

Managing International Education Outcomes through resourcing – a structural review of Macquarie University

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Abstract

Two years ago, under the duress of exponential growth in all areas, Macquarie International undertook a significant restructure. The redesign was driven by volume, resourcing issues (both financial and human), relationship management, marketing considerations and professional development opportunities for all staff. One of the major outcomes of the restructure was the creation of Macquarie Abroad, a specialised unit for all of Macquarie's short term eg study abroad and exchange, initiatives.

.In light of consistent and continued growth, and taking into consideration forecast growth, Macquarie International has completed another significant review of both its structure and resourcing levels. This has resulted in the creation of new roles and amalgamation or reclassification of other roles. The aim of this review was to achieve best practice in the use of available resources to improve the service delivery of all outcomes to stakeholders, whilst limiting knowledge gaps and communication gaps. With international activities being so crucial to the function of the university, the professionalisation of international activity into an organised unit, governed by strategic business plans and not hidden away inside faculties, is critical.

Since the original paper was presented at the 2002 ISANA Conference, Macquarie International has received many enquiries into its structural reviews. This session will look at the history of Macquarie International's structures and will allow delegates to see the evolution of roles within a large international office. It is hoped this will help individuals, departments and larger units in finding approaches that may fit their needs for managing their own international education outcomes.

Key Words

resources, structure, workplace redesign, education abroad, exchange, study abroad, internships

Introduction

Macquarie University has become one of the largest recipients of all categories of international students in 2004, as well as having one of the largest outbound student mobility programs in the country. Transnational Education programs are also in a growth phase, and the ranges of international activities being undertaken by the University are broad and diverse. The Pro Vice Chancellor International leads Macquarie International in the development, implementation and administration of these activities.

This paper will provide a snapshot of the latest workplace redesign process, which at the time of writing, was being assessed for implementation by the University.

Background

Management Perspective

Macquarie University has a very centralised administration, clearly demonstrated by all international activities being under the umbrella of the PVC International and Macquarie International. The University has set ambitious international recruitment targets for 2005-6, as well as a high percentage aim for student mobility programs (30%), and the diversification of its students and programs.

New technologies have also been developed to move the entire operation into an e-business domain, which have the added benefit of freeing up scarce human and other resources for less routine and "busy" work.

One of the main considerations and drivers of the redesign was to structure the office in such a way as to achieve better levels of integration across the different but interdependent functional units. The need to halt the development of “silos” was of major concern to the MI executive.

The workplace redesign therefore focused on achieving Macquarie University’s desired international education outcomes by resourcing MI appropriately and effectively.

Macquarie Abroad

In terms of Macquarie Abroad, this meant re-looking at the resources available and the trends of the area, and the consideration that this area was one of the core business units of the whole office. The 2002 MI structure is attached as Appendix A, and the 2002 Macquarie Abroad structure as Appendix B.

Building on the philosophical basis of the 2002 restructure, there was a need to:

- Maintain quality personalized service to both partners and students (CRM)
- Maintain low staff-student ratios
- Provide sensible reporting lines and duty statements within units to cover recruitment travel periods
- Provide interesting and relevant staff development opportunities

From 2002 to 2003 the volume of activities across Macquarie Abroad increased by 55% being 24% for inbound programs and 276% for outbound programs, put down in large part to the newly instituted structure and broadening of activities. An additional 9 countries were either sending or receiving students. These are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: 2003 Short-term students by program type and country

Inbound Study Abroad	Inbound Exchange	Inbound Internships	Inbound Short Programs	Outbound Exchange	Other Outbound	Country
	8					Austria
			2			Brazil
2	34	2		33	2	Canada
				7	27	China
	1				4	Czech Rep
9	8	1		6	3	Denmark
					20	Egypt
	1				16	Fiji
2	6					Finland
3	27			18	34	France
97	34	26	2	10	60	Germany
					1	Greece
	8			2		Hong Kong
				1		Iceland
					4	India
	4			3	3	Ireland
	7				28	Italy
2	20	1		17	13	Japan
	2			1	7	Korea
				1		Lebanon
34	10	3	24	6		Mexico
				2		Morocco
3	7	1		9	2	Netherlands
22	12		2	2	2	Norway
				5		Poland
	1				2	Singapore
					2	South Africa

	1			1		Spain
28	14	1		10	1	Sweden
3		1				Switzerland
	6	1				Taiwan
1						Thailand
	1					Turkey
2	32	1		32	10	UK
520	42	19	76	43	46	USA
728	286	57*	106	210	287	Total

* may also be included in Inbound Study Abroad and Exchange numbers

The effective full-time staff responsible for these activities in 2003 was 10. The 2004 data is listed below as Table 2, and shows extraordinary growth in numbers, without budgeted and sufficient human resources to manage them without losing quality of service provision. From 2003 to 2004 the growth in overall Macquarie Abroad activities was 44%, being 26% in inbound programs and 88% in outbound programs. There was an increase of 20 in the number of participating countries from 2003.

Table 2: 2004 Short-term students by program type and country

Inbound Study Abroad	Inbound Exchange	Inbound Internships	Inbound Short Programs	Outbound Exchange	Other Outbound	Country
				1	2	Argentina
	6	1		1	8	Austria
			1			Belgium
	2	1				Brazil
	24	3		11	22	Canada
2					1	Chile
		12	1	9	46	China
1			1			Columbia
						Croatia
					1	Cuba
				1	3	Czech Rep
6	10	3		13	41	Denmark
					14	Egypt
					1	Ethiopia
				3	26	Fiji
5	6	1	1	1	5	Finland
1	42	2	1	28	74	France
172	18	53		6	45	Germany
					1	Ghana
		1		2	3	Greece
	7	2				Hong Kong
				1	1	Iceland
					3	India
	1			4	7	Ireland
					1	Israel
	3		5	6	30	Italy
1	12	3		10	32	Japan
	4	2		2	5	Korea
				2	2	Lebanon
				4	7	Malta

76	17	10	5	10	20	Mexico
			1	2	2	Morocco
					2	Nepal
6	13		6	7	7	Netherlands
					34	New Caledonia
					4	New Zealand
					1	Nigeria
32	10	1	2	4	8	Norway
		3		1	1	Poland
					1	Portugal
					14	Russia
					1	Samoa
	4			3	13	Singapore
			3		2	Slovenia
					2	South Africa
	3	1			3	Spain
					1	Sri Lanka
21	14			9	15	Sweden
			1		4	Switzerland
	1					Taiwan
1		1			2	Thailand
	2				4	Turkey
					1	Uganda
3	28	3		49	75	UK
645	66	53	26	45	98	USA
		4				Venezuela
972	293	160*	53	235	698	Total

* may also be included in Inbound Study Abroad and Exchange numbers

Work Re-design

With the volume, diversification and specialisation of the various short-term programs in a dramatic growth phase, it was necessary to carefully analyse the resources required to ensure quality of service to all stakeholders. The process across MI took 8 months, and Macquarie Abroad was determined to be one of the core functional areas of the overall operation. The new structure of MI is at Appendix C, with the detailed structure of Macquarie Abroad at Appendix D.

Features of the 2004 Macquarie Abroad structure include:

- Reclassification of senior roles
- Additional staff for Outbound, Internships, enrollments, marketing support
- Additional functional area (Customised Programs)
- Clear reporting lines
- Discrete budgets for some items
- Scope for future growth and budgetary allowances

Conclusion

Maintaining superior quality service to our partners, students and other stakeholders will always be difficult in an environment of continued growth and shrinking resources. Macquarie International has attempted to do this by a process of continuous improvement, quality controls, introduction of new technologies, and a rolling cycle of workplace assessment and redesign. It is difficult to know if we're preparing for the future correctly, but we believe our broad-based strategic planning has been successful so far, and as such, we think we have allocated sufficient resources to ensure our success over the next three-year period.