators
Theme: Perception of UbD	I haven't heard of those terms, [P1] No. No, I haven't. / Just a little bit. I attended your seminar and, yeah, I learnt about that in your, in your talk. [P2] I've heard of backwards design? Not understanding by design? /… the information sheet you sent around. The first time I came across that term. [P3] No, never heard of that [P5]
	… I understand that backward design to be… just like you would probably like a business with a strategic plan. What's the end goal? What's my objective here? And then being able to, as you write the course, always going back to those objectives and those outcomes and say, well, have I just provided that content in, at this level or is that really focussed on the strategic elevation and strategic thinking that is the undercurrent of the programme. [P1] Well, it would be designing a course by starting with the learning outcomes and thinking from there, um through the tasks the students are going to need to complete and then thinking about the materials they need for that task from there. [P3] I think what you might be implying with design thinking kind of approach is often I will think about where I want the course to be. What is specific content, knowledge, given my knowledge of theory? And then sometimes I will work backwards and say, right, I will here's here's the content that I think is most have here. Here are the different components of content. And then I'm and sometimes I will cognitively rather than necessarily writing anything down cognitively frame that in my mind. It's about what that will look like in terms of modules. [P5]
Category: Course design alignment to UbD process Theme: Course curriculum design - Process articulated but driven by program objectives curriculum alignment.	I start off actually with program objectives. I look at the discipline program objectives and then I'll look at the course objective, how that fits in that. And then I start designing the floor space, to see how it fits to satisfy a) the programme objectives and b) the course objectives. / And then, and then I basically start looking at the assessment. I actually look at the assessment first and see how that will then filter into the course design, because obviously the assessment has to fit into the objectives, has to fit into the programme. And then I say, well, now that we've got to that sort of that the, at that level, let's go down and actually see the content and what, what, what, what content do we need to satisfy all these, / Having said that, I don't try to satisfy all the programme objectives, that's not the purpose. I try to I try to make sure that the course objectives are consistent with at least some of the programme objectives rather than targeted to the program objectives the course objectives have to be consistent with some but not all of the program objectives. [P1] I'm thinking about how I've done it in the past. I definitely think about the academic skills we want to develop and sort of backwards map from there, I guess, um, to do assessment tasks and then thinking about the particular readings and so on that we'd need from there. Um, but also just a specific knowledge that we can use to a specific content move that would be just a more conventional course design of finding a way to fit it in, I guess. And that's a combination with the backwards design. [P3] So if I'm writing a new course. I'll start with the course objectives, obviously start with the course specification and the course objectives and the rationale and synopsis … So I will tend to use a modular approach. / So if I have four modules, I'll break it up into module one, two, three, four. So module one scaffolding knowledge related to the course learning outcomes so that if learning outcome one is defined and explained, then, you know, chap. module one might be referring mainly to the objective one. And then objective two and three starts talk about apply and develop a different leadership theories or change many theories. Then I'll start to work up these, those modules to fit them. So I very much. If the writing component, then the module design with the learning outcomes and the rationale synopsis of the course. / the modules then are reflective of the course, the course content is reflected of what we want to achieve, what do we want to achieve in that particular course. / And then the assessment then is designed specifically to be able to address this, course outcomes [P5]

Category: Course design alignment to UbD process Theme: Other approaches to course design	(not the other way round). The old, the old way we design the content. The design is everything after that. So that's long dead. [P1] … when I first started teaching probably 30 years ago … but what I focus, especially in the early stage, is the content, is what I need to present to the student and help them to understand and help them to learn. So that would be the number one thing because that yeah, that is, that I suppose what we are saying is the learning outcomes. / But in the past, we never use that term, so um but it's always say, say a syllabus. What are the topics that the students need to learn? And then what I would do is to look at what other universities are doing. And then look at our own programme and see how they fit in with other courses or subjects. [P2] I think it's probably a bit of a combination of that sort of backwards design and sort of more conventional design. (conventional design) starting with, you know, sort of disciplinary knowledge, area theory knowledge and treating that as what you need to get across to your students, rather than on academic skills? / And um, it's sort of something that I've discovered sort of, you know by, through trial and error. So if it works and learning from other people you know. [P3]
Theme: Identify desired results (Stage 1) Sub theme: Unpacking standards (Professional Accreditation bodies/TLOs/ Program objectives/ course specs/ attributes/ Academic plan-FYI/WIL)	Well, again, it all goes back to literally the map. I design a map, which is programme, course assessment. [P1] So the whole programme objective was actually to, to train people to do research in the future [P2] we all should be very conscious of that, those AQF levels, I guess, and looking at, you know, what that what those standards are like, so you know it and what we want to achieve. / … the volume of learning that you have to compress into half the time is is huge. [P4]
Theme: Identify desired results (Stage 1) Sub theme: Clarifying content priorities identifying big ideas and core tasks (content/topics/ theories/skills/attributes)	So it's not just people telling you, it's not just problem solving. It's got to be, beyond that. So I always have this sort of thinking. /I like my students to have this ability attitude that they keep learning, keep exploring, keep developing more as a thinker and researcher. Not just in their university, problem-solving, search problems, but there in their lives their family, everything. [P2] So, I set, sometimes I design a problems. I will look at whether it is problem solving or finding your problem, or find your problem and find solutions, or just identify future issues [P2] I think it's from specific topics. I think it's about thinking about the course as a whole. I'm thinking about the most logical way or the most feasible, practical way of getting that knowledge across over the course and how I to break it up into modules and you know how we can scaffold, you know, more complex things rather than simpler things we are on / First, to content theme of the course, the knowledge that content being adopted rather that the academic skills [P3]
Theme: Identify desired results (Stage 1) Sub theme: Reframing around understanding (course	But I guess it's a process of just thinking about, um, you know, what the overall course objective are, what the overall, um. [P3] Well, it gets back to the learning, learning outcomes really specifically. So, you know, the learning outcomes say reflect and apply some kind of knowledge to particular case. / So, I really do connect with the learning outcomes all the time / They are just really do relate to the outcomes. / Yeah, I do. I often go back to Bloom's Taxonomy, Learning Taxonomy. So I say, right, you know, knowledge, comprehension, you know, the kind of stuff application and I'll go back and say, well, I think. [P5]

objectives/ module learning outcomes)	
Theme: Determine acceptable evidence (Stage 2) Sub theme: Curricular priorities and Assessment methods alignment	With that you try to get an overall feel for, for basically what you're trying to achieve. And your trying to achieve competence in the course material and trying to achieve some sort of key skills, adaptability, communication, whatever. / But you've got to look at the overall picture and sometimes the overall picture is exactly what you're trying to achieve, which are achieve, a graduate or a person who that leaves the course that is actually competent in that course. / So, the assessment at the end of the day, you've got to look as, as a big picture. Has the assessment achieved what these overall objectives are rather than. [P1] So, of course, they need to understand all the basic formative stuff, like vocabulary needed to read, terminology and some of them they are not intellectual challenges / So they just spend time to learn to understand and that is important. And that is just like language. So, yes, they don't have that skill if they don't have those vocabularies. They can communicate. They can get things done efficiently. So that is important. / I think the nature of information systems or I.T. or engineering, so, there's a big part, which is in application solving problems, designing things. / But the challenge would be to work on the assessment so we can achieve the outcome because a good piece of a assessment. I think that would really help because like if they actually going to something that is very useful and they learn a lot, it is because it's not just textbook. [P2] And I think this is again, what's probably been a refreshing task in the MBA is going back to those outcomes and also having a really good idea of scaffolding. / I'm conscious of two things: one is, is the content knowledge, but also then the skills, I guess, that they are trying to build [P4] Well, I normally break down the content. So let's say there are two pieces, two major bits of content in each of those in a particular module. And let's say each of the content is broken down into, say, three sub parts. [P5] And for that, it would be simple multiple choice questions or just fill in the blank, short questions, things like that. And usually they don't get too many marks for that. But I do, if possible, to get them to earn a few marks, so that is to encourage them to actually do it./ And then the big part and, which is the problem solving and summative. And that is for them to apply what they learn. [P2] So, I think that having a final, you know, it's resulted in me thinking that having a final task, which is sort of a summing up of some overall theme and sort of critical analysis, of the course content and sort of a, a, you know, a synthesis of course content is a good final thing. / And then having sort of an earlier summative assessment item like I'm on, yeah, really, now we're down into a specific sort of an analysis of a particular reading or something along those lines. And then, also having, I guess, formative assessment throughout the course in terms of a low short stakes, weekly activities throughout the course as well. / It's just, you know, using that's conventional two essay and an exam sort of thing and sort of learnt over time that um, that It's doesn't work particularly well. [P3]

	It would be good for us to feed into a portfolio of evidence at the end of the day where, you know, those, those courses in the assessment for those courses actually provided them with evidence that they had, in fact, achieved in that area or mastered that skill or learnt that content or whatever it was. [P4] this particular component of the content would be ideal, for formative assessment. This particular component would be ideal for summative, you know, and not ideal for formative because it's a bit more complex and it needs to be teased out more, you know. / So I might sort of say it would be for them to look at formative assessment for sub parts one and two and then maybe sub parts for the two point one and two point two or something and. But the formative assessment, sorry the summative assessment would then need to pick up the other sub parts because they're the major, major bits and pieces that I think they must have, like must have knowledge. Must be to demonstrate, sorry, articulate that knowledge in terms of how they apply to a particular problem or something like that. [P5]
Theme: Determine acceptable evidence (Stage 2) Sub theme: Authentic performance	And it's explicit in saying here's what the, the big concepts are, here's what that looks like in practise, here's how you need to maybe reflect on your own practise and right now would bring it all together, do whatever. So I guess in the assessment it was the same thing. / So we could assess what those big picture things were, we would assess what you think it looks like in the world, we want to assess how you've experienced it in the world. And so they can see as they're learning that how that contributes to the evidence, I guess. / So that when they leave, that contributes to them getting jobs. And, and also even in their own course selection, [P4]
Theme: Plan learning experiences (Stage 3) Sub theme: Designing/planning process (right experience)	Any learning activities should basically be complimenting the course material. / should be sort of building towards the assessment tasks. So, it's like that big of a link between the two / But it's the overall picture that if you look at the learning activities as a whole, are they doing that link and if they are that's the focus of them. [P1] I think what is important for me is always learn and know about all this new technology and, and try to use them when they are relevant. / Cause when they go to workforce, they will need that and I will encourage and force them to use Zoom or Slack. Yeah, it just make it, just not technical, the teaching stuff but everything support what their learning to achieve. [P2] What I do most of my courses is have revision questions and tutorial activities, which are either answering some question about the course content, which is normally directed at specific, you know, academic skill as well, like tasks and thing like academic skills and scope of the content for the week? / And perhaps a task like summarising a piece of research and reading research paper coming up with some paragraphs or something like that, or outlining an argument breaking down the logical structure in an argument. [P3] I've been involved in the MBA, which is to have all of those learning activities, just be the assessment. [P4] So you have a lot of learning activities all through the modules. / And some of them could be reflective pieces, some of them could be small application to application of knowledge to practise, you know, activities. So, yeah, they're all through all through the modules / It's sort of like what, what, what you know, what things I'd like them to know about knowledge and what things I'd like them to know about comprehension, and the other aspects of that tax taxonomy. [P5]
Theme: Plan learning experiences (Stage 3) Sub theme: Cohort consideration	so Microsoft teams, that we are using or Slack's or a Trello. These are great tools. And I tried to get them to use them so they may not be related to their course thing that they need to learn for getting marks. But these little things, especially like, say, for example, Microsoft team, and that would be very, very useful transferable skills that they have. / Cause when they go to workforce, they will need that and I will encourage and force them to use Zoom or Slack. Yeah, it just make it, just not technical, the teaching stuff but everything support what their learning to achieve. [P2] I need to understand how the younger generation learn? AND I think that is really important. / But I need to acknowledge and understand that, like um, for them, ok, that may not be the norm. So I need to I need to make their learning easier. / I think from their current stage to the next space of learning style or that that that takes time. I think we need to be aware of, of their situation, their style, their behaviour. [P2]

	We have such a varied profile of student and how a school leaver, for example, wants to interact with your material is hugely different than how an executive wants to interact with your material. / So, yeah, in terms of the activities, look, I think what's really difficult also is that students pare everything back to: what do I need to pass, you know by and large. [P4] And also learning styles. I'm aware of learning styles that different people, different learning styles which came out of my PHD studies years ago. And so I try to mix and match the kind of activities that I think would be suitable for: a. different learners and how they learn and b. based on, you know, Bloom's tax, learning taxonomy, which is pretty? [P5]
Theme: Plan learning experiences (Stage 3) Sub theme: What to Cover VS not to cover	They want to learn something like write a programme collaboratively and I get them to use the tools to help them to get their work done. [P2] I thought about what skills I want them to develop therefore I got the assessment items, which I think are going to develop those skills and the design that will help them with those assessment items. [P3]
Theme: Plan learning experiences (Stage 3) Sub theme: Formative assessment – when, what, how	So, of course, they need to understand all the basic formative stuff, like vocabulary needed to read, terminology and some of them they are not intellectual challenges [P2] And then, also having, I guess, formative assessment throughout the course in terms of a low short stakes, weekly activities throughout the course as well. [P3] this particular component of the content would be ideal, for formative assessment. [P5]
Theme: Plan learning experiences (Stage 3) Sub theme: Engaging and effective	I think that, what's not, what's not working, which is actually what a lot of us have, is our learning activities, is simply asking them to comment on things in the discussion board, because they've don't, the realities that they don't. / Mentimeter and things like that a little bit…And I've actually found that to be, quite, quite enlightening and active and thought provoking, which has been good. And I think something like Mentimeter because it's anonymous. [P4]

Emergent theme 3: Lack of clarity around requirements, expectations or obligations	
Data extracts - Group 2 Professional	***Data extracts - Group 1 educators***
Theme: Vague standards and TEQSA requirements threshold standards, they're not that extensive really. And they're not, they're kind of more high level / they aren't meant to be … overly prescriptive and that they do want universities to have a certain amount of leeway in terms of how they, um, implement things or not. [P6] the threshold standards and all of the TEQSA guidance notes just far too vague and I don't know why they feel like they need to be so vague [P7]	
Theme: What's in vogue at the time university perspective. I think. It's more around. Whatever policy document is in vogue at the time around, learning and teaching, that's to me what would be encapsulating the university's perspective so or expectations. So, I guess, at the moment the, that main document would be the Academic Plan…first year experience, … workplace integrated learning and employability principles. / you'd be expected to comply with whatever assessment policy and procedures So, I feel like the university's expectations, to the extent that they are articulated, arh, tend to be articulated in those types of documents. [P6] the overall values of the university and what they're trying to achieve, in that sense. … each individual course actually, you know, referring back to those overall values of the, you know, respect integrity, excellence as well. / the minimum requirements, [P7]	
Theme: TEQSA at program/institution/ program/ course level I still think this is framed as being at the program level / But probably more aimed at the program level. / All I can really go on is what's in the threshold standards and I guess like the guidance notes, but again a lot of those guidance notes are more institutional level / So I don't think they (TEQSA requirements) go down, to what we call the course level, [P6] TEQSA's are not actually specific in what they require in that area (course design), and I would say none. [P7]	
Theme: Lack of clarity of university or institutional expectations or approach	
Yeah, well, I don't think that's (university expectations of the academics) very clear at all. / if you are tasked with designing a course. That's end product …I don't think is ever really clearly articulated. / I don't think that academic staff are necessarily given any guidance from supervisors or heads of school around curriculum designed to be perfectly blunt. / … I think that things like what does the university expect at that level is pretty badly articulated, [P6]	I think there's two things that are really a problem: one, when you get away from the programme level and the discipline level, people just design stuff that might be interesting to them. / I think, I think things like TEQSA and the HES framework, that they're admirable, you know, they're necessary. I think the operationalisation of that at our level is really poor. [P4]
Theme: Fixing the problem through building capacity	

there's a very large kind of educative piece that is missing as well and, um…kind of really developing staffs capacity to understand and execute, um, good curriculum design. / You know, when we're on boarding staff, when we're even for casual staff like that should be something around the fact that we work in a regulated sector and that we have certain kind of statutory obligations that we have to fulfil to remain as a university [P6] …online course on that wouldn't be out of the ordinary. [P7]	
	Theme: Institutional barriers to course design I do find quite a lot of limitation in terms of the technology. I know [redacted] has a lot of technology but allocation of that and, and time to develop activities is difficult also [P4]. it's the level of approval that is needed for us to make any changes. Like, um. I think that is a hurdle, have to say a hurdle because. Sometimes changing things... I think if we've got that flexibility to make changes any time we want, in a way and time, especially…/ But certainly in terms of the big structure and big thing, I still need lots of approval. / So if that process can be streamlined, I think that would help. / But I think if we can have more visibility and that might be easier. [P3]
Theme: Perception of university imposition and dictation	
They (university processes) have been perceived as … quite … revolutionary and sort of like, we've got all this stuff suddenly we had to have to do. …no no, these are the minimum requirements. This is what is minimally expected, like most people, should be going well and truly above this. / I think a lot of lecturers are just saying it is, you know, an extra added bit of workload rather than this is actually a requirement of TEQSA. [P7]	So I find it quite annoying. That I see over and, over, and over again dictation of what should go in when it's not understanding the creative process. … what should we be coming from administration is guidelines. And that's all that should be coming, not dictation. / Which I think is actually doing the exact opposite of what they hope to do stifling creativity it's killing basically people's ability to adapt. / … a terrible section of our admin that every has to be mapped, but it's not everything. You try and design something on a, on a sort of generic level or a macro level. And when, and when you get these ridiculous pedantic arguments for: how does this particular module relate to this particular? / … people who dictate with this has to fit with this. It doesn't fit. It's not like a Lego. Things don't have to fit identically. /... I'm so, so annoyed with this um: you will have 13 points now, our stupid rules now. / It's just so restrictive that it doesn't give you creativity, doesn't give you ability. [P1] And I know the idea is quality and all that, but it's like we're racing to the bottom. We're racing to the absolute minimum standards. You might be guaranteed the minimum quality. But that's all your guaranteeing. [P1] Again, it's it's still part of this mentality that we cannot get away from that every part, of course, of every assessment of everything has to be mapped to something specific / …You don't design a

	course that way because it's so mechanical, it's so ridiculous…And to say but assessment one that maps to … and is so restrictive. It's, it's just insane. [P1] It's, it's, it's dictated by people haven't design anything in their lives. It's dictated by people who think everything can be mapped exactly. Again, I don't want to be sort of restricted by saying every single learning activity, every question and every learning activity must be matched exactly too. This is that ridiculous admin dictation process. [P1] Once you start dictating how to paint, you know, then it's not a painting any more is it? It's, it's, it's, just mechanical reproduction. And that's, that's, the process we've gone down and unfortunately at [redacted] we've gone down very prescriptive by the numbers, you will do these ten steps and look your course will be perfect. Um, no it's not, it's not like that at all. /And we have this mind set in some insane people on this place that's the way we do, our course design. List the standards, have them written in front of you and make sure everything matches against the standards. [P1]

Data extract - Group 2 Professional	*Data extract - Group 1 Educators*
Theme: Academic awareness	
People have no idea about that stuff. In the main, I would say that most people have, you know, absolutely no clue, about...even like the basic, like I guess, they might have some inkling that higher education is regulated like some kind of inkling, but how that is relevant to what they do know - no idea. / I'm not blaming academics for this. I think it's the institution's responsibility to really make sure that everybody is on the same page [P6] I don't think that they see that connection … …people (academics) just don't understand the bigger context. / less than 50 percent (awareness of TEQSA) [P7]	Well, TEQSA is just the government, the government imposing what they believe is minimum required standards and they've got every right to. / But the bottom line is the government's got every right. And they should have every right to impose minimum standards. / But the university's response to TEQSA can be sometimes, um, over reactive, can sometimes be a little bit hysterical / Of course, we've all heard of TEQSA, we've all, all, terrified of being audited by TEQSA. Aren't we? / No there guidelines [P1] Yes, that's arh, I don't understand. I, I'm sorry. I'm not familiar with the actual details (HESF). What was more specifically (standards related to academics), no. [P1] Yeah, I've heard it them, to satisfy some internal pilots, um, they need to add quality, but yeah, no, um, but I really don't understand what they do really. / We have some of these administrative requirements that we need to deal with some time. But I don't think that's been something that I've really had to come up against, so. / I seen those words, those was acronyms but I, yeah. / From past experience ...I, I actually work on one of they um application to that, yeah, for a private university but that was like, um, 2010. [P2] I'm, I'm aware of them, but I don't know a lot about them because we haven't had. They haven't kind of been. I don't think so, anyway, I have flowed down to us in academic, at the level of writing programs. … Not, not a lot. Just heard about them, but not a lot, probably very little. I've had I haven't used of them in the design of my courses or programmes. [P5]

Theme: Academic response/ perceptions of TEQSA/ Standards	
And they see a lot of the initiatives, to kind of move in that direction as being the university, being overly prescriptive or taking away their freedom to be creative in their own courses or whatever / you start using words like quality or, you know, the regulator or whatever, people think that it's like talking about a performance or whatever. Massive failing on our part. [P6] the vast majority of people consider it an enormous waste of their time. But the vast majority don't, the vast majority think they're, you know, they're being interrogated by the police. [P7]	It's our job as universities and I say ours. It's everyone's job to make sure that we operate within those rights (TEQSA) [P1] I don't feel any particular responsibility to them, I don't feel any responsibility to that, I just making sure students do well. / We have some of these administrative requirements that we need to deal with some time. But I don't think that's been something that I've really had to come up against, so. [P3] So I think, I think things like TEQSA and the HES framework, that they're admirable, you know, they're necessary. I think the operationalisation of that at our level is really poor. [P4] Ok, all right, no, no, sorry that I was getting that confused. No not as totally familiar with the TEQSA one and the other one then in that sense. I had been using the AQF levels. / I know about TEQSA, I guess I know about, about TEQSA stuff because I've had to work with someone in TEQSA years ago when I was signing of a program. But and I remember vaguely her sending, she was the head dog of TEQSA at the time, they're sending me some stuff. Think it might have been when I was rewriting the MBA years ago, but I can't remember much else, [P5]

Emergent theme 4: No evidence or documentation exist or is required for course design.	
Data extract: Group 2 Professional	***Group 1 Educators***
Theme: no course design documentation	
Someone (academic) actually fully outlining the decisions they've made in terms of the constructive alignment of the course and yeah, I seriously don't think anyone's doing that. / I would say most people (academic) would have no idea, what's expected of them, and people just make it up. And in terms of actually documenting decision, the decision making process would be seriously surprised if people did that. [P6]	The records are kept here. (indicating in the head) / I do maps on whiteboards… No, I don't. I don't take a picture of the whiteboard, I don't, I don't copy down. Basically, that whiteboard. [P1] I would say mostly up in my head. [P2] No, not really. (gesture pointing to head) / But no, I haven't been systematic about documenting. / No. You know, I've got the, the actual, the actual structure, you know, appear on StudyDesk - yeah, but I don't document the structure – how I actual come to them. [P3] No (the process) No. I honestly just jot it down. [P5]
Theme: No University documentation for TEQSA requirements for program not course There's not really like a systematic approach to that as far as I'm aware, like, you know, a kind of template or something to fill out. And I think as we move towards a curriculum management system and, um, I'm talking more here about core specifications rather than like really putting the meat on the bones to courses. [P5] But we've been quite specific in terms of what we require. Mostly because of the TEQSA accreditation…the course action plans…when examiners are going to make change or even if they're not coming to make change after a semester of teaching, it does make sense to write a few sentences to justify why change was made or to justify why change wasn't made. [P7] But you know, evidence, some sort of evidence brief would help with that. … that was pointed out in our conditional registration that we needed more evidence around curriculum change … [P7]	
Theme: No university Framework or tools for course design thinking about re accreditation? You know, that, that's just very poorly and very kind of manually handled. / terms of that type of regulatory requirement … I guess ,we need to do a lot better, um, from a systems perspective to make sure that we have a central point [P6] There's not really like a systematic approach to that (course design) as far as I'm aware, like, you know, a kind of template or something to fill out. And I think as we move towards a curriculum management system and, um, I'm talking more here about core specifications rather than like really putting the meat on the bones to courses. [P6]	

Mm hmm. And in terms of program, I know we're going to some sort of software in another year or so that will evidence the curriculum design and development of a program level, but not necessarily a course level. [P7]	

APPENDIX E:-Unpublished Paper Submission confirmation

Cathy Tame

From: Editors of Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice <editors-jutlp-3334@rouow.bepress.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 21, 2023 12:26 PM
To: Cathy Tame
Cc: The Authors; The Editors
Subject: MS #3334: Article received for Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice

A new article for Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice has been uploaded by "Cathy Tame" <cathy.tame@usq.edu.au>.

The authors are:

"Cathy Tame" <cathy.tame@usq.edu.au>
"Nicole Brownlie" <nicole.brownlie@usq.edu.au>
"Karen Trimmer" <karen.trimmer@usq.edu.au> The title is:
"Equipping Academics with Tools for Designing Courses and Learning"

The keywords are:

Understanding by Design, course design, learning design, academics, higher education

The article has been assigned #3334. Please refer to this number in any correspondence related to the submission.

Authors may check the status of the article, submit revisions, and contact editors via the following link:

https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/preview.cgi?article=3334&context=jutlp

---

Editors can access the management tools for this article at:

https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/editor.cgi?article=3334&context=jutlp

The Editors

Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice