

# 2015 First Year Experience (FYE) grants

## Embedding transition pedagogies in the curriculum

### Application form

Project applications (expressions of interest) must be submitted on this form.  
Applications must be submitted by **10 am Thursday December 4th, 2014.**

Applications are to be submitted by email to Kathy Egea, UTS FYE coordinator at [Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au](mailto:Kathy.Egea@uts.edu.au).

<b>Project applicant/team leader:</b>	
Name: Samantha Donnelly	Position: Sessional staff / Research officer
Contact email: Samantha.Donnelly@uts.edu.au	Contact phone no:...
Faculty: Design, Architecture and Building	
School/Department (if applicable): Architecture	
<b>Other applicants if team application:</b>	
Name: Jo Kinnaburgh	Position: Lecturer
Name:	Position:
Name:	Position:
<b>Title of project:</b>	
STRATEGIES FOR RETENTION AND SUCCESS OF TAFE GRADUATES IN ARCHITECTURE CORE FIRST YEAR SUBJECTS	
<b>First year subject /Transition subject involved:</b> 11211, 11209, 11214, 11208	
Architectural Design – Forming (Semester 1)	
Architectural Design – Making (Semester 2)	
Architectural Communications (Semester 1)	
Architectural Communications (Semester 2)	
<b>Endorsement by ACTING DEAN</b>	
I, ..... endorse this project application and confirm that embedding of the project outcomes in the subject will be supported by the Faculty.	
ACTING DEAN PETER MCNEIL	
Signed	
Date:	
<b>Have you received one or more FYE Grants previously?</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – please attach a progress summary (max 1 page) for any 2014 grant that is not yet completed. Reports from earlier grants will be taken into account.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	

**Project outline (max 1-2 pages) (See guidelines for detail)**

**A brief description of the aims and rationale for the project**

**2015 Widening Pathways Project Grant**

This proposal builds on a 2014 Widening Participation Project research grant, which examined the transition of TAFE students into the Schools of Design, Architecture and Built Environment. The research reviewed the success and retention of TAFE graduates in specific courses, the effectiveness of Credit Recognition and the formalization of Articulations to support new pathways into UTS. This proposal further expands on the research by developing support scaffolds and mediations for TAFE graduates as a targeted group, whilst they are actively engaged in Architectural and Design subjects over the course of an academic year.

**Background**

UTS has an established reputation for being one of the most closely aligned universities with TAFE schools in NSW, this is particularly true for the DAB Faculty. The number of TAFE graduates accepted into the courses in the Architecture School specifically has steadily risen over the last 3 years. The success and retention of these students is important to the Faculty for the diversity and strength of knowledge that these students bring to the school. Many are low SES students, who missed the required UAC scores to get into Undergraduate Degrees in the DAB. Usually, these students are living out of home and are working part time to cover expenses. Usually, these students also have industry experience, which marks them valuable in a studio setting in terms of knowledge base and diversity of experience. Transition for these students requires different scaffolding to those first year students directly transitioning from high school to university. Students interviewed during the research identified difficulties with working conceptually or dealing with “academic approaches”, as well as difficulties with working with less specific design outcomes (more independent and self directed research). Another issue was the apparent lack of support or direction – short, intense contact time with tutors, followed by long periods of “working it out solo”. This is compared to TAFE where the students work together for larger periods of time, several times a week, always with the assistance of tutors.

**Project Aims**

To expand upon the 2014 research grant, by creating a series of targeted online support sessions during the academic teaching period. The intent is to actively support and develop the skills of TAFE graduates so that the alignment of skills gained at TAFE and acquired skills in a first year learning experience are carefully scaffolded together. This is in line with *Learning 2014*'s agenda for linking what students can do with what they know to actual learning activities. Possible resources to provide would include online guides to drawing and modelling technologies, examples of past projects with clear explanation of their strengths and weaknesses and a more detailed explanation of assessment criteria with illustrative examples.

The support proposed is in response to student feedback from current TAFE graduates who have transitioned into first and second year courses. This support will have a flow on effect of improving and sustaining performance in other subjects in future years. It also has the potential to improve the performance of other students in the courses who have not transitioned from TAFE schools. Therefore, this project aims to create a support strategy with continuous benefit over the course of the undergraduate degree.

**First Year Curriculum principles for Transition Pedagogy addressed by the project (tick the appropriate box(es) Select the 1-2 strongest principles that you are addressing.**

Kift (2009) First Year Curriculum principles for Transition Pedagogy -



<http://fyhe.com.au/transition-pedagogy/fy-curriculum-principles/>

- Transition
- Diversity
- Engagement
- Assessment
- Design (broader focus)
- Evaluation and Monitoring (broader focus)

**Provide detail of how the selected principle(s) is (are) addressed in your project.**

#### **Transition**

*The curriculum and its delivery should be designed to be consistent and explicit in assisting students' transition from their previous educational experience to the nature of learning in higher education and learning in their discipline as part of their lifelong learning. (First Year Curriculum Principles: Program coordinator checklist, Australian Teaching and Learning Council)*

Strategic online resources can be made available as a series of explanatory videos which deal with the

Issues the TAFE graduates find difficult (for example, the conceptual thinking / abstract making processes, independent research and development of ideas). These can be made available online for both Architectural Design and Architectural Communications subjects so that students can access them when needed. Tutors will be made aware of these resources, so that they direct students who are in need of additional assistance during their course of study. The videos could either be sourced from content already available (lots of this out there) or provided by tutorial staff. This addresses the need for a balanced and well informed transition to university study as well as encouraging independent learning in a structured framework. The added benefit of this resource is that it can assist those students who are not graduates who are struggling with similar issues.

#### **Diversity**

*First year curriculum design should recognise that students have special learning needs by reason of their social, cultural and academic transition... The first year curriculum should take into account students' backgrounds, needs, experiences and patterns of study and few if any assumptions should be made about existing skills and knowledge. (First Year Curriculum Principles: Program coordinator checklist, Australian Teaching and Learning Council)*

This project aims to integrate the educational experience of TAFE graduates by working with their previous learning, to fold these attributes into the Architectural Design and Communications courses in a way that supports their learning, rather than being viewed as an impediment to creativity. From the research, TAFE graduates sometimes feel ostracized for an ability to draw / model in a far more developed way than other students. However, their abstract and conceptual thinking skills are regarded by some staff and other students as less developed in preference for "real world" or practice based approaches to design thinking.

A tutor induction session for first year tutors in Architectural Design and Communications will be introduced to raise the awareness of the Low SES and TAFE student circumstances. A single session (equivalent to a tutorial session) with presentations and discussions will be held early in the semester. This would be a paid session. This strategy will support the work of external tutors and ensure the quality of face to face teaching as well as ensuring that the tutors integrate these students well within the studio group. This addresses the need for recognitions of diversity of students and diversity of their experience and aspirations.

<b>Other University/Faculty/Course/Subject priorities addressed (optional)</b>
<p><b>Key project activities and timeline, including appropriate activities that engage the overall teaching team (if applicable)</b></p> <p>Tutor workshop – Week 1 of each semester, 1 session for Architectural Design and Communications subjects. (Tutors who teach both semesters need only attend once). Online workshops – 5 sessions, made available between weeks 2 to 6 of semester to have full benefit.</p>
<p><b>Your evaluation strategy ie how you will know that the project has been successful, with particular focus on the transition pedagogies that you have chosen, and how will you collect information to improve the outcomes?</b></p> <p>Monitoring success of former TAFE students in the design courses by quantitative analysis of grade data at completion of courses. Student feedback specifically addressing their transition into the Architectural Design and Communications first year course before and after the implementation of online programs for qualitative analysis.</p>

## Project Budget

\*NOTE: HOURLY RATE INCLUDES 17.06% ON COST

ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER	RATE / HR*	HRS	SUBTOTAL	TOTAL COST
Tutor Workshop	Sessional staff		\$50.38			
	11211 Architectural Design : Forming (S1)	12	\$50.38	12	\$604.56	
	11209 Architectural Design : Making (S2)	9	\$50.38	9	\$453.42	
	11214 Architectural Communications (S1)	10	\$50.38	10	\$503.80	
	11208 Architectural Communications (S2)	7	\$50.38	7	\$352.66	<b>\$1,914.44</b>
ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER	RATE / HR	HRS	SUBTOTAL	TOTAL COST
Online sessions	2 staff directing content	2	\$49.79	20	\$995.80	
	1 video production assistant	1	\$49.79	15	\$746.85	
						<b>\$1,742.65</b>
					<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,657.09</b>