Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching

**Final report:** 2018

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**Partner institutions:** RMIT University, University of Tasmania

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Kylie Readman
Kate Renshaw
Giao Reynolds
Christian Ritz
David Robinson
Peter Robinson
Dee Roche
Avril Rose
Donna Rudd
Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching
## List of acronyms used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HERDSA</td>
<td>Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMT</td>
<td>intensive mode teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLT</td>
<td>Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Executive summary

Intensive mode teaching (IMT) involves students participating in classes or facilitated learning activities on fewer days and for longer each day than is traditional for the discipline. The mode has been used for many years in disciplines in which classes are structured to accommodate practical experience, such as education and health, and in courses where many students work full time, such as Masters courses in business and law (Davies, 2006). In the 21st century, IMT is used for staff to teach in blocks at offshore and regional campuses. The convenience of the mode has increased, with technology now providing opportunities for students to access information, learning activities, assessments, and peers and teachers outside class. The mode inherently raises concerns about whether students have time to learn, with classes on fewer days than traditionally. Despite the increasing popularity of IMT, until now knowledge about understanding how to teach in the mode was scarce. This project aimed to promote and support improved student experiences of learning in units (also known as courses or papers) that involve IMT.

The project made the only recent study of the student experience of IMT in multiple units and disciplines. An IMT guide with sector-wide relevance was developed, disseminated, implemented, and tested.

Method

The project was framed by threshold capability theory, which is adapted from threshold concept theory (Baillie, Bowden, & Meyer, 2013). Threshold capabilities and threshold concepts are critical to students’ progress in the discipline, transformative, and usually troublesome for students. The method involved the following stages:

1. an online, sector-wide survey of 105 coordinators of units taught in intensive mode from 26 universities, to discover the models being used and why intensive mode was used
2. two-phase studies including an exploratory phase and where possible a quantitative phase in eight intensive units and three matched traditional units, to explore and confirm students’ experiences of threshold capability development in the units
3. in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of seven intensive mode university teachers
4. development of the draft Intensive Mode Teaching Guide
5. workshops with 161 post-secondary teachers in ten workshops in seven Australian cities, to review the draft guide
6. brief videoed interviews with intensive mode teachers, for the online guide.
7. repeat study in a unit, which had been improved based on the recommendations in the guide
8. a survey of students to review the guide.
Key findings

The survey of unit coordinators, who were from 26 institutions, confirmed that use of IMT is widespread across disciplines and institutions in the higher education sector in Australia. Fifty-two per cent of participants reported that the intensive mode units they coordinated were at the graduate or postgraduate level. The most common reason for using intensive mode was for students to fit study between other activities (selected by 30 per cent of participants). Models of intensive mode reported by coordinators varied widely from two full days of classes following online preparation to five half-days over a full semester.

In common, the unit coordinators who participated in the survey, as well as the teachers and students in the studies of learning in the intensive mode units, appreciated the following opportunities to support learning that are offered by IMT:

- the opportunity to bond as a learning community in the unit
- a retreat-like focus on a unit with limited distractions
- extended interactive activities
- continuity between learning, facing trouble, applying, engaging with and overcoming challenges, and practising in one day
- opportunities for exposure to practice such as hands-on and authentic activities, with proximity to practitioners and/or real or simulated workplaces.

The most common concerns reported by teachers and students across the project were:

- exhaustion
- difficulties if students did not prepare for class and keep up during the unit
- the importance for students to receive feedback with time to use it and the challenge for teachers to provide feedback within a short time.

The studies in units highlighted differences between the intended and experienced curricula. Interactive learning activities were uncomfortable for some students. Additionally, in some units students were spending time and energy on learning other than the intended threshold concepts and threshold capabilities, such as vocabulary, software, and simple applications.

Benefits of IMT do not come with the mode alone. Intentional curriculum design is required. IMT recommendations were identified to reap the benefits offered by intensive mode and mitigate the risks introduced by the mode. The recommendations are based on students’ and teachers’ comments about practices that support development of threshold capabilities in intensive mode.

The recommendations for teachers can be explained as first forcing students to meet the challenges of threshold concepts and threshold capabilities early in the unit, and second taking steps to support them in engaging with the challenges in order to develop the threshold capabilities during class.
Students who reviewed the guide ($N = 27$) rated the following recommendations as most important:

- recommendation 6: Design appropriate assessments
- recommendation 12: Manage workloads
- recommendation 3: Design an optimal learning space and environment
- recommendation 7: Support students to prepare
- recommendation 4: Design appropriate activities.

**Outputs**

The project website includes access to, or details about, all outputs.

The *Intensive Mode Teaching Guide* was developed and is available to view online or download. The guide includes 12 recommendations and a map of models of IMT. The online version of the guide includes video vignettes with 16 intensive mode teachers.

The project has a LinkedIn group.

Two journal papers and four conference papers have been published on the project’s research (Crispin et al., 2016; Male et al., 2015; Male et al., 2016; Male et al., 2017; Male & Leggoe, 2017; Smith et al., 2016). A book chapter has been accepted for publication (Male et al., accepted).

**Impact**

At the local level, the teaching team members in the eight intensive units studied at four universities learned about the student-experienced curriculum in their units and refined their units to improve student learning as a result of the study. One unit was studied again in 2016, after improvements were made following the study in 2015. Threshold concepts and capabilities that students reported experiencing in 2016 were consistent with those intended by the unit coordinator, rather than about the software used in the unit, which had been the case in 2015. The guide was used at the lead institution in 2017 in workshops to prepare teachers for the summer teaching period.

At the national level, 161 people participated in 10 workshops to review the guide. In doing so they learned about the teaching recommendations and discussed IMT with others. Participants requested case studies, which are now in the online guide, and a continuing conversation is offered by the LinkedIn group, which now has over 90 members. Over 500 people have attended presentations to learn about the project findings and recommendations. The website has received 4050 page views to 14 December 2016. The project team received the Engineers Australia, Australasian Association for Engineering Education Award for Engineering Education Research Design 2017.
Outputs will continue to be accessible after completion of the project. The IMT website including the guide will be accessible for at least seven years. There are plans to continue adding to the video vignettes.
**Table of contents**

Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ iii
List of acronyms used ................................................................................................. v
Executive summary ...................................................................................................... vi
   Method ....................................................................................................................... vi
   Key findings ............................................................................................................... vii
   Outputs ..................................................................................................................... viii
   Impact ....................................................................................................................... viii
Tables .......................................................................................................................... xii

Chapter 1. Introduction .............................................................................................. 1
   Theoretical framework ........................................................................................... 1
   Aim ......................................................................................................................... 2

Chapter 2. Approach .................................................................................................... 3
   Stages of the research ........................................................................................... 3
   Methodology .......................................................................................................... 3

Chapter 3. Project findings and outputs .................................................................... 11
   Survey results ....................................................................................................... 11
   Practices that supported and hindered learning ................................................ 11
   Outputs ................................................................................................................. 12
   How the project used and advanced existing knowledge .................................... 13
   Disciplinary and interdisciplinary linkages that emerged as a result of the project 13
   Factors that were critical to or impeded success ................................................ 14
   Extent to which the approach and outcomes are amenable to implementation in a variety of institutions or locations ......................................................... 14
   Links between the project and other projects in the priority areas .................... 14

Chapter 4. Impact, dissemination, and evaluation ...................................................... 16
   Dissemination activities ....................................................................................... 16
   Impact .................................................................................................................... 18
   Significance of evaluation .................................................................................... 19

References ............................................................................................................... 20

Appendix A. Certification ............................................................................................ 22
Appendix B. Questionnaire for survey of coordinators ................................................. 23
Appendix C. Questionnaire for student review of guide .................................................. 35
Appendix D. Posters by workshop participants .................................................................. 41
Appendix E. Sample evaluation ratings by workshop participants ........................................ 51
Appendix F. Impact plan ....................................................................................................... 53
Appendix G. Evaluator’s report .......................................................................................... 55
Tables

Table 1. Units studied in Stage 2 (Male et al., 2016, p. 195) ......................................................... 5
Table 2. Workshops to disseminate and review draft guide ................................................................. 8
Table 3. Disciplines represented at stand-alone workshops (N = 114) .............................................. 9
Table 4. Dissemination other than workshops to review draft guide .................................................. 16
Chapter 1. Introduction

Intensive mode teaching (IMT) involves students participating in classes or facilitated learning activities on fewer days and for longer each day than is traditional for the discipline. The mode has been used for many years in disciplines in which classes are structured to accommodate practical experience such as education and health, and in courses where many students work full time, such as Masters courses in business and law (Davies, 2006). In the 21st century, IMT is used for staff to teach in blocks at offshore and regional campuses. Higher percentages of students than in the past are now undertaking paid work during teaching weeks, and for these students it can be more convenient to attend extended classes on few days, than hours on multiple days in a week. Furthermore, the convenience of IMT has increased, with technology now providing opportunities for students to access information, learning activities, assessments, and peers and teachers outside class.

With the rapid interest and adoption of IMT, it is important to ensure that the student experience of learning is optimal. Opportunities to improve learning might arise from the extended uninterrupted periods for students to focus on one unit and benefit from 21st-century advances in technology. However, IMT inherently carries risks that students might have shorter time than otherwise to overcome troublesome aspects of their learning. It is critical for educators to optimise students’ learning using sound evidence.

Previous studies compared intensive modes with other modes to determine which was better. Studies on optimising IMT were limited in depth or scope (Male et al., 2016). This Australian study investigated students’ experiences of critical and challenging learning in multiple units and universities – the first deep study of students’ learning with current learning technology and diversity of student cohorts.

With the prevalence of IMT for practical reasons, the project focused on how to optimise student learning when intensive mode is used, rather than comparing modes.

Theoretical framework

The framework for this project was threshold capability theory (Baillie et al., 2013). This is adapted from threshold concept theory, which was first developed by Meyer and Land (2003) and has since been applied in numerous disciplines of higher education. Threshold concept theory assumes that every discipline has concepts that are transformative. These threshold concepts are critical to future learning and working in the discipline and are usually troublesome for students in one of several ways, such as being foreign, complex, counter-intuitive or requiring unfamiliar language (Perkins, 2006). Threshold capabilities usually require understanding of one or more threshold concepts.

By studying students’ experiences of threshold capability development in intensive- and traditional-mode units, and the factors that supported and hindered them in developing threshold capabilities, the project focused on supporting students’ most critical and challenging learning.
Aim
The project aimed to promote and support improved student experiences of threshold capability development in units (also known as courses or papers) that involve IMT. A guide on supporting the student experience of capability development in units involving IMT was to be developed, using an approach designed to establish sector-wide relevance and impact.
Chapter 2. Approach

The approach involved the following eight stages. Stages 1 to 3 were concurrent. Below, the methodology explains how the theoretical framework influenced the method. The method for each stage is then outlined.

Stages of the research
1. An online, sector-wide survey, of 105 coordinators of units taught in intensive mode from 26 universities, was carried out to discover the models being used and why intensive mode was used.
2. Two-phase studies, including an exploratory phase and where possible a quantitative phase in eight intensive units and three matched traditional units, was conducted to explore and confirm students’ experiences of threshold capability development in the units.
3. In-depth interviews, with a purposive sample of six intensive mode university teachers, were held.
4. The draft Intensive Mode Teaching Guide was developed.
5. Workshops were held with 161 post-secondary teachers in 10 workshops in seven Australian cities, to review the draft guide.
6. Brief videoed interviews were held with intensive mode teachers, for the online guide.
7. Repeat study in a unit that had been improved based on the recommendations in the guide.
8. A survey of students was conducted, to review the guide.

Methodology
The methodology describes how the theoretical framework influenced the method. The theoretical framework of threshold concepts and threshold capabilities features shaped the studies of students’ learning in units in six ways:
1. The framework and project focused on students’ experiences of learning. As described by Billett (2011, pp. 20–24), the ‘experienced curriculum’, ‘enacted curriculum’ and ‘intended curriculum’ can differ.
2. The framework is approachable for academics teaching in disciplines because although studies using the framework consider students’ experiences foremost, academics’ understanding of the discipline and experience teaching in the discipline are also valued within the framework (Cousin, 2010).
3. The framework describes a ‘liminal space’ (Meyer & Land, 2003, p. 10) as the state experienced by a student when a concept or capability has come into view for the student and is still troublesome. The time required for a student to traverse the liminal space varies depending on the student, the concept, and the curriculum. This was of concern when studying IMT because the time available to traverse the liminal space can be shorter than otherwise.
4. The framework recognises that one of the factors that influences a student’s experience of a concept is ‘pre-liminal variation’ (Meyer & Land, 2005, p. 384). This raised the significance of investigating the influence of variation in students’ backgrounds in this project.

5. Threshold concept theory is founded in the phenomenographic methodology for education research (Cousin, 2009). When using this methodology, researchers identify levels of conceptual understanding of a phenomenon among participants and identify the dimensions of variation between the levels. Although this project did not use phenomenography, the interest in the breadth of variation of students’ descriptions of their experiences across the full breadth of diversity of the students was important.

6. When using threshold concept theory for curriculum design, researchers identify the reasons for trouble that students experience in overcoming thresholds. This informs the design of curriculum improvements. In this project, the students’ experiences of troublesome features of threshold capabilities were identified, and this contributed to informing the recommendations in the guide.

Stage 1. Survey of unit coordinators
The Intensive Mode Teaching Guide was designed to be relevant sector-wide. Therefore, the models and reasons for using IMT were important for understanding the contexts in which people would use the guide.

A survey was conducted online to discover the models of IMT across the sector, in order to plan the guide so that it was relevant sector-wide. Valid responses were received from 105 coordinators of intensive mode units at 26 universities.

Participants were recruited through email invitations distributed through Australian Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Education), Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development, Australian Council of Engineering Deans, Australian Business Deans Council and the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA). At The University of Western Australia, email invitations were sent to coordinators of units taught in non-standard teaching periods in 2015.

The questionnaire is presented in Appendix B. The questionnaire was implemented using the Qualtrics survey tool. Participants selected the disciplines they taught from the Australian Standard Classification of Education, Field of Education Codes (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001), and reported details about an intensive mode unit that they coordinated.

Stage 2. Two-phase study of students’ development of threshold capabilities
Students’ threshold capability development in eight intensive units and three matched traditional units were studied. The units are listed in Table 1, where University A was in no network, University B was in the Australian Technology Network of universities and Universities C and D were research-intensive universities.
Table 1. Units studied in Stage 2 (Male et al., 2016, p. 195)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit topic and university</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Days/weeks spanned by classes</th>
<th>Weeks after classes before final assessment</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Management (University A)</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting (University C)</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting (University C)</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics of Machines (University B)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics of Machines (University B)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>13 weeks</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trip on a Working Fishing Vessel (University A)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15 to 20 students per voyage^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computational Fluid Dynamics (University A)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computational Fluid Dynamics (University A)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>13 weeks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computational Fluid Dynamics (University C)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Theories of Technological Development (University C)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian Engineering (University D)</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Intensive</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36 on campus + 8 in the field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Additional students undertook intensive mode offshore but were not included in the study reported here.
2. Two focus groups were held with students from two separate voyages.

The method was adapted from that developed by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) project ‘Engineering thresholds: an approach to curriculum renewal’ (Male, 2012). The ‘Engineering thresholds’ project developed a method for identifying threshold capabilities, as well as identifying the factors that can lead to students...
finding them troublesome. The method had involved two phases: the phase in which individual or small groups of students and academics identify potential threshold capabilities and features that make them troublesome in their experience, and the phase where these are negotiated to reach a refined structured list that represents the diversity of identified capabilities and relationships between them (Male & Baillie, 2011).

The two-phase method was adapted for Stage 2 in the current project. The qualitative exploratory phase involved either a student focus group or a student in-class workshop, and interviews with teaching team members. Both groups of participants were introduced to the theory of threshold concept and capabilities and were asked to identify threshold concepts and capabilities in the unit, and how they were transformative or troublesome. Students were also asked what they had done to overcome the thresholds, and what aspects of the unit and their own efforts had supported or hindered them in overcoming the thresholds.

A researcher who was not involved in the unit analysed the qualitative data to identify themes, using codes aligned with terms used in the theoretical framework where they could be applied. It was only at the end of the unit, after students had received their grades (consistent with the ethics approval), that focus groups with teaching team members were held. These focus groups identified one main threshold capability and a list of supporting and hindering features of the unit. The focus groups informed the development of the questionnaire, which was completed by students, the purpose of the survey being to confirm results that emerged from the exploratory phase.

One hundred and ninety-seven students and 10 teachers participated in the qualitative phases of Stage 2. Details are reported in a conference paper (Male et al., 2016). The detailed method is reported in two journal papers (Crispin et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2016).

**Stage 3. In-depth interviews with experienced IMT teachers**

Seven people identified as having extensive experience teaching with IMT were interviewed. Participants were from four universities and from the disciplines of accounting, computer science, engineering, and nursing.

Questions were similar to those asked of students and teachers in the units studied. Four participants were interviewed about their experiences teaching individual intensive mode units. The other three had overseen programs taught in intensive mode over many years and so the discussion was about teaching programs in intensive mode. The interviews were 30 to 60 minutes in duration.

The interviews were concurrent with other stages. Early interviews informed the development of the survey of unit coordinators. Later interviews confirmed the challenges that frequently arise with using IMT and informed recommendations in the guide, especially the recommendations for administrators.

**Stage 4. Development of draft guide**

The project evaluator recommended an online guide including videos. As such, the *Intensive Mode Teaching Guide* was developed iteratively. Presented as 12 recommendations, it
includes practices of students and teachers that were reported to support students’ learning, address the issues raised by teachers and students, and pre-empt gaps between intended and experienced curricula, which were identified in the studies within units and in the interviews with experienced intensive mode teachers. The guide also includes a mapping of models of IMT based on Stage 1.

Stage 5. Workshops with teachers
The guide was reviewed by 161 people in 10 workshops. The workshop locations and dates are presented in Table 2. Participants at the seven stand-alone (not attached to a conference) workshops were from 32 institutions. The discipline profile of participants at the stand-alone workshops was broad, although not equally distributed (}
Table 2. Workshops to disseminate and review draft guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; Learning Forum workshop</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>28 January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>13 April 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>6 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>8 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
<td>9 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biennial Threshold Concepts Conference workshop</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>16 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>24 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>1 July 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HERDSA pre-conference workshop</td>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>4 July 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand-alone workshop</td>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>19 July 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Disciplines represented at stand-alone workshops \((N = 114)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Broad discipline(^1)</th>
<th>(N)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Medicine</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities/Languages</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Science</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Media</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritime/Nautical Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Broad disciplines were identified from the participant’s nominations of their discipline, and not selected from a list.

**Stage 6. Video-recorded interviews with intensive mode teachers**

The project evaluator and participants at the workshops requested examples of the experiences of intensive mode teachers as part of the online guide. Sixteen intensive mode teachers kindly participated in video-recorded interviews. Resources permitting, these will continue to be expanded.

The duration of each video vignette is about five minutes. Participants speak about what they teach, the model they use, what they like and dislike about the mode, and techniques or recommendations for teachers and students. Participants are from accounting, education, engineering, computer science, management, research training, and science communication, across seven institutions.

**Stage 7. Repeat study of a revised unit**

The coordinators of units studied in 2015 all revised their units in 2016 based on the studies. One of the revised units was studied again as an evaluation (Male & Leggoe, 2017). In this unit the students had not focused on the threshold concepts or capabilities that the unit coordinator had intended, because they were focusing on learning the required software. In response to this, the coordinator provided more support with exercises early in the unit, among other changes. Sixteen of the 17 students who took the revised unit participated in an in-class workshop, and most of the identified threshold concepts and capabilities were now aligned with the unit coordinator’s intentions.
Stage 8. Student survey to review the guide

The guide was reviewed by 27 students in an online questionnaire (Appendix C). Students rated the following recommendations as most important:

- recommendation 6: Design appropriate assessments
- recommendation 12: Manage workloads
- recommendation 3: Design an optimal learning space and environment
- recommendation 7: Support students to prepare
- recommendation 4: Design appropriate activities.
Chapter 3. Project findings and outputs

Survey results

Models of and reasons for intensive mode
The survey of unit coordinators, who were from 26 institutions, confirmed that use of IMT is widespread across disciplines and institutions in the higher education sector in Australia. Fifty-two per cent of participants reported that the intensive mode units they coordinated were at the graduate or postgraduate level. Participants were asked to select one primary reason for using the mode. Most frequently selected were for students to fit study between other activities (selected by 30 per cent of participants), for students to engage in interactive learning activities over extended continuous periods (25 per cent), for students to focus on one unit with limited distractions (10 per cent) and for the teaching team to travel to students (9 per cent).

Models of intensive mode reported by coordinators varied widely and included:
- two full days of classes following online preparation
- one full-time week of classes
- two, three or four moderately intensive weeks of classes
- a full day of classes once a week for seven weeks, or
- five half days over a full semester.

Offshore teaching and residential excursions were additional variations.

Practices that supported and hindered learning
Recommendations in the guide were developed to enhance the opportunities afforded by IMT, mitigate the threats to learning that are increased by the mode, and pre-empt potential gaps between the intended and experienced curricula. These opportunities and risks are listed below.

Opportunities to support learning afforded by intensive mode
In common, unit coordinators who participated in the survey, and teachers and students in the studies of learning in the intensive mode units, reported appreciation of the following opportunities to support learning that are offered by intensive mode:
- the opportunity to bond as a learning community in the unit
- a retreat-like focus on a unit with limited distractions
- extended interactive activities
- continuity between learning, facing trouble, applying, engaging with and overcoming challenges, and practising in one day
opportunities for exposure to practice such as hands-on and authentic activities, with proximity to practitioners and/or real or simulated workplaces.

Threats to learning that are increased in intensive mode
The most common concerns that were reported by teachers and students across the project were:

- exhaustion
- difficulties if students did not prepare for class and keep up during the unit
- the importance for students and challenge for teachers of timely feedback to students between assessments.

Identified gaps between intended and experienced curricula
The studies in units highlighted differences between the intended and experienced curricula. Interactive learning activities were uncomfortable for some students. Additionally, in some units students were spending time and energy on learning other than the intended threshold concepts and threshold capabilities such as vocabulary, software or simple applications.

Outputs
The Intensive Mode Teaching Guide includes the map of models of intensive mode, reasons people use intensive mode based on the survey of coordinators, and 12 recommendations for IMT, including one for administrators. The guide is available to view online or download. A critical recommendation is to intentionally design to reap the benefits of IMT and mitigate the risks introduced by IMT.

The online version of the guide includes video vignettes with 16 intensive mode teachers.

The project has a LinkedIn group.

Papers have been published in:

- the Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference (Male & Leggoe, 2017), about study in a computational fluid dynamics unit taught in consecutive years
- the Students Transitions Achievement Retention & Success Conference (Male et al., 2017), about recommendations in the guide
- Education + Training (Crispin et al., 2016), about the studies in intensive accounting and management units and a matched accounting unit
- International Journal for Service Learning in Engineering (Smith et al., 2016), about the intensive mode unit in humanitarian engineering
- the HERDSA Conference (Male et al., 2016), about the studies in units
- the Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference (Male et al., 2015), about the study in the unit on critical theories of technological development.
A book chapter has been accepted in a book based on the Threshold Concepts Conference 2016 (Male et al., accepted). The chapter describes how the factors that students reported to support their learning in intensive mode can be explained using threshold concepts and threshold capabilities.

The project website provides access to or details about all outputs and includes links to posters, videos of presentations, and presentation slides.

**How the project used and advanced existing knowledge**

This project was funded under the Strategic Priority of 21st Century Student Experience. As noted in the introduction, this project contributed a study with depth of investigation of students’ experiences of learning with intensive mode, and a project with sector-wide scope, with 21st century learning technology and diversity of student cohorts.

The project contributed to the existing scant but consistent literature on IMT. The findings are consistent with previous studies and add understanding that students need opportunities to ask questions in class, and intentional design to support diverse students to learn from each other and feel confident in interactive activities. Awareness that students use online tutorials and sources to develop understanding of threshold concepts and to develop threshold capabilities was not previously recognised in the literature on IMT.

The project was framed by threshold capability theory, which emerged during the project ‘Engineering thresholds: an approach to curriculum renewal’. The framework successfully focused the project on students’ critical and challenging learning. The project successfully adapted the two-phase method developed in the ‘Engineering thresholds’ project, to identify and explore students’ experiences of thresholds in a unit.

The theoretical framework, and in particular the understanding of a liminal space, provides a possible explanation for the recommendations in the guide. The recommendations can be explained as ensuring that students enter the liminal space as early as possible in an IMT unit, and supporting students to engage with thresholds deeply to optimise chances of traversing the liminal space during the unit.

**Disciplinary and interdisciplinary linkages that emerged as a result of the project**

A surprising finding of this project, especially apparent in the workshops to review the guide, was that the experience of IMT was very similar across disciplines. The same challenges apply across disciplines and therefore many of the practices to support students are valuable across disciplines. Many teachers reported that IMT worked for them, but they guessed it might not in a different discipline. A significant finding is that IMT is being used successfully across the sector. The feedback by participants who created the sample poster ‘IMT is possible’ (Figure 2 of Appendix D) indicates that this was important for these participants.
Factors that were critical to or impeded success

The experience, commitment and diversity of the project team, engagement by the evaluator, the project consultant, and support from the reference group and OLT were critical to the success of this project. The consultant drew attention to a special issue in which the team was able to publish a journal paper. Reference group members hosted and promoted workshops at their universities. The meeting arranged by the OLT for strategic priority projects assisted in sharing dissemination opportunities. Engaging stakeholders in the research throughout the project was critical. Early dissemination led to an additional collaboration and a published journal paper.

A few factors had the potential to impede project success. One project team member left the sector during the project and another was seconded elsewhere. Fortunately, these people had already made their critical contributions to the project. The teaching loads of team members limited the ability to take up additional opportunities both to evaluate revisions to units and to publish. Plans to study intensive mode overseas did not eventuate due to lack of resources in one case, and in the other case concern from an administrator that inter-university relationships could be damaged.

Extent to which the approach and outcomes are amenable to implementation in a variety of institutions or locations

Both the Intensive Mode Teaching Guide developed by this project and the approach used in this project to study units are amenable to implementation elsewhere.

The workshops with post-secondary teachers demonstrated that the recommendations are relevant in universities and providers around Australia. Indeed, the video-recorded interviews include participants who have taught with intensive mode in Australia, China, and the USA.

The approach used to study units in this project could be used by others in their units. During this project, a unit at The Australian National University was added to the units studied. This was because the unit coordinator heard about the project and approached the project team to collaborate in studying his new intensive mode unit (Smith et al., 2016). The success of this collaboration bodes well for transferability to other institutions.

Participants in workshops expressed interest in studying their own intensive mode units and the guide’s recommendations on identifying thresholds and reviewing a unit will be suitable for this. Even in response to a recent email thanking participants, the project lead received interest from a workshop participant in learning more about studying her own unit. There is a demand and opportunity to support intensive mode teachers in undertaking and reporting research into students’ learning in their intensive mode units.

Links between the project and other projects in the priority areas

The leaders of the OLT Postgraduate Student Experience Project (Crane et al., 2016), which was also funded under the 21st Century Student Experience priority, collaborated with this project. A poster and presentation about postgraduate students’ experiences of IMT were

Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching
made at the Postgraduate Student Experience Symposium 2016, hosted by the Postgraduate Student Experience Project. These are available from Past Events and Materials on the project website.
Chapter 4. Impact, dissemination, and evaluation

Dissemination activities

The project website and LinkedIn group were established at the start of the project. The bookmarks listed the project outputs and promoted the website and LinkedIn group.

The survey of coordinators and the workshops (Table 2) were designed as part of the research method and also to increase awareness of and interest in the project. Participant recruitment by email through networks included the link to the project website.

Dissemination included published papers, presentations at conferences and meetings, posters, and distribution of bookmarks and full copies of the guide (Table 4). Bookmarks were additionally distributed in satchels or on registration tables at the following conferences in 2015: Students, Transitions, Achievement, Retention & Success; International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; and Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education.

Throughout the project, updates such as forthcoming workshops and new video vignettes and the latest version of the guide were posted on the LinkedIn Group. Participants who had agreed to be contacted with updates were emailed at critical times, such as when the final guide was posted on the website.

Table 4. Dissemination other than workshops to review draft guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter/s</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male, Baillie, Hancock, Leggoe, MacNish</td>
<td>Teaching &amp; Learning Forum</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>30 January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posted</td>
<td>Australian Engineering Associate Deans Teaching and Learning Meeting</td>
<td>Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Queensland University of Technology</td>
<td>12 June 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, Crispin, Leggoe</td>
<td>HERDSA Conference</td>
<td>Presentation on panel</td>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>8–9 July 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Round-table discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crispin and Hancock</td>
<td>Australian Business Deans Council</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>7 August 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Leggoe</td>
<td>Faculty Academy for Scholarship in Education</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>20 October 2015</td>
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<td>Topic</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Western Australian Network and Dissemination Sharing Day</td>
<td>Poster presentation Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
<td>6 November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, Baillie, Leggoe</td>
<td>HERDSA Rekindled</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Notre Dame, Fremantle</td>
<td>25 November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Baillie</td>
<td>Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference</td>
<td>Paper presentation Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>8 December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Australian Engineering Associate Deans Teaching and Learning Meeting</td>
<td>Presentation Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>10 December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male, Baillie, Hancock, Leggoe, MacNish</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Forum</td>
<td>Presentation Workshop Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>28 January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crispin and Hancock</td>
<td>Australian Business Deans Council Meeting</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Brisbane</td>
<td>1 February 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Australian Council of Engineering Deans</td>
<td>Mention Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>4 April 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Postgraduate Student Experience Symposium</td>
<td>Presentation on panel Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Gold Coast</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>Australian Council of Deans of ICT ACDICT Learning &amp; Teaching Academy Forum</td>
<td>Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>University of Technology Sydney</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>Project update Bookmarks distributed</td>
<td>Brisbane</td>
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<td>Male</td>
<td>HERDSA Conference</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Fremantle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leggoe</td>
<td>HERDSA Rekindled</td>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>9 November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Western Australian Network and Dissemination Sharing Day</td>
<td>Poster presentation by video</td>
<td>Murdoch University</td>
<td>10 November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Group of Eight Electrical &amp; Electronic Engineering Heads of School Meeting</td>
<td>Presentation Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>The University of Western Australia</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Australian Engineering Associate Deans Teaching and Learning Meeting</td>
<td>Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>Coffs Harbour</td>
<td>8 December 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching
### Impact

The teaching team members in the eight intensive units studied at four universities learned about the student-experienced curriculum in their units and refined their units to improve student learning as a result of the study. One unit was studied again in 2016 after improvements were made following the study in 2015, and the student focus on intended threshold concepts and capabilities had improved (Male & Leggoe, 2017).

One hundred and sixty-one people participated in 10 workshops to review the guide. In doing so they learned about the recommendations, and learned from others. A continuing conversation is offered by the LinkedIn group, which now has over 90 members. Over 500 people have attended presentations to learn about the project findings and recommendations. The website has received 4050 page views to 14 December 2016.

Workshop participants have expanded the reach of the project. Doe, who attended a project workshop in Hobart, adopted the recommended techniques in a unit in China and presented a paper on the implementation at the Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference (Doe et al., 2017). Lim, who attended a project workshop in

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Students Transitions Achievement Retention &amp; Success Conference</td>
<td>Presentation and publication of good practice report Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>Adelaide</td>
<td>1 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Full-day workshop on engineering education with engineering academics and academic developers</td>
<td>Workshop using guide Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>University of Sunshine Coast</td>
<td>5 December 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference</td>
<td>Presentation Poster Copies of full guide distributed Received Award for Engineering Education Research Design</td>
<td>Manly</td>
<td>10-13 December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>Shared findings with academic developer Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>RMIT University</td>
<td>8 January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Shared findings with academics Copies of full guide distributed</td>
<td>The University of Sydney</td>
<td>9 January 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACDICT, Australian Council of Deans of Information and Communications Technology.
Melbourne, wrote about the project in the magazine of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (Lim, 2016).

For the IMT project, the project team received the Engineers Australia, Australasian Association for Engineering Education Award for Engineering Education Research Design 2017. The Award was presented at the Australasian Association for Engineering Education Conference Dinner 2017.

Outputs will continue to be accessible after completion of the project. With support, there are plans to continue adding to the video vignettes and offer workshops at critical review times when change can be managed. The impact plan is presented in Appendix F.

**Significance of evaluation**

The project evaluator guided the project team throughout. Managing the scope of the project was critical.

The recommendations in the guide were reviewed and improved in workshops held around Australia. The workshops both disseminated and evaluated the guide for refinement. Participants learned about the guide, the recommendations in the guide, and tools such as the use of a target to evaluate a workshop, and a poster as an assessment item to force group work. The project evaluator attended the first workshop, and conducted the request for feedback in the form of posters. Posters were created by participant groups at the end of each workshop and a sample of posters is presented in Appendix D.

A target was created at the start of each of the final five stand-alone workshops, based on participants’ identified dimensions of a successful workshop. At the end of each of these workshops, participants rated the success of the workshop on each dimension. Samples from two workshops are presented in Appendix E. This evaluation method modelled an approach to encourage students to take responsibility for the success of a learning activity, which is presented by Anas Ghadouani in his video vignette.

The project evaluator recommended an online guide and this idea was supported by workshop participants. Participants also expressed a desire for continuing conversation, as is now available through the LinkedIn group; to hear from people who have used intensive mode, now included as video vignettes in the online guide; and recommendations for administrators, now added.

The evaluator’s report can be found in Appendix G.
References


Appendix A. Certification

Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)

I certify that all parts of the final report for this OLT grant provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Name: Professor David Sadler

Date: 10/04/2018

Title: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education of The University of Western Australia
Appendix B. Questionnaire for survey of coordinators

The questions below are exported from Qualtrics. The questions below followed the participant information. The question numbers are generated by the software based on the order in which questions were prepared and therefore mean little. They were not visible for participants but are retained here for future reference.

Q45 PAGE 1 of 2

Q47 Intensive mode teaching engages students in facilitated learning activities or classes intensively over longer than is traditional for the field in a day, and on fewer days than is traditional in the field.

Q48 By a ‘unit’ we refer to a module of study. It is likely to be part of a course, most likely 25% of one semester of equivalent full-time study. It could also be another module such as a bridging course. How many units are you co-ordinating with intensive mode this academic year?

- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (7)
- 5 (8)
- 6 (5)
- 7 (9)
- >7 (10) _________________

Q3 Please complete the remainder of this questionnaire for one unit taught with intensive mode. The unit must be: ___ currently co-ordinated by you or ___ co-ordinated by you within the last 24 months or ___ likely to be co-ordinated by you within the next 12 months.
Q4 At which university do you teach the unit?

- Australian Catholic University (ACU) (1)
- Australian National University (ANU) (2)
- Bond University (Bond) (3)
- Central Queensland University (CQU) (4)
- Charles Darwin University (CDU) (5)
- Charles Sturt University (CSU) (6)
- Curtin University (Curtin) (7)
- Deakin University (Deakin) (8)
- Edith Cowan University (ECU) (9)
- Federation University (FEDUNI) (10)
- Flinders University (Flinders) (11)
- Griffith University (Griffith) (12)
- James Cook University (JCU) (13)
- La Trobe University (LATROBE) (14)
- Macquarie University (MACQUARIE) (15)
- Monash University (MONASH) (16)
- Murdoch University (MURDOCH) (17)
- Queensland University of Technology (QUT) (18)
- RMIT University (RMIT) (19)
- Southern Cross University (SCU) (20)
- Swinburne University of Technology (SWINBURNE) (21)
- University of Adelaide (ADELAIDE) (22)
- University of Canberra (CANBERRA) (23)
- University of Melbourne (MELBOURNE) (24)
- University of New England (UNE) (25)
- University of New South Wales (UNSW) (26)
- University of Newcastle (NEWCASTLE) (27)
- University of Notre Dame (UNDA) (28)
- University of Queensland (UQ) (29)
- University of South Australia (UNISA) (30)
- University of Southern Queensland (USQ) (31)
- University of Sydney (SYDNEY) (32)
- University of Tasmania (UTAS) (33)
- University of Technology Sydney (UTS) (34)
- University of Sunshine Coast (USC) (35)
- University of Western Australia (UWA) (36)
- University of Western Sydney (UWS) (37)
- University of Wollongong (OUW) (38)
- Victoria University (VU) (39)
- Other (40) __________________
Q10 In which main field is the unit?

- Agriculture, environmental and related studies (1)
- Architecture and building (2)
- Creative arts (3)
- Education (4)
- Engineering and related technologies (5)
- Food, hospitality and personal services (6)
- Health (7)
- Information technology (8)
- Management and commerce (9)
- Mixed field programmes (general education, social skills, employment skills, other mixed field programmes) (10)
- Natural and physical sciences (11)
- Society and culture (12)

Q11 What level is the unit?

- Pre-university (1)
- First year (2)
- Undergraduate or honours and not first year (3)
- Graduate or postgraduate (4)
- Other (5) ____________________
Q13 What portion of the learning outcomes for the unit are: (Explanations welcome in the boxes.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>None or hardly any 1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>All or almost all 5 (5)</th>
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<tr>
<td>theoretical or analytical? (1)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>hands-on or skills-based (e.g. clinical or laboratory skills, skills working with people or using tools)? (2)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td>using concepts that are represented mathematically? (3)</td>
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<td>□</td>
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<td>using concepts that are described in words? (4)</td>
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<td>requiring creativity? (5)</td>
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Q7 In how many models of intensive mode is the unit taught? (A 'model' refers to the combination of characteristics such as the teaching schedule and whether students are on campus. For example, a unit taught in 7 weeks with one full day of classes per week for
students on campus, and also taught with one week of classes on campus for students who are usually off-campus, is taught in two models of intensive mode.

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- >3 (4)

Q17 Is the unit also taught in traditional mode?

- Yes (1) ________________
- No (2) ________________

Q8 For the following questions, refer to only one model of intensive mode in which you coordinate the unit.
Q9 Considering one model of intensive mode in which you co-ordinate the unit, either currently, most recently or otherwise the soonest in the future.

Q5 In which country or countries is the unit taught with this model of intensive mode?

☐ Australia (1)
☐ Others (Please specify.) (2) ____________________

Q12 What is the primary reason the unit is taught with intensive mode? (Select one.)

☐ For students to fit study between other activities. (1)
☐ For teaching team members to focus on other tasks between teaching. (2)
☐ For the teaching team to travel to the students. (3)
☐ For students to catch up with their learning. (4)
☐ For students to focus on one unit with limited distractions. (5)
☐ For students to engage in interactive learning activities over extended continuous periods. (6)
☐ This is how units in the degree program have always been taught. (7)
☐ Other (8) ____________________

Q16 What benefits do you perceive of teaching this unit with intensive mode? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Students fit study between other activities. (1)
☐ Teaching team members focus on other tasks between teaching. (2)
☐ Teaching team members travel to the students. (3)
☐ Students catch up with their learning. (4)
☐ Students focus on one unit with limited distractions. (5)
☐ Students engage in learning activities over extended continuous periods. (6)
☐ Other (7) ____________________

Q20 Approximately how many students take the unit?

☐ 0-40 (1)
☐ 41-80 (2)
☐ 81-120 (3)
☐ >120 (4) ____________________
Q15 Approximately what percentage of the students taking the unit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>study full-time? (1)</th>
<th>work full-time? (2)</th>
<th>speak English as a second language? (3)</th>
<th>are enrolled concurrently in other units? (4)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-20% (1)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40% (2)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60% (3)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>61-80% (4)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-100% (5)</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A (6)</td>
<td>□</td>
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<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q31 What is the largest class-size for the most interactive component of the unit?

☐ 0-30 (1)
☐ 31-60 (2)
☐ 61-90 (3)
☐ 91-120 (4)
☐ >120 (5)

Q32 How many members are in the teaching team for the unit?

☐ 1 (1)
☐ 2 (2)
☐ 3 (3)
☐ 4 (4)
☐ >4 (5)
Q19 Approximately what percentage of other units taken by the same cohort are taught with intensive mode?

- 0-20% (1)
- 21-40% (2)
- 41-60% (3)
- 61-80% (4)
- 81-100% (5)
- N/A (6)  

Q18 How many hours of preparation are students expected to complete for this unit before the first facilitated learning (i.e. class time)? (Comments welcome.)

- 0 (1)  
- 1-5 (2)  
- 6-10 (3)  
- 11-15 (4)  
- >15 (5)  

Q44 What is the students' preparation? (Select all that apply)

- Reading (1)
- An online course (2)
- An assignment (3)
- Other (4)  

Q24 What is the highest number of hours of facilitated learning (i.e. class time) in the unit on any one day?

- 0-2 (1)
- 3 (2)
- 4 (3)
- 5 (4)
- 6 (5)
- >6 (6)
Q25 On how many days does the facilitated learning happen?

- 0-3 (1)
- 4-6 (2)
- 7-9 (3)
- 10-12 (4)
- 12 or more (5) ________________

Q26 Over how many weeks does the facilitated learning span? (Round to the nearest number)

- 1-2 (1)
- 3-4 (2)
- 5-6 (3)
- 7-8 (4)
- 9-10 (5)
- 10-12 (6)
- >12 (7) ________________

Q30 What percentage of the facilitated learning is during:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-20% (1)</th>
<th>21-40% (2)</th>
<th>41-60% (3)</th>
<th>61-80% (4)</th>
<th>81-100% (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>normal office hours? (1)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>evenings? (2)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>weekends? (3)</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q33 What percentage of the facilitated learning is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0-20% (1)</th>
<th>21-40% (2)</th>
<th>41-60% (3)</th>
<th>61-80% (4)</th>
<th>81-100% (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lecture-style in class? (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>interactive in class? (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>laboratory/practical on campus? (3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in the field or a workplace? (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>online? (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other? (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q43 During facilitated learning, usually how frequent are breaks?
- At least once every 30 minutes (1)
- At least once every hour (2)
- At least once every two hours (3)
- At least once every three hours (4)
- Other (5) ____________________

Q41 What do the students do for the unit between facilitated learning sessions?
- reading (1)
- assignments/projects (2)
- practice problems (3)
- other (4) ____________________

Q42 What support is offered for students between facilitated learning session?
- online discussion (1)
- teaching team members available at times for students to drop-in (2)
- other (3) ____________________
Q27 How many weeks after the facilitated learning ends do students complete their final assessment for the unit? (Round to nearest number)

- 0 (1)
- 1-3 (2)
- 4-6 (3)
- 7-9 (4)
- >9 (5)

Q28 What weight do exams have on the assessment for the unit?

- 0-20% (1)
- 21-40% (2)
- 41-60% (3)
- 61-80% (4)
- 81-100% (5)

Q40 Please briefly describe the schedule (e.g. Students attend for 3 days in one week, then go back to their jobs for 12 weeks, then attend 2 days in one week, then go back to their jobs for ten weeks before the final assessment is due. During the weeks at work they have a 1.5 hour online tutorial each week.)

Q38 Please describe anything you especially like about this model of intensive mode teaching and why you like it.

Q39 Please describe anything that you especially dislike about this model of intensive mode teaching and why you dislike it.

Q29 You may choose to enter your name and email address in the questionnaire. These may be used to share results with you, contact you to discover more about your model of intensive mode teaching, or request permission to provide your contact details on the map or related publication for others who wish to adopt your model of intensive mode teaching. You may also indicate whether you agree to be acknowledged by name. Information that you provide will not be released by the investigators in any form that may identify you unless you agree to be acknowledged, or agree after an additional specific request from us.
to be identified as a contact for further information. The only exceptions to this principle are if documents are required by law.

Q34 Do you agree to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes (1)</th>
<th>No (2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be acknowledged by name along with the names of others who agree to be acknowledged? (1)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receive project updates? (2)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be contacted for clarification if necessary? (3)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be contacted seeking contact details for a specific point in a publication if your model is identified as innovative? (4)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q35 For any purposes agreed above, please enter your first and last names.

Q36 For any purposes agreed above, please enter your email address.

Q37 Do you wish to add any other comments?
Appendix C. Questionnaire for student review of guide

Student Review of Intensive Mode Teaching Guide

Q20 Student Review of Intensive Mode Teaching Guide

Intensive mode teaching involves classes on fewer days and for longer on each day than is traditional in the discipline. Questions begin on the next page.

Q13 PAGE 1 OF 2: Questions about you to help us describe the sample of participants

Q1 What is your current degree program and major?

Q2 Are you enrolled as an international, domestic, or exchange student?
   ☐ As an international student (1)
   ☐ As a domestic student (2)
   ☐ On international exchange (3)

Q3 Do you have any previous qualifications? (Please specify.)

Q24 Is your whole degree program in intensive mode?
   ☐ Yes (Please specify.) (1) ____________________
   ☐ No (2)

Display This Question:
   If Is your whole degree program in intensive mode? No Is Selected

Q31 Have you completed a unit in intensive mode?
   ☐ Yes (Please specify.) (1) ____________________
   ☐ No (2)
Q4 What is the maximum number of intensive units you have taken concurrently?
- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (5)
- 5 (6)

Q37 What is the maximum number of units you have taken concurrently with an intensive unit (in addition to the intensive unit)?
- 0 (1)
- 1 (2)
- 2 (3)
- 3 (4)
- 4 (5)

Q5 In an average teaching week while studying in intensive mode, how many hours did you spend at work (paid or unpaid but not studying)?
- 0 (1)
- 1-5 (2)
- 6-10 (3)
- 11-15 (4)
- 16-20 (5)
- 21-25 (6)
- 26-30 (7)
- 31-35 (8)
- >35 (9)

Q6 In an average teaching week while studying in intensive mode, how many hours did you spend undertaking recreational commitments (e.g. sport)?
- 0 (1)
- 1-5 (2)
- 6-10 (3)
- 11-15 (4)
- 16-20 (5)
- >20 (6)
Q7 While studying in intensive mode, did you have illness, injury or disability or a life incident (such as illness or injury of a close family member) that added to the burden of your studies?
- No (1)
- Yes: Minor (2)
- Yes: Major (3)

Q8 While studying in intensive mode, were you the primary carer for anyone (e.g. children)?
- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- Always (3)

Q9 While studying in intensive mode, were your own main meals provided (e.g. by a partner, parent, or residential college)?
- Never (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- Always (3)

Q10 What was your age in years at your last birthday?

Q11 Are you male or female?
- Female (1)
- Male (2)
- Other (3)
Q12 Is English an additional language for you?
☐ No (1)
☐ Yes (2)

Q14 PAGE 2 OF 2: The following questions refer to the intensive mode teaching guide. Please take a look at the guide. You will be asked about each recommendation and the video vignettes. Links to each are provided in the relevant questions below.

Q29 Please rate each recommendation using the 5-point scale below. Please enter any explanations in the text boxes. 1 = Not important; 5 = Extremely important
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>1 (1)</th>
<th>2 (2)</th>
<th>3 (3)</th>
<th>4 (4)</th>
<th>5 (5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Focus on thresholds</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Support and value diversity</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Design an optimal learning space and environment</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Design appropriate activities</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Support development of a learning community</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Design appropriate assessment</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Support students to prepare</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Optimise learning</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
<td>〇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Consider important resources (10)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Design to reap potential benefits of intensive mode and mitigate potential disadvantages (12)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Review (13)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Manage workloads (25)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video vignettes (26)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q40 Do you think this guide could help teachers to improve intensive units? (Comments welcome.) (1 = Not at all; 5 = Very much)

☐ 1 (1) ________________
☐ 2 (2) ________________
☐ 3 (3) ________________
☐ 4 (4) ________________
☐ 5 (5) ________________

Q38 Is there anything you would add to the guide?

Q39 What would you put in an intensive mode guide for students?
Appendix D. Posters by workshop participants

At the seven stand-alone workshops to disseminate and review the guide, groups of participants prepared posters in response to a series of questions to provide feedback to the researchers. Figures 1 to 10 present a sample of the posters. Where relevant, the questions addressed on the poster have been added. Words that are difficult to read have been transcribed on the posters.

Figure 1. Sample workshop poster 1
Q1: What is the most significant thing you have learned today?
IMT IS POSSIBLE!
What makes IMT better?
Teaching plan is important AND resourcing
GET OUTSIDE AT TIMES

Q2: What is still muddy?
OPTIMAL TIMING/LENGTH
Concrete examples of threshold concepts & how to address them in IMT
Overall - why would you choose IMT vs. traditional - which situations suit which?
Are more specific teaching skills needed for IMT - more compared to traditional teaching?

Q3: What are you likely to do to improve IMT?
MORE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES
Possibly from award winning units/lecturers
More research findings
Possibly as pre-reading
Introduce participants existing experience in IMT
WORKSHOP IMT
Participants bring in one of their examples
More application to own work
PDF version of guide

Q4: How might the guide help you?
GET ANOTHER STAFF MEMBER TO HELP RUN MY IMT!
Focus on getting good learning spaces
Peer review of existing IMT
Start running an IMT

Figure 2. Sample workshop poster 2
Questions posed to participants:

Q1: What is the most significant thing you have learned today?

Q2: What is still muddy?

Q3: What are you likely to do to improve IMT?

Q4: How might the guide help you?

Figure 3. Sample workshop poster 3
This poster focuses on the opportunity in IMT for students to experience the liminal space and a sense of communitas.

Figure 4. Sample workshop poster 4
Poster

Q1: Which aspects of the guide resonate with you?
Q2: Are there any additions that would enhance the guide?
Q3: What are you likely to do to improve IMT?

Figure 5. Sample workshop poster 5
Poster possibly responding to questions 1 and 2

Q1: Which aspects of the guide resonate with you?

- addressing the differences +
how to utilise intensive learning
in non-professional/higher level thinking courses

Q2: Are there any additions that would enhance the guide?

- lecturers collaborating with others
to determine learn from each other

Figure 6. Sample workshop poster 6
Poster responding to questions 1 to 3:
Q1: Which aspects of the guide resonate with you?
Q2: Are there any additions that would enhance the guide?
Q3: What are you likely to do to improve IMT?

Figure 7. Sample workshop poster 7
A poster responding to questions 1 to 3 showing life cycle of IMT curriculum development implementation and evaluation.

Q1: Which aspects of the guide resonate with you?
Q2: Are there any additions that would enhance the guide?
Q3: What are you likely to do to improve IMT?

Note: Some text transcribed for ease of reading.
Figure 9. Sample workshop poster 9
Q2: Are there any additions that would enhance the guide?

Poster

Resonating Aspects:

1. Thresholds, 4. Activity Design, 7. Student Preparation

How these aspects merge to create effective IMT

* We haven’t read the whole guide yet & BUT
  * We’d like to see some Best Practice Case Studies (maybe they are in the following)
  * Institutional environment/culture
  * How different institutions incorporate/use/limit IMT

* We want to improve/do with IMT:
  * Our understanding/implementation of thresholds
  * Using preparation + consolidation to maximise limited space
  * Creating/Improving formative assessment to improve IMT.

Figure 10. Sample workshop poster 10
Appendix E. Sample evaluation ratings by workshop participants

Sample participants ratings of the success of workshops are below (Figures 11 and 12).

![Diagram of workshop participant ratings sample 1]

Place stickers on your target to indicate how well the workshop participants achieved each goal:

1 = not achieved; 5 = achieved very well

Rated by:

- people in STEMM
- others (mainly accountants)

Figure 11. Workshop participant ratings sample 1
How well the workshop participants achieved each goal
1 = not achieved; 5 = achieved very well

Rated by:
- academic developers
- people in STEM
- people in social science/business/arts/education/Post
- others

Figure 12. Workshop participant ratings sample 2
## Appendix F. Impact plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anticipated changes at:</th>
<th>Project completion</th>
<th>Six months post-completion</th>
<th>Twelve months post-completion</th>
<th>Twenty-four months post-completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Team members</strong></td>
<td>IMT units taught by project team members in engineering and business at UWA, UTAS and RMIT are improved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Immediate students</strong></td>
<td>Teaching teams and students of the IMT units studied are better prepared for IMT. The repeat study in a revised unit confirmed improved focus on intended thresholds.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Spreading the word</strong></td>
<td>People engaged in the survey and the workshops (Table 2). Additional dissemination activities were undertaken (Table 4).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Narrow opportunistic adoption</strong></td>
<td>Units have been revised in engineering units at ANU through Jeremy Smith, Paul Compston, and Chris Browne.</td>
<td>Adoption of recommendations in units at partner universities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Narrow systemic adoption</strong></td>
<td>Adoption of recommendations in IMT units in faculties of the teaching team members.</td>
<td>Adoption of recommendations institution-wide by partner universities. The Chair of Academic Board at UWA referred to the guide to inform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussions about new teaching schedules. The guide was used in 2017 by Edfutures in workshops to prepare academics at UWA for the new summer teaching period.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Broad opportunistic adoption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption of recommendations by teaching teams in units with IMT. People who attended presentations and workshops learned about how to achieve this. Doe is an example (Doe et al. 2017)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Broad systemic adoption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities arise at times when teaching is reviewed or redesigned. Deans, associate deans, Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Education) and academic developers are aware of the guide, and support to use it is available for when opportunities for change arise. Case studies help to promote credibility of the guide.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G. Evaluator’s report

Evaluation Report for

Student experiences of threshold capability development with intensive mode teaching

SP14-4624 University of Western Australia

Background

This project aimed to promote and support improved student experiences of threshold capability development in units involving intensive mode teaching (IMT). This project contributed to addressing the strategic priority ‘The 21st Century Student Experience’. A growing mode of teaching experienced by students in the 21st century is intensive mode teaching (IMT) as flexibility in studying becomes increasingly important for students. The possibilities for universities to offer IMT have expanded due to advances in technology. IMT appeals to educators and Australian universities in many onshore and offshore programmes. With the rapid interest and adoption of IMT, it is important to ensure that the student experience is optimal. The project was framed by threshold capability theory and threshold concept theory.

The intended deliverables were all achieved and include:
- Intensive mode teaching guide
- Project website
- Interest groups – LinkedIn
- Different models of intensive mode teaching
- Published papers in journal and conference proceedings

The project was allocated an evaluator from the independent evaluation team for all Strategic Commissioned Projects by the then Office for Learning and Teaching. The role of the evaluator was to conduct formative evaluation activities throughout the life of the project as well as providing summative evaluation of the project at its conclusion informed and based by the ALTC Project Evaluation Resources designed to assist projects in achieving success and impact.

The summative evaluation that forms the basis for this report has been guided by the following questions:
- Was the project managed and conducted in ways that contributed to project success?
- Did the project achieve its stated outcomes?
- Did the project achieve as much impact as it should have?
- How could the processes associated with the project be improved and replicated?
Evaluation reflections

This project team and the evaluation team were first introduced at the OLT opening workshop in March 2015 for all 2014 Strategic Commissioned Projects. The 21st Century student experience cluster was comprised of four project teams, including this project led by Associate Sally Male at the University of Western Australia, with partner institutions RMIT University and University of Tasmania. A unique aspect of this project was Sally Male was also the Project Manager as well as Project Lead, with team members: Firoz Alam, Caroline Baillie, Stuart Crispin, Phil Hancock, David Harte, Jeremy Leggoe, Cara McNish and Dev Ranmuthugala. By the time of the March workshop, the project was well underway with a cohesive project team and strong management and leadership.

Formative evaluation processes included:
- Participation in regular face to face and virtual team meetings
- Ongoing communication with Project Lead and Manager
- Inclusion of evaluator in shared team space for access to notes, minutes, timelines, etc.
- Inclusion of evaluator in key reference group meetings and communications
- Inclusion of evaluator in key project team meetings
- Participation in forums and workshops
- Input into analysis of data and evidence collection from surveys and workshops
- Regular reporting back to project leaders, project team members, reference group
- Planned and ongoing engagement with evaluator around expectations, monitoring of achievements against milestones, risk assessment and strategies for intervention.

Project management

It is well known that effective project management practice incorporates principles that:
- Identify project requirements
- Establish clear and achievable outcomes
- Balance the competing demands for quality, scope, time and cost
- Manage the expectations of various stakeholders
- Adapt plans to overcome challenges

This project clearly evidenced these project management principles. In particular, the project was tightly managed with clearly defined outcomes and deliverables, realistic timelines and flexibility to fine tune and make adjustments to accommodate challenges. Having a dedicated project manager/leader with strengths in project management and leadership working collaboratively with the evaluator was a critical success factor. The team was also proactive in making links and forming collaborations with other project teams in the 21 Century Student Experience cluster of 2014 Strategic Commissioned Projects.

Achievement of outcomes

This project has successfully interacted with over 450 people in various presentations and forums and a further 160 in specific workshops in developing the guide to IMT. Strategically targeting the lead institution as the first venue for workshopping the good practice guide
enabled in fact a beta test of the ideas and findings to date as well as informing the future structure of subsequent workshops. The website in early December 2016 has over 4000 visitors and page views.

The key findings illustrated that while there are many different modes of intensive teaching opportunities all of them attempt to provide opportunities to bond as a learning community, extend interactive learning activities in addition to providing opportunities for relevant and authentic activities. Common concerns were that students face greater difficulties in intensive mode deliveries when they are not prepared or able to keep up, as well as highlighting for teaching staff being able to provide timely feedback.

**Impact**

The LinkedIn group continues to grow and there have been several presentations at conferences and meetings, as well as published papers in journals. All of the teaching team involved in the eight intensive units studied as part of this project have further refined their units to improve student learning as a result of participation in this project. The cohesive project team worked constantly in an iterative feedback framework to update and refine not only their teaching but also the resources to assist others in thinking about or developing intensive mode units.

**Summary**

The project activities ensured that a large number of stakeholders (students, academics and university leaders) were not only consulted in developing the findings, but were also engaged with the development of threshold capabilities as critical framework for improving student learning in intensive mode delivery unit.

This project was a pleasure to work with due to the experience, respect and willingness of the team to engage with and learn from others. It was a highly competent and well led team that achieved not only its project outcomes but has also extended impact in a range of areas and ways. The relationships that have been formed during this project are a key strength and will be an asset for the endurance of the project work. Associate Professor Sally Male should be commended for her leadership not only of the project team, but also this important area of work.