



Teacher Capability 2016 Report

September 2016



Teacher Capability

Promoting Excellence in Teaching

Contents

Preface.....	3
Introduction.....	4
At a Glance – 2016 data	5
Priority Area 1: Improve teaching and learning	5
Developing a curriculum or instructional model.....	6
Developing teacher reflective practice	7
Enhancing teacher performance through analysing student data and linking this to targeted professional development.....	7
Priority Area 2: Recognise and promote the development of high performing teachers	11
Priority Area 3: Promote and support great teachers especially in the areas of early years, students with disability, learning difficulties and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, family and community engagement	12
Early years	12
Disability	12
Learning difficulties	12
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education.....	13
Wellbeing.....	13
Priority Area 4: Promote partnerships across schools, authorities, sectors and providers to enhance and provide professional excellence	14
Priority Area 5: Develop excellence in mentoring and coaching	15
Priority Area 6: Development of aspiring leaders	15
Next Steps.....	16

Preface

The Queensland Catholic education sector recognises that enhancing the capability of our teachers is one of the most important ways we can continue to improve the educational outcomes for our students.

The impact of high quality teaching has been noted in the draft report from the Productivity Commission on the National Education Evidence Base. The report notes:

Furthermore, there is a substantial body of evidence suggesting that teachers have the greatest impact on student performance outside of students' own characteristics, and that directing attention to higher quality teaching can have large positive effects on outcomes across the board. (Productivity Commission, 2016)

The importance of maintaining and developing teacher quality has also been recognised by the Queensland Government with the provision of an additional \$52 million for the Catholic sector over four years (2013-17) to focus on professional excellence in teaching.

The government recognises the diversity of Catholic schools and has provided much needed flexibility for the Queensland Catholic Education Commission to effectively administer this funding and maintain accountability to the outcomes and high standards demanded of the initiative.

The 300 Catholic schools in Queensland are governed by five Diocesan education authorities and 17 Religious Institutes/Public Juridic Persons employing 10,000 FTE teachers. This governance is grounded in two basic principles.

- The first principle of the common good is characterised by promoting a spirit of co-operation rather than competition, effective communication, and individual responsibility.
- The second principle of subsidiarity states that decisions should be taken as close to the local level as appropriate and/or feasible.

These two principles provide principals, staff and school boards with considerable decision making ability to implement curriculum, design pedagogy, determine staffing structure, design facilities and manage finances as well as ensure collaboration and teamwork in schools. This flexibility allows school authorities and their schools to respond to local context and needs, operate efficiently and be inclusive of parental/community engagement.

These principles also underpin a process whereby each school authority liaises with their schools to determine the focus of actions and report these to QCEC annually.

Introduction

This 2016 report summarises the projects which the 22 Catholic school authorities determined to promote excellence in teaching. These projects are implemented in the context of the operation and capacity of each school allowing them to make decisions that best suit their local communities.

There are six priority areas the Queensland Catholic Education Commission has identified to promote professional excellence in teaching and support school decision-making:

1. Improve teaching and learning
2. Recognise and promote the development of high performing teachers
3. Promote and support great teachers especially in the areas of early years, students with disability, learning difficulties and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, family and community engagement
4. Promote partnerships across schools, authorities, sectors and providers to enhance and provide professional excellence
5. Develop excellence in mentoring and coaching
6. Development of aspiring leaders.

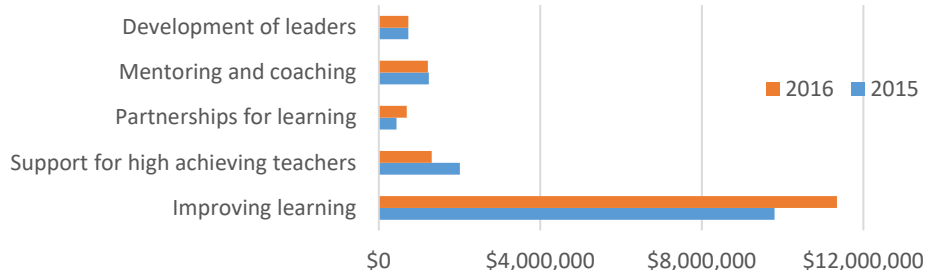
The 2016 reports are reflecting greater evidence of impact on student learning as the projects developed by schools and school authorities are maturing and evolving. Initiatives in this area have grown to 12,413 participating teachers and the majority of funding is being directly targeted towards improving student learning.

At a Glance – 2016 data

Profile

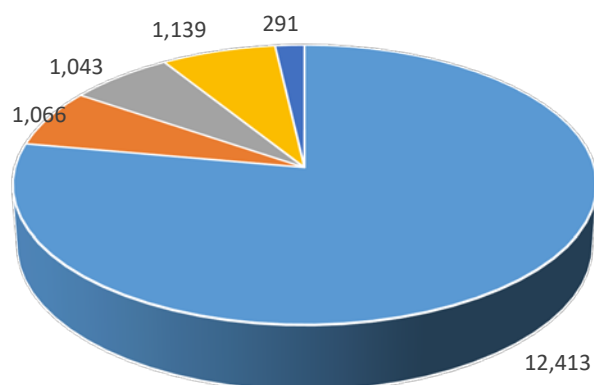
Catholic schools in Qld	300
Projects	213
Teachers (FTE)	10,000
Students - total	145,838
Students with disabilities	6,209
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	6,146

Where the funding was targeted



	Improving learning	Support for high achieving teachers	Partnerships for learning	Mentoring and coaching	Development of leaders
2016	\$11,348,000	\$1,306,000	\$688,000	\$1,218,000	\$734,000
2015	\$9,800,000	\$2,007,000	\$437,000	\$1,237,000	\$732,000

Participation by program area



- Improving learning
- Support for high achieving teachers
- Partnerships for learning
- Mentoring and coaching
- Development of leaders

Outcomes

- Use of data to inform teaching practice
- Goal setting based on evidence-based reflection
- Increased use of explicit and targeted feedback
- Differentiated learning
- Action research projects
- Leadership programs

Impact

- ✓ Improvements noted in student learning and engagement
- ✓ Improvement in NAPLAN results
- ✓ Increased student achievement on A-E Reporting

Priority Area 1: Improve teaching and learning

The *Teacher Capability* program is supporting staff in Catholic schools to improve teaching and learning through developing a curriculum or instructional model, developing teacher reflective practice, enhancing teacher performance through analysing student data and linking this to targeted professional development.

Developing a curriculum or instructional model

Initiatives to improve teaching and learning through the development of a curriculum model included:

- use of consultants to guide curriculum planning
- development of a response to the introduction of Year 7 into secondary schools in 2015 and the transition of students into Year 8 and 9
- provision of support for the implementation of practices that cater for differentiation
- increased ability to engage in research based curriculum development
- innovative practices in the selection and organisation of content and delivery of learning and teaching programs
- action planning based on research and data.

This has resulted in greater focus on student engagement, better practices in the selection and organisation of content and delivery of learning and high expectations that effective teaching strategies will be used.

For example, one diocese has explored the work of John Hattie's 15 years of research into which practices have the greatest positive impact on student learning with all schools. Each school has collected data based on this research and has commenced an implementation plan that has impacted on pedagogy.

Case study



Exploring the work of John Hattie's Meta Analysis

All teachers in the diocese attended a Foundation Day.

This day explored the work of John Hattie which pulls together 15 years of research into which practices have the greatest positive impact on student learning.

The day looked at:

- what makes a visible learner
- how teachers can track their impact
- teacher qualities that most support students
- effective feedback and mind frames to empower learning.

School leadership teams then met on two occasions following the initial workshop – during week 6 of term one and week 8 of term two. The purpose of these meetings was to formulate a plan to put the evidence about what has the greatest impact on student learning, into practice.

Developing teacher reflective practice

There were several projects that specifically focussed on teacher reflective practice within a particular professional growth model such as Educator Impact, Peer Mentoring and the e-Learning Paradigm. Feedback through student and staff surveys and structured classroom observations has been used by trained mentors to guide their work with teachers. Evidence-based goals were established using the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Professional Standards for Teachers. Outcomes were more effective strategies implemented within the classroom and identified individualised development that aligns to school improvement.

Case Study Personalised action research investigations



The aim is to improve classroom practice and student achievement through reflective teaching practices and feedback and positioning teachers as leaders. The action research has been linked to AITSL Professional Standards and School Goals.

Teachers were supported through the following stages:

- Reflect
- Explore research
- Identify change to teaching practice
- Collect data before and after intervention
- Analyze and Interpret Data showing measures of growth
- Take Action
- Share results (this year)

All teachers recently presented a snapshot of their projects to their colleagues in Week 3 of Term 4 on the Pupil Free Day.

Visiting Diocesan personnel will give feedback and feedforward in Weeks 7 and 8 of this term. Evaluation will occur after this process is complete. 2017 will be a time to connect teachers across schools to work on specific areas of need through classroom visits and video chat technologies.

Enhancing teacher performance through analysing student data and linking this to targeted professional development

Gathering data using the ACER Progressive Achievement Tests in Reading and Mathematics and other resources is an ongoing process involving expert consultations for some authorities. Already the data analysis is being used to track students at the upper and lower end of proficiency.

As subject area middle managers become more proficient, it is expected that student tracking will provide a platform for student/teacher and student/pastoral leader conversations about academic progress.

Teachers have used this data to differentiate learning and to assist in guidance for students.

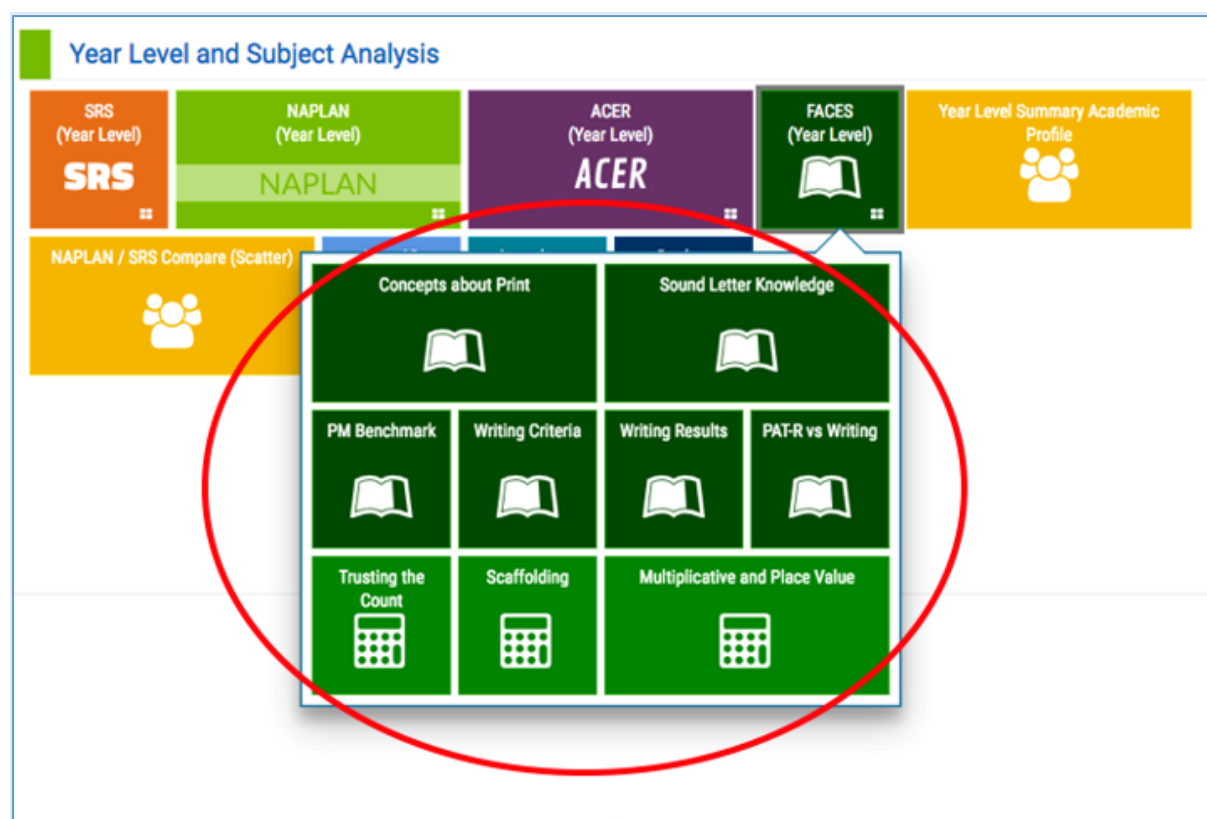


Figure 1 Monitoring tool in Student Analytics within the Learning and Teaching Dashboard as part of the 2016 *Delivering Excellent Learning and Teaching* strategy

Authorities and schools are building teaching capacity to improve learning outcomes around the areas of literacy, numeracy, mathematics, digital technology, phonics and pedagogy and assessment. Some projects have focused on flexible and inclusive education as well as mental health first aid.

Most initiatives share a focus on work aligned with whole-of-system strategies and include the design and building of a professional Learning Online hub which will promote targeted professional reading, learning and engagement aligned to the school's Strategic Plan.

In a project from another school authority, 28 schools interrogated student data to identify student and group needs. This allowed for more focused intervention and teaching.

The following project included 800 teachers from 137 schools forming four collaboratives to focus on literacy as a subset of the collection and analysis of data using system wide monitoring tools (see figure 1 above).

Case study

Learning Collaboratives

Through 2015 and 2016, as part of the Delivering Excellent Learning and Teaching strategy, schools were given the opportunity to participate a choice of 4 “collaboratives”.

Three of the four had a focus on literacy for most schools with a few schools focusing on numeracy.

The key professional learning for each of these 137 schools this year was organised around this collaborative work.



Goals

- Build collective capacity through collaboration across schools
- Use the high yield strategies to engage in cycles of collaboration inquiry
- Use effective and expected practices for teaching.

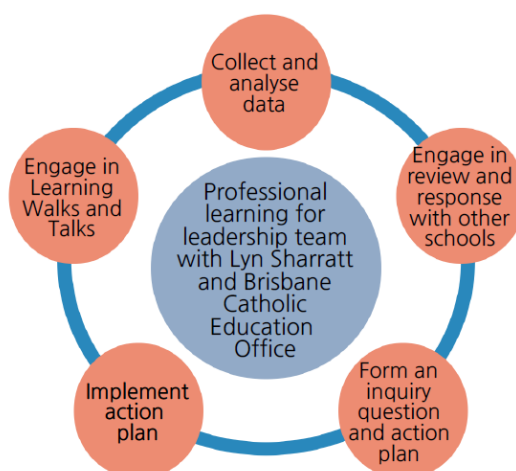


Figure 2 Delivering Excellent Learning and Teaching using three high yield strategies to evaluate the impact of teaching and leadership on learning progress for each student.

Impact

Feedback showed a range of results related to **impact**:

1. Student feedback indicated great satisfaction with teacher performance and the use of targeted feedback.
2. Teachers have seen improvements in student learning and have gained knowledge of students' conceptual understandings.
3. Students are asking more questions about how to improve and are using 'language for success'.
4. Impact has also been noted in an analysis of 2016 NAPLAN for one diocese indicating the following-
 - a. Year 3:
 - i. Reading: *Now an established upward trend. Starting from a very low base in 2013 the diocese is now above State Mean and National Mean. 96.67 % of students are at or above NMS.*
 - ii. Writing: *98.6% of students are at or above NMS. Spelling: is now on an established upward trend. 96.31 % of students are above NMS.*
 - iii. Grammar & Punctuation: *is now an established upward trend. 96.56% of students are at or above NMS.*
 - iv. Numeracy: *97.19% of students are at or above NMS.*
 - b. Year 5, 7 and 9 showed similar improvements.
5. NAPLAN Data: One of the targeted schools reported the following increases in mean scale score from 2014: YEAR 5 Reading +109; Writing +111; Spelling +142; Grammar & Punctuation +132; Numeracy +122.
6. Schools also reported an increased student achievement on A-E Reporting.
7. Heads of Department have provided feedback that data meetings have assisted them to shift from administration tasks to meetings which focus on student learning. Observation focus has moved from teacher performance to student engagement.

Significant outcomes

- Improved use of student achievement data
- Increased capacity for student to teacher feedback
- Increased capacity for teacher to teacher feedback
- Improved professional discussion amongst teachers about student learning and alignment with teaching practice
- Improved skills in literacy and numeracy teaching
- Improved teaching strategies in response to student's identified learning needs
- Improved pedagogical practices based on evidence based research
- More effective use of the Australian Professional Standards to inform performance and development processes
- More effective use of the school's performance and development framework

Priority Area 2: Recognise and promote the development of high performing teachers

Several initiatives were focused on the development of high performing teachers. Development was pursued through:

1. Using teaching practice observations and feedback to improve learning impact and inform goal setting based on collaborative evidence-based reflection.
2. Establishment of Centre for Professional Practice as a hub of professional learning that provides 24 x 90 minute sessions per teacher per year for strategic professional learning on exemplary teacher practice and to enhance teacher collaborative planning and reflection on practice.
3. Studying to gain expertise in areas of emerging need such as: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, digital learning, teaching reading, numeracy, cognitive and emotional developmental impacted by trauma, working with young people with significant mental health issues.

Case Study Whole school approach to learning improvement

School located in a lower socio-economic area.

Goals were:

- Improved teaching strategies and pedagogical practices.
- Improved professional discussion amongst teachers about student learning and alignment with teaching practice.
- Improved use of student achievement data.
- Increased capacity for teacher-to-teacher feedback.
- Improved skills in literacy and numeracy teaching to improve outcomes for students.
- Development of structures aimed at supporting teaching and learning

Significant impact on learning has occurred as shown by using *Like Local Schools ICSEA Comparison* for Yr 5 (2014) – Yr 5 (2016):

SCHOOL	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar & Punctuation		Numeracy	
	Score	Cohort Improvement	Score	Cohort Improvement	Score	Cohort Improvement	Score	Cohort Improvement	Score	Cohort Improvement
National Average	502	+ 83	475	+ 73	493	+ 81	505	+ 79	493	+ 91
GSCS ICSEA = 970	495	+ 109	470	+ 111	490	+ 109	512	+ 120	486	+ 122
KSS ICSEA = 971	481	+ 99	450	+ 74	467	+ 88	478	+ 86	478	+ 99

Priority Area 3: Promote and support great teachers especially in the areas of early years, students with disability, learning difficulties and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, family and community engagement

Early years

Strategies that have supported early years teachers have involved parent engagement in:

- smoothing the transition to school
- the explicit teaching of phonemic awareness
- improved assessment, development and monitoring of programs that share pre- and post-testing with parents and advise on how to assist at home.

Disability

Projects have included further studies in the areas of students with disability and in differentiating the curriculum to better meet the needs of students with high learning needs. The following were significant outcomes

- Increased provision of professional learning
- Improved/development of assessment and monitoring programs
- Improved/development of Curriculum Differentiation Plans
- Increased use of differentiated instruction/pedagogy
- Improved key learning outcomes for students.

Learning difficulties

Several projects have focused on assisting students with learning difficulties. This has resulted in a far greater awareness of the need for differentiation in task design and general teaching. Programs have used data to select students and then analyse for gaps and weaknesses to formulate an individual program of recovery or small group intervention as necessary.

Impact on student learning

The impact on student learning has been:

- improved student confidence in oral and written communication skills
- higher levels of student classroom engagement noted
- confidence in the use of technology enhancing student performance
- confidence of teachers in curriculum differentiation practices including scaffolding
- increased capacity for teacher-to-teacher feedback
- the development of structures aimed at supporting teaching and learning.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education has been enhanced through visits by teachers to Townsville, Palm Island and Alice Springs to engage in peer-to-peer practice and mentoring programs.

Staff have participated in social and wellbeing training programs specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Another project developed a Yarning Circle that is being led by Indigenous Elders in the local community and has included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Art workshops led by representatives of their own culture.

As a result, staff are now more culturally aware and engaged with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the local community.

Case Study

One college that undertook a series of Literacy intervention strategies has reported 27% of their Indigenous students have moved up a level in the Band scales from C to D. Five key staff led a whole of college Literacy learning for learners where English is an additional language involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as well as other students experiencing disadvantage or difference:

Recent surveys indicate that 92.19% of parents believe that the College appreciates and values students' varying cultural backgrounds... 95.24% of parents also believe that the College promotes a view that ALL students can learn and are expected to perform to the best of their ability and 97.14% of staff agree with this... over 60% staff report that they have used this [literacy] learning in their classroom and that this appears to be assisting students understand and generate text. Revised strategies have improved the completion and submission of assignment work by almost 40%. In Numeracy classes introduced in Yr 7 & 8, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have demonstrated a 55% (Yr 7) and 22% (Yr 8) improvement in their Numeracy learning.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing projects have involved development of whole school wellbeing approaches and the development of the culture of the school being a safe, 'common ground', learning space. It is reported that after a focus on wellbeing, students who experience the school as a safe place also experience significant improvements in their learning outcomes and behaviour.

Priority Area 4: Promote partnerships across schools, authorities, sectors and providers to enhance and provide professional excellence

Partnerships have facilitated the sharing of teacher expertise as well as the sharing of resources. Systems and processes have been reviewed to incorporate key learnings identified in exchange visits and cultural immersions. Some examples are:

1. An eLearning Conference has been established across six schools where 20 teachers present and discuss pedagogy with teachers from other schools. As a result, there are now more staff contributing to professional networks and associations to build productive links with the wider community to improve teaching and learning.
2. Partnerships with higher education institutes have led in one case to the implementation of three new programs which are designed to have the threefold effect of teaching reading strategies in the classroom using academic reading material, improving student access to quality reading material and improving the quality of material read by the students. Improvements have been noted in all areas of concern and the programs have been shared with other schools.
3. In other higher education partnerships, teachers have focused on action research projects to improve student learning. The impact has empowered teachers because it equips them to make decisions about teaching and learning that are professionally relevant, personally meaningful, and effective in facilitating improved educational outcomes for students. One project involved 800 teachers across 31 regional schools forming professional learning communities and teams to implement their school annual action plan and report outcomes to a gathering of the school principals. Many schools have developed partnerships with other schools including several remote schools.
4. A Literature Festival was devised to encourage parents and the wider community to be involved in boys reading. Parents engaged with a panel of 3 renowned authors to discuss boys reading and gave advice on how the boys might become authors in the future.

Significant outcomes

- Sharing of resources
- Increase in professional expertise
- Increased research by teachers that focuses on student learning

Priority Area 5: Develop excellence in mentoring and coaching

Mentors/coaches have implemented programs to develop teacher reflective practice, for professional learning and skill development. The practice of mentoring/coaching has been used within professional learning communities and resulted in increased effectiveness, confidence and knowledge.

The impact is seen in an increased quality of teacher feedback informing practice and an improvement in goal setting based on collaborative evidence-based reflection and practice.

Priority Area 6: Development of aspiring leaders

Catholic school authorities have been very active in identifying future leaders and offering professionally challenging leadership programs such as:

- *Aspiring Small School Principals:* Particularly pertinent for a high percentage of rural and remote small schools
- *School Leadership:* Supports school leadership teams to develop high quality practice and shared leadership models
- *Middle leadership mentoring:* Supports school middle management teams to develop high quality practice

The impact of these programs is seen in the improvement in "change management" skills, improved resilience skills and improvement in leadership skills.



Next Steps

The Teacher Capability programs funded with the assistance of the Queensland Government and implemented at a local level to meet the needs of school communities are allowing meaningful and effective educational change to occur. Feedback indicates that teachers and school authorities are identifying those changes that have impacted positively on student learning and are sustainable, and significant.

As this round of initiatives comes to fruition, school authorities are working collaboratively with their schools to collect meaningful data and other information that provides a basis for further evaluating impact on student learning.

The important work done so far in enhancing teacher capability needs to be built on with further development.

The next steps include:

- identifying those projects that significantly impact on student learning
- supporting an emerging collegial learning environment
- identifying the information required to provide a comprehensive evidence base to inform whole of school / school authority approaches to improved student learning
- planning the collection and reporting of quality evidence that informs the learning process
- planning a process for collegial sharing of good practice that is cost effective.

While this report fulfils accountability requirements and provides a transparent record of activity and outcomes, it also clearly demonstrates the real benefits that come from the sharing of experiences and effective evidence-based evaluation to promote teaching excellence and deliver improved outcomes for students.

