

## Locating learning advisers in the new university: What should be our role?

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During the past two decades, Australian universities have begun to prioritise generic skills development (James, Lefoe, & Hadi, 2004) in response to pressures created by the diversification of the student body and industry demands for graduates with 'transferable' skills. While some academics still believe that these generic skills, attributes and values should be taught separately from 'content' (Moore, 2004), the current consensus is that they are most effectively developed within disciplinary contexts (Hirst, Henderson, Allan, Bode, & Kocatepe, 2004; Bath, Smith, Stein, & Swann, 2004). This shift from a deficit model to a more complex framework for understanding the relationship between knowledge and academic skills development (Lawrence, 2003) effectively requires the development of a new curriculum (DEST, 2002, as cited in Hirst et al., 2004; de la Harpe, Radloff, & Wyber, 2000). Hence, it has significant implications for Learning Advisers, who have traditionally provided academic skills programs from centralised Learning Centres (Tiernan, 2001). Because the institutional location of Learning Centres influences the type of work undertaken by the staff within them, location itself has sometimes been the focus of debate among Learning Advisers (Tiernan, 2001). In this paper we contribute to this debate by reflecting on our own experience as newly 'embedded' learning advisers in the Learning Development Unit within the Griffith Business School. We suggest that learning advisers can play a vital role in the development of the new curricula demanded by Universities, employers and students by developing partnerships with disciplinary experts, which are based explicitly on a model of co-production (Gordon & Lee, 1998). Adopting this model means that the new curriculum is seen as a third knowledge, which must be constructed through strong and equal working relationships between disciplinary and language/skills specialists.

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