# Flagship Curriculum Projects: structures and processes
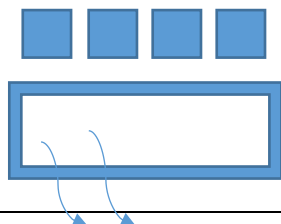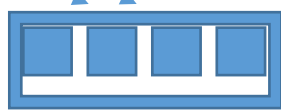
The original invitation to apply for funding for:

1. The development of learning 'Pods' – (modules) to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society
2. The development of new 'Accelerator Units' to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society
3. The development of new 'Advantage Majors' and sub-majors are intended to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society.
4. Co-curriculum elements?

The first round of funded Flagship Curriculum Projects (FCPs) are now, as intended, raising some challenges to established curriculum development and approval policies and practices. This paper identifies some of these challenges and suggests how they might be used to build our capacity for agile curriculum development and quality assurance.

# Learning pods

| | Curriculum form | Enrolment | Record of completion | Funding | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1. Pods as stand-alone co-curriculum activities – open to all enrolled students | Record engagement and completion of each pod in vUWS | Pod artefacts available for inclusion in student portfolio | HEPP and strategic initiatives funds Loss leader | Not load bearing No CGS funding No SSAF funding No approvals needed? |
|  | 2. Pod embedded in a standard unit of study | The pod is simply an assessed (vUWS based) learning activity in a unit of study. Enrolment in the unit is recorded in Callista. | Unit appears on transcript  Pod artefacts are available for inclusion in student portfolio | Load bearing CGS funding | Approved as a variation to unit assessment via SAC. |
|  | 3. Multiple unrelated pods aggregated by students to form a credit bearing unit of study | After successfully completing 2x pods, student can elect to enrol in a 'shell' unit (Future of Work Skills) and bank 4 pods as an ungraded(?) elective unit. Unit enrolment and outcome recorded in Callista. | Unit appears on transcript  Student puts details of pods into portfolio | Load bearing CGS funding SSAF | Approval process not clear. Could be through new x-discipline approval route for the shell unit, would require list of approved pods. |
|  | 4. Multiple related pods sequenced by staff to create a unit of study | Standard unit - Enrolment in the unit is recorded in Callista. | Unit appears on transcript | Load bearing CGS funding SSAF | The individual component pods are also available as standalone pods Normal unit approval processes |
|  | 5. Pods as stand-alone professional learning activities – open to community members and work place training | Pod offered through vUWS or a micro-credentialling platform. Offers an alternative entry pathway Enrolment as non-award student | WSU Micro-credentialling | Fee paying | Available for advanced standing Needs to be approved within discipline at AQF level and credit points mapped into degree. |

## Purposes for Pods

The development of learning 'Pods' – (modules) to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society

- These 'Pods' comprise learning activities that typically require between 3 hours – 1 week (10 hours) of student learning effort.
- The 'Pods' provide opportunities to develop skills, capabilities or understandings, relevant to the needs of the future of work and utilise partnership pedagogies.
- They require little or no specialised pre-requisite knowledge beyond that expected for general university level learning.
- They can be accessed as 'stand-alone' co-curriculum opportunities by any interested student or as a 'module' embedded in a unit of study in a student's program of study.
- Delivered flexibly and have capacity for 'at-scale' student participation (>50 students).
- They might offer an entry point (taster experience) to a unit, sub-major, or degree pathway.
- Depending on the assessment component, they may be non-credit bearing however they can generate a record of successful completion for inclusion in a testamur, or as non-graded assessment for a unit, or with the addition of suitable assessment, as partial graded credit to a unit, or as an alternative credential.
- It is envisaged many pods will be non-award co-curricular offerings. However, if they are to be credit bearing towards a degree the learning outcomes should be at the relevant AQF level.

## Examples - drawn from FCPs

1. **Co-curricular pod.** Architecture Studio is being planned as a standalone micro-credentialled element that will pilot a modularised form of unit for the new B. Architectural Design degree program.
2. **Embedded pod.** Coded Design is being designed as a 2 credit point element to fit into existing or planned units, across disciplines. In the first instance it will be incorporated in a unit in the B. Architectural Design degree.
3. **Multiple unrelated pods.** Learning pods for Business is developing postgraduate topic-based unit shells and a series of 2 credit point pods that can select to suit their interests.
4. **Multiple related pods within one unit.** See example 1.
5. **Pods as standalone professional learning.** Fire Protection programs is a series of blended online and workshop elements to prepare small businesses for new industry accreditation requirements. It will also provide an entry pathway into postgraduate programs.
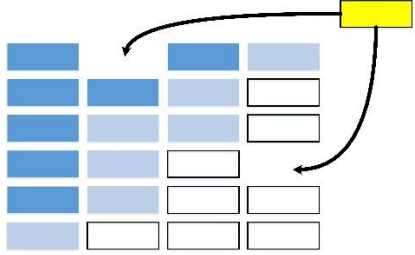
## Processes for pods

No formal approval process required for co-curricular pods with no credit attached. Some other QA processes will be needed.

Pods within specified units would be dealt with as parts of those units.

A new process will be needed for 'shell' units where students choose the mix of pods.

Where a pod exists independently for professional development, any advanced standing arrangements would need approval.

# Accelerator units

| Unit role | Description | Academic ownership | Approval | Maintenance and QA | Funding and staffing | student enrolment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1. embedded in course and available as a cross-discipline elective. | School | SAC & APCAC See notes overleaf on current new unit approval process. Add unit to central register of electives? | School ACR etc. SAC for revisions. | School | offered as core part of course or within major, sub-major or key program Current process for enrolling in units as part of degree. Central electives list/register. |
| | 2. generated outside a School for x-discipline use | needs to partner with academic School? | SAC & APCAC electives register? | The current QA processes report on units only as part of courses. | from partner school or from external partners who are coordinated by School? | Offered as elective only, on a central electives list. Central electives list. |
| | 3. non-standard format or length to incorporate FT study abroad or work placement elements in a 10 CP unit elective | School | SAC & APCAC electives register? | School ACR etc. for relevant courses. | School | Any issues around student enrolling in year-long 10 CP unit crossing several terms – new term definitions? Program rules? |

CORE unit    Major unit    Elective    New element

## Purposes for accelerator units

2. The development of new 'Accelerator Units' to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society

- The 'Accelerator Units' comprise learning activities that typically require 10 hours / week of student learning effort across a semester.
- They provide opportunities to develop skills, capabilities or understandings, relevant to the needs of the future of work and society and utilise partnership pedagogies
- The units are available, as electives or core, to students in multiple degrees, or as part of a thematic major that is available across several degrees and Schools.
- The units are credit bearing and comply with university policies.
- The units can potentially be accessed as 'stand-alone' credentialed learning by any interested community member.
- They are flexible in their delivery and have capacity for 'at-scale' student participation (>50 students) across multiple Schools.
- The inclusion of these new explicit curriculum elements will convey significant '*signature*' value to prospective students and will offer existing students the capacity to add breadth to their educational experience to increase their career success.
- They only require entry level domain/discipline/field specific pre-requisite knowledge at the relevant unit and course level.
- The new units will be accommodated by the new degree structures proposed through the School Curriculum Pilots.

## Examples - drawn from FCPs

1. Strategic personal branding (HCA): available to all disciplines as a for credit unit as elective and also eventually as part of a sub-major. Offered summer 2018 as an elective unit. Online/blended. Also to be available externally as standalone PD module?
2. GWS life (HCA): about creating podcasts. Within three HCA degrees and available to others as an elective for credit.
3. Global engagement & Citizenship (SSH): available to all disciplines as a for credit unit as elective. Year-long unit for 10 credit points, offered twice a year. Involves an overseas trip in the middle.

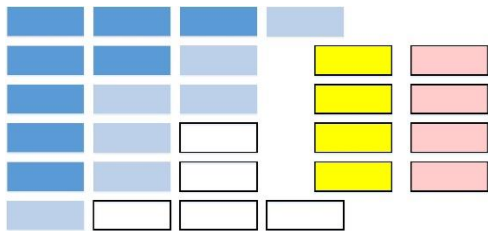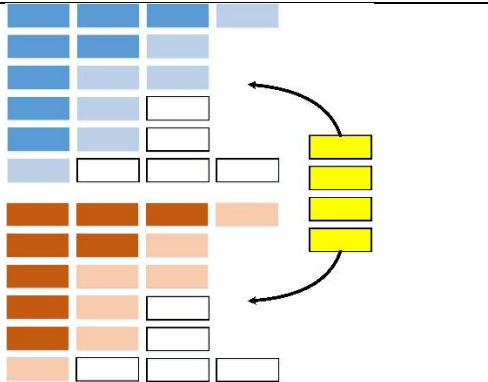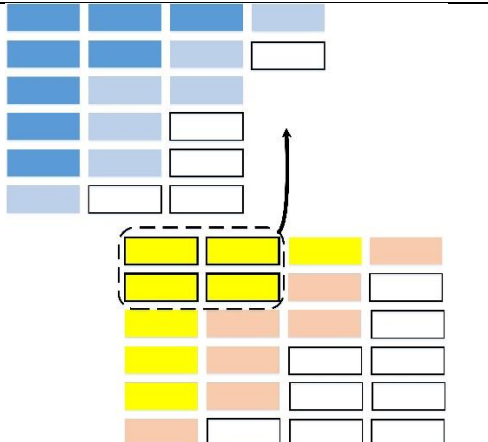**Questions**: recognition in testamur, secondary testamur or portfolio?

## Processes for study units.

Current processes:

- All units are associated with particular degree programs, otherwise they do not appear in the handbook. Students have to hunt through the handbook to find free elective options.
- The SAC determines how a unit fits into the discipline and plans School resources required.
- APCAC identifies and plans institutional resource implications and general fit with WSU.
- It takes 2 months approval for a unit to go through SAC and APCAC, if all the meeting times line up. If there are multiple SACs, much longer. An academic develops a new unit proposal in consultation with the CQO. The proposal then goes to the Course Data Management Team, who check the rules and documentation and then file it in the TRIM system with a formal recommendation. The recommendation goes to the Governance team, who create the SAC agenda, which then goes to the SAC Chair for approval. Once approved by the SAC, the School Governance Officer sends a recommendation to APCAC.

New cross-discipline approval and student enrolment processes will be needed.

# Advantage sub-majors and majors

| Unit group type | Description | Academic ownership/home | Approval process | Maintenance and QA | Student enrolment & information | Comments and suggestions |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | One of several sub-major options associated with particular courses within a School | School | SAC and APCAC | School ACR etc. | as part of degree program options | Normal approval and QA |
|  | Sub-major generated outside a School, or using units from several Schools, available to slot into many degrees | partnerships with or between Schools | currently would require multiple SACs & APCAC, as required by checklist on current C18 form. Separate x-discipline approval process to bypass need for multiple SAC approvals? See flow chart | Units reviewed and updated through owning Schools separately, which would require multiple SAC approvals with perhaps the owning School doing overall review. Course Data Management Team? | Offered independently of any particular course? | Rules around what can and can't be included in independent sub-majors – i.e. no core units from any course. |
|  | Core units in one discipline used as x-discipline sub-major in OTHER courses | lead School | multiple SACs & APCAC | | | Rules needed about sub-major only available for students outside the discipline? |

## Purposes for Advantage Majors and Sub-Majors

The development of new 'Advantage Majors' and sub-majors are intended to enhance students' successful engagement with the Future of Work and Society

- These are thematically integrated sequences of new (or renewed) units as sub-majors (4 units) or majors (8 units) that add substantial *multidisciplinary* or (Future of Work and Society) *capability*-based *depth* and practical (vocational) *applications*, to the student's existing key program.
- The Advantage majors and sub-majors will convey significant '*signature*' value to prospective students by providing a significant potential career advantage for graduates.
- These Advantage majors and sub-majors will be available to students in any WSU coursework degree, where the degree structure flexibility allows it.
- They provide a potential core/key program for a new '21C Futures' degree.
- They will involve contributions from multiple Schools and may also involve partnerships with other education and industry providers to embed vocational qualifications and credentials.
- The majors and sub-majors comply with university policies and will be TEQSA compliant.
- They utilise sophisticated WSU partnership pedagogies and offer a 'flagship' for publicising Western's curriculum transformation.
- The (sub) majors will potentially also be accessible as 'stand-alone' credentialed learning by any interested community member with the relevant capabilities to successfully engage with the learning opportunities they offer (see Stage 2).
- Flexibly delivered and have capacity for 'at-scale' student participation (>50 students) across multiple Schools.

## Examples

1. Normal single School sub-major.
2. (a) Global Sustainability Flagship Curriculum project. Generated by Sustainability team within Learning Transformations, contains units from 5 Schools and the Academy. Partnership with School of Business as the academic 'owner'.
   (b) The existing Indigenous Australian Studies sub-major. This had to be associated with every single degree in the handbook.
3. BSc Core Flagship curriculum project aims to strengthen basic scientific literacy

## Processes and rules for advantage majors and sub-majors

Currently a sub-major (or major) has to be owned by a School and associated with at least one course so that it appears in the Handbook. It would only appear with information about an associate course.

For cross-discipline sub-majors generated outside a School, there has to be a partnership with a 'home' School that approves the sub-major. All other SACs with associated courses would need to be informed. As with the accelerator units, the visibility of the sub-major would be limited unless it is associated with many degrees.

New majors and sub-majors require submission of a C18 form, which has many questions that are usually not relevant.

A major must have at least 30 CP at level 3 or above, but there are no rules for sub-majors.

While there are restrictions on double counting units towards a degree, there is nothing to prevent a student counting core units towards multiple majors or sub-majors.