



TRANSITION TO ONLINE TEACHING AND LEARNING AT UBSS

‘Like Ducks to Water’

Greg Whateley

Andrew West

Anurag Kanwar

September 2020

INTRODUCTION

UBSS prides itself on being a market leader in technology and welcomes the opportunity to respond. First, and paramount for UBSS, is to ensure that students are protected against the pandemic and to guarantee that the student academic experience is not significantly impacted.

Online delivery was established and planned for at UBSS well in advance of COVID19. This is evidenced by the submission of a Material Change in Modality for online delivery submitted to TEQSA in October 2019.

In March 2020 when TEQSA gave notice that all courses were to be online UBSS enlivened plans as prepared prior to submitting the Material Change. Some have said that UBSS took to online delivery '*like ducks to water*'.

Due to the changing circumstances of COVID19 UBSS acted with foresight as evidenced below -

Sequence of Events

Timing	Action
Week #8, Trimester 1	Final week of F2F teaching
Week #9, Trimester 1	Intensive Staff Training with TEAMS
Week #10, Trimester 1	Online teaching commenced with staff onsite
Weeks #13 and #14, Trimester 1	Online Examinations

Exam submissions online increased by 3% **moving to 84%** up from 81% in F2F invigilated mode.

Grade distributions were the same in T1, 2020 (on line) compared to T3, 2019 (F2F invigilated). The same aggregated progression rate of 79% was evident.¹

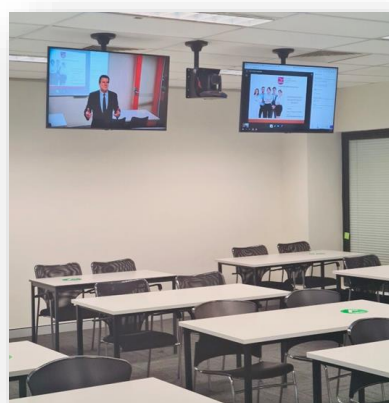
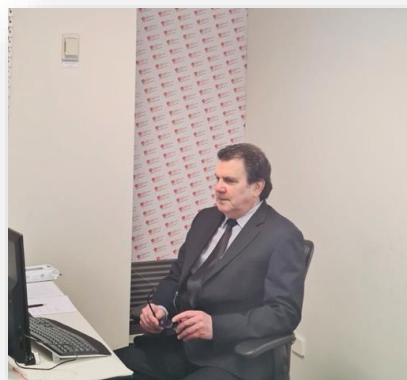
Grade	BACC	BBUS	MBA	UBSS
HD	6%	2%	9%	6%
D	16%	12%	13%	14%
C	25%	24%	24%	24%
P	37%	40%	31%	36%
F	16%	22%	23%	20%

¹ Report to UBSS Academic Senate, May 2020, Item #10

Timing	Action
Week #15, Trimester 1	Modified Assessment Model moving forward ²
Weeks #1 - 3, Trimester 2	Transition to Blackboard Collaborate tools
Weeks #14+, Trimester 2	Classroom enhancements to Studio level

The investment in technology and the focus on sustaining a high standard of teaching and learning was evidenced in the conversion of classrooms into lecture studios³ –

‘T2, 2020 got off to a positive start with staff migrating from TEAMS to **Blackboard Collaborate** – a platform designed specifically for online teaching. With the likelihood of online teaching continuing throughout 2020 (and possibly beyond) GCA has invested heavily in converting classrooms into **lecture studios**.



² As submitted and supported by the UBSS Academic Senate, May 2020 (Item #15)

³ Report to GCA Board of Directors, July 2020, Item #10.3

Timing	Action
Week #5, Trimester 2	Students surveyed regarding enthusiasm to return to campus ⁴

In Week #5, T2 2020 we conducted a student survey in an attempt to ascertain the level of enthusiasm to return to campus – in a hybrid manner and observant of Safe Work Australia regulations and conditions.



In brief, we had 495 responses with **28% keen to return** to hybrid F2F classes and **72% preferred to stay on line** (28:72).

Timing	Action
Week #6, Trimester 2	Memo released to staff and students highlighting intention of a hybrid return to campus (catering for the 28%) and selected F2F invigilation of examinations at a dedicated examination centre (associated with CPA and CA ANZ accreditation).

UBSS released an update to staff and students in Week #6 T2, 2020 flagging our intention to provide the *option* of a hybrid return to class catering for those interested and the intention to facilitate F2F invigilated exams for *selected accounting subjects* in Weeks #13 and #14.

⁴ Report to GCA Board of Directors, July 2020, Item #10.3

Timing	Action
Week #9, Trimester 2	Hybrid return to campus commenced with very low student response
Week #10, Trimester 2	Cancellation of hybrid return and invigilated exams

Circumstances in NSW changed and the threat of a second wave became more likely. Plans to continue hybrid return and invigilated exams were put on hold. Staff and students were informed accordingly.

Timing	Action
Week #10 and #11, Trimester 2	Student Feedback on Units Surveys (SFUs) were conducted electronically.
Week #12, Trimester 2	SFUs published ⁵

⁵ Report to UBSS Academic Senate, August 2020, Item #15

SFUs OUTCOMES T2, 2020

Extract from 'Message from the Executive Dean #107'

'Given the disruption to teaching and learning in Week #9 of T1, 2020 SFUs were not conducted.



The **T2, 2020** SFUs data analysis was completed by **Assistant Professor Kim Sharma** - many thanks as always. Kim provides incredibly quick turnaround on data and presents the outcomes in such a succinct and appropriate way.

We are delighted (again) with the outcomes given the extraordinary circumstances – and congratulate all involved. The transition from F2F teaching to online had its challenges – and our teaching and support teams have met those challenges head on – and I for one am incredibly grateful.

An overview of the T2, 2020 SFUs is best captured in the following table -

Survey Questions		BBus	BAcc	MBA
		T2 2020	T2 2020	T2 2020
Q1	The subject provided useful knowledge and skills	4.30	4.13	4.23
Q2	The learning outcomes were achievable	4.18	4.03	4.13
Q3	The subject workload was manageable	4.13	4.07	4.03
Q4	The subject helped to develop relevant professional skills such as problem solving and critical thinking	4.17	4.17	4.14
Q5	The lecturer was well prepared for each class	4.31	4.24	4.30
Q6	The lecturer provided useful feedback	4.25	4.21	4.18
Q7	The lecturer had a good knowledge of the subject matter	4.32	4.32	4.33
Q8	The lecturer used e-learning resources eg smartboard moodle in a way that aided learning in the subject	4.20	4.20	4.26
Q9	The lecturer was available to discuss learning problems outside of class time	4.12	3.99	4.02
Q10	The assessment requirements were clearly explained	4.26	4.09	4.20
Q11	Overall the teaching in the subject was of a high quality	4.26	4.13	4.16
Average		4.23	4.14	4.18

This represents the summary of the T2, 2020 results. The average for each of our three degrees is impressive (though ever so slightly down from T3, 2019). The only orange light (and sitting on 3.99 at that - .1 off a green light) was the Bachelor of Accounting Q9 – 'The lecturer was available to discuss learning problems outside of class time'.

Associate Professor Wayne Smithson has already developed a strategy going forward. I hasten to add – it is only .1 off a green light!

The overall aggregated response was **4.2** – above strategic plan target (4) and just below the 2019 aggregate of 4.3. I overviewed the most recent 11 trimesters (T2, 2016 – T3, 2019) and discovered the aggregated score was **4.2** over the five year period – talk about consistency!

Survey Questions		Bachelor of Business											
		T2 16	T3 16	T1 17	T2 17	T3 17	T1 18	T2 18	T3 18	T1 19	T2 19	T3 19	T2 20
Q1	The subject provided useful knowledge and skills	4.20	4.38	4.30	4.36	4.28	4.57	4.44	4.35	4.35	4.26	4.50	4.30
Q2	The learning outcomes were achievable	4.09	4.29	4.27	4.30	4.25	4.55	4.36	4.23	4.23	4.21	4.42	4.18
Q3	The subject workload was manageable	4.06	4.00	4.14	4.20	4.17	4.51	4.21	4.19	4.19	4.16	4.36	4.13
Q4	The subject helped to develop relevant professional skills such as problem solving and critical thinking	4.17	4.20	4.27	4.31	4.26	4.55	4.35	4.24	4.30	4.25	4.38	4.17
Q5	The lecturer was well prepared for each class	4.35	4.45	4.44	4.39	4.40	4.62	4.54	4.42	4.20	4.25	4.53	4.31
Q6	The lecturer provided useful feedback	4.29	4.37	4.35	4.30	4.32	4.56	4.47	4.33	4.33	4.23	4.48	4.25
Q7	The lecturer had a good knowledge of the subject matter	4.28	4.52	4.46	4.41	4.39	4.69	4.54	4.47	4.45	4.30	4.51	4.32
Q8	The lecturer used e-learning resources eg smartboard moodle in a way that aided learning in the subject	4.31	4.45	4.33	4.34	4.33	4.56	4.45	4.39	4.39	4.24	4.48	4.20
Q9	The lecturer was available to discuss learning problems outside of class time	4.13	4.28	4.18	4.27	4.14	4.55	4.37	4.24	4.53	4.20	4.42	4.12
Q10	The assessment requirements were clearly explained	4.27	4.28	4.28	4.32	4.27	4.63	4.41	4.34	4.33	4.17	4.40	4.26
Q11	Overall the teaching in the subject was of a high quality	4.30	4.37	4.31	4.28	4.29	4.52	4.45	4.37	4.32	4.30	4.46	4.26
AVERAGE		4.22	4.33	4.30	4.32	4.28	4.57	4.42	4.32	4.33	4.23	4.45	4.23

Survey Questions		Bachelor of Accounting											
		T2 16	T3 16	T1 17	T2 17	T3 17	T1 18	T2 18	T3 18	T1 19	T2 19	T3 19	T2 20
Q1	The subject provided useful knowledge and skills	4.15	4.43	4.16	4.36	4.18	4.26	4.27	4.34	4.34	4.25	4.38	4.13
Q2	The learning outcomes were achievable	4.05	4.39	4.10	4.30	4.07	4.25	4.17	4.32	4.32	4.23	4.26	4.03
Q3	The subject workload was manageable	3.95	4.09	4.10	4.20	3.98	4.17	4.11	4.21	4.21	4.13	4.23	4.07
Q4	The subject helped to develop relevant professional skills such as problem solving and critical thinking	4.10	4.32	4.15	4.31	4.04	4.20	4.20	4.29	4.10	4.22	4.29	4.17
Q5	The lecturer was well prepared for each class	4.26	4.48	4.27	4.39	4.16	4.29	4.29	4.41	4.30	4.26	4.25	4.24
Q6	The lecturer provided useful feedback	4.19	4.38	4.16	4.30	4.04	4.19	4.20	4.37	4.30	4.23	4.22	4.21
Q7	The lecturer had a good knowledge of the subject matter	4.29	4.36	4.25	4.41	4.18	4.34	4.33	4.48	4.20	4.31	4.29	4.32
Q8	The lecturer used e-learning resources eg smartboard moodle in a way that aided learning in the subject	4.24	4.46	4.22	4.34	4.11	4.29	4.25	4.43	4.20	4.26	4.31	4.20
Q9	The lecturer was available to discuss learning problems outside of class time	4.03	4.26	4.04	4.27	3.98	4.17	4.16	4.30	4.10	4.19	4.18	3.99
Q10	The assessment requirements were clearly explained	4.19	4.34	4.15	4.32	4.08	4.23	4.24	4.35	4.20	4.25	4.25	4.09
Q11	Overall the teaching in the subject was of a high quality	4.15	4.40	4.17	4.28	4.07	4.24	4.19	4.34	4.20	4.16	4.22	4.13
AVERAGE		4.15	4.35	4.16	4.32	4.08	4.24	4.22	4.35	4.22	4.23	4.26	4.14

Survey Questions		Master of Business Administration											
		T2 16	T3 16	T1 17	T2 17	T3 17	T1 18	T2 18	T3 18	T1 19	T2 19	T3 19	T2 20
Q1	The subject provided useful knowledge and skills	4.20	4.44	4.27	4.24	4.35	4.40	4.27	4.37	4.37	4.33	4.39	4.23
Q2	The learning outcomes were achievable	4.00	4.36	4.15	4.17	4.27	4.37	4.19	4.28	4.28	4.31	4.36	4.13
Q3	The subject workload was manageable	3.90	4.21	4.09	4.08	4.18	4.25	4.15	4.25	4.35	4.25	4.33	4.03
Q4	The subject helped to develop relevant professional skills such as problem solving and critical thinking	3.90	4.40	4.11	4.12	4.25	4.31	4.19	4.27	4.27	4.29	4.36	4.14
Q5	The lecturer was well prepared for each class	4.20	4.59	4.17	4.29	4.42	4.44	4.37	4.42	4.42	4.38	4.46	4.30
Q6	The lecturer provided useful feedback	4.10	4.44	4.19	4.17	4.31	4.33	4.26	4.32	4.50	4.28	4.38	4.18
Q7	The lecturer had a good knowledge of the subject matter	4.30	4.58	4.30	4.38	4.43	4.48	4.41	4.48	4.48	4.41	4.50	4.33
Q8	The lecturer used e-learning resources eg smartboard moodle in a way that aided learning in the subject	4.10	4.51	4.27	4.29	4.31	4.37	4.30	4.40	4.40	4.31	4.39	4.26
Q9	The lecturer was available to discuss learning problems outside of class time	4.00	4.26	4.13	4.12	4.20	4.20	4.11	4.21	4.25	4.24	4.34	4.02
Q10	The assessment requirements were clearly explained	4.00	4.51	4.17	4.22	4.28	4.38	4.26	4.34	4.35	4.35	4.40	4.20
Q11	Overall the teaching in the subject was of a high quality	4.10	4.41	4.09	4.18	4.26	4.32	4.23	4.31	4.36	4.27	4.40	4.16
AVERAGE		4.07	4.43	4.17	4.21	4.30	4.35	4.25	4.33	4.37	4.31	4.39	4.18

The overall UBSS aggregate - for T2, 2020 **of 4.2** out of a possible 5 - is very important. This is above Strategic Plan (KPI) target – again! We are close to student capacity in Sydney – so these outcomes are exceptionally good. This is also the first time we have measured our *on-line performance* – so the outcome is particularly satisfying. And, as mentioned, it is consistent now over 12 trimesters.

The recent research provided by **Associate Professor Andrew West** leans towards the fact that the larger you become the more difficult it is to maintain quality outcomes (i.e. QILT and SFUs). The sector is also reporting anticipated dips in student satisfaction levels – we remain on top of the game.

Individual subject outcomes are available to staff on their Moodle sites. A subject by subject analysis is sent to program Directors for discussion with individual staff.



Of special note – **Usman Sindhu** had created a revised target of 1200 student responses (given the peculiar circumstances of COVID19) – he delivered (yet again) with **1203** - a brilliant outcome!

Well done, Usman, and thank you.

Congratulations, again, to all involved. This remains a remarkable and sustained outcome.'

Timing	Action
Week #12, Trimester 2	Internal audit against TEQSA good practice guidelines was conducted ⁶
Week #13, Trimester 2	HEPP_QN Benchmarking findings on online delivery published ⁷

The UBSS approach to Online Learning

UBSS has developed a two pronged approach to online learning. The focus is and remains 'the students'.

UBSS has invested significant IT resources to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by online learning. What makes UBSS a market leader in the sector is the combination of state of the art resources coupled with passionate lecturers. The Executive Dean publishes daily updates for all staff on the particular nuances and experience of online delivery. In addition, UBSS remains one of the few providers to insist on lecturers delivering their lectures from the campus rather than their homes. This ensures that lectures are delivered in a scholastic and familiar environment for the students viewing and participating.

⁶ Report to UBSS Academic Senate, August 2020, Item #17

⁷ Report to UBSS Academic Senate, August 2020, Item #16

Coupled with this is the focus of the GCA Executive Management Team on ensuring that the UBSS online experience is in line with accepted industry practice. This is done in the following manner. Firstly, the Board of Directors receive ongoing IT updates from the IT Director on the state of resources and the like. Secondly, UBSS conducts internal audits with reporting lines back to the UBSS Executive Dean, GCA CEO and Academic Senate on the progress of online delivery.

The audit tool used is derived from TEQSA's Online delivery key considerations for Providers (April 2020) <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/latest-news/publications/online-delivery-key-considerations-providers>.

There is also a watching brief on the TEQSA website to alert when and if the resources are changed or updated.

The outcomes are best captured in the following traffic light report that has been reported to the UBSS Academic Senate –

Criteria	TEQSA reference guide	Action	Status	Responsible Officer(s)
	<i>Online learning good practice</i>			
Providing set of questions before class		Lecturers provide homework and questions for students before class.		Lecturers
Glossary of terms used for online learning (in class)		Glossary of terms is provided in the unit outline.		Lecturers
Students have access to technology (tablet, phone, laptop).		Students have access to computers, the material is also accessible on phones. Student lab is also open if students need PCs.		Student Services
Online readings available		Readings are available in Moodle. UBSS has moved away from hard copy resources.		Lecturers
Attendance is recorded promptly.		Lecturers are recorded in Moodle via the login page ¹ .		Lecturers
FAQ, YouTube, Ted Talk links, tables used		This is currently in the Moodle page for the individual unit.		IT/Lecturers
Use of Warm Up activities for students to get to know each other.		Students are put into small groups for their activities. Students are then given meet and greet activities as part of group (breakout).		Lecturers
Students are provided information on support services.		The support services are available on Moodle and the UBSS website. Students are also provided information during orientation.		Lecturers
Are lecturers available for questions after the structured learning?		Lecturers use the chat forum and queries are addressed at the break or the end of the class.		Lecturers

	<i>Enabling Staff to work with Online Learning</i>			
UBSS templates are used. Style guide		All slides are in the UBSS template.		PDs
Short Summative assessment		Webinars are used		Lecturers
Major assessment (catered for online)		Student learning notes are provided, with Q&A with summaries provided. Assessments have been changed where applicable.		Lecturers
How to get students engaged and to show up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate in short timely messages - Pictures (visuals) - Feedback is given early and often - Start off with a virtual tour (of the unit) 		Learning videos Questions for demonstration Self-study plans are provided		Lecturers and PDs
	<i>Student Experience</i>			
Support services clearly articulated		The support services are available on Moodle and the UBSS website. Students also provided information during orientation.		Deputy Dean (Student Service)
Aware of good online behaviour		While students are provided information on behaviour during orientation, the PD and Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee has formulated specific bulletins about online learning and required behaviours.		Exec Dean
How to contact the lecturer? Students are aware. E.g. Through chat forum or email. Choose one medium and stick to it		Lecturers contact details are on Moodle and in the unit outline. The chat function on Blackboard is utilised.		Lecturers

Material was mobile friendly		Anecdotal evidence has revealed that the material is accessed by students on their phone		Lecturers
	<i>Assessment Integrity</i>			
How are the exams invigilated? Require cameras on?		Exams are currently on Moodle due to COVID-19. They are not invigilated. An external source, Clifton, was found for examinations but due to the outbreak of COVID-19 it is not being used for T2. The requisite authorities (CPA) have been made aware of the current situation. Further investigation into the use of software for invigilation is being considered.		Exec Dean & Deputy Dean (Student Experience)
There are well structured assessments with questions and activities that are clearly articulated.		Comprehensive unit outlines and the high score in the SFU verifies that assessment requirements were clearly explained and the learning outcomes were manageable.		Lecturers
How is feedback communicated?		Lecturers provide feedback usually in the online quizzes, via chat and individual specific feedback is provided upon request. The high score in the SFU demonstrates that students are agreeable to this structure of feedback.		Lecturers
Academic Integrity Notices are published on the website		Plagiarism, penalties and what is expected of students in exams has been developed by the AIC. A notice to students has been sent out. Lecturers also use Turnitin if there is a suspicion of plagiarism.		PD
Assessments are open book, include self-reflection.		Assessments are open book and include critical reflections. Assessment requirements are explained to the student in the unit outline. This is evidenced by the high score in the SFU.		Lecturers

HEPP_QN Benchmarking Findings on Online Delivery

This internal review confirms the findings of the HEPP-QN external COVID 19 benchmarking project which was conducted in May 2020. This was conducted as a summary of Zoom meetings held with members of HEPP-QN to gauge the response from independent higher education providers to COVID19.

The focus groups occurred on 12th May, 2020 approximately 2 months after the COVID 19 restrictions occurred. There were two clusters of focus groups. One of the groups was based on *business schools* including the following 5 providers - Australian Institute of Business, Polytechnic Institute Australia, Russo business School, Universal Business School Sydney, and Western Sydney International College. The second cluster is based on 6 theological providers including Avondale College, Sheridan, CHC, Campion College, Eastern College and Alphacrucis College.

The 4 main areas covered in the focus group discussion were –

1. Governance and decision making to implement changes;
2. Student support provided;
3. Staff support provided;
4. Measures to ensure quality maintained.

As can be seen from the responses, UBSS conducted comparable decision making, staff and student support and implemented measures for quality assurance. One of the measures UBSS implemented that was *not* used by other providers was the use of practice exams for students. This may have a positive impact on the academic performance of students in Trimester 1, 2020 and again in T2, 2020 than otherwise may have been the case.

In response to recommendation 3 (below), the grade distribution project has been modified for this year. There is currently a HEPP-QN project into Grade Distribution v4, which compares grade distribution between trimester/semester 1 2019 with trimester/semester 1 2020 to identify the impact of academic performance of COVID19. The results of this project *will be available in November 2020*.

Summary and Consolidated Observations –

- Almost all providers moved to online only or mostly online delivery;
- The transition was achieved very quickly, usually through a Committee involving key stakeholders;
- The TEQSA checklist for online delivery was a useful tool and utilised by a number of institutions as a checklist or mechanism for improvement;
- Staff needs and training have been considered, particularly in the use of technology (e.g. Zoom and in the case of UBSS TEAMS and Blackboard Collaborate);
- Some institutions have changed their approach to assessment (e.g. changed group assessments to individual assessments) and grading or reviewed Fail grades;
- Students have been at the heart of initiatives with a significant focus on student support and engagement;
- Regular student surveys have been conducted;

- There is opportunity in the challenges.

Looking Forward –

- There will be some work to do managing students who dislike the online experience;
- Academic integrity remains in focus with the move to online assessment;
- Wellbeing of international students remains a concern;
- There is significant uncertainty in relation to Semester 2, 2020+.

Possible Recommendations –

- There was interest in the Student Engagement project so this should continue;
- We could reconvene the groups again with a focus on three areas -
 1. What were the results of student surveys and how have they modified practice?
 2. What about the transition back to on campus delivery? How are institutions planning and preparing for this?
 3. What was the impact on academic performance of the move to online due to COVID19?

Results for Trimester 2, 2020

Timing	Action
Week #15, Trimester 2	Investigation of proctoring invigilation options commenced
Week #15, Trimester 2	T2, 2020 Grade Review Committee Report published

Following is a summary of the results of T2, 2020, for the three programs at UBSS and the UBSS aggregate.

Grade	BACC	BBUS	MBA	UBSS
HD	5%	2%	3%	4%
D	15%	12%	16%	14%
C	24%	24%	31%	26%
P	38%	40%	32%	37%
F	18%	22%	18%	19%

The **aggregated progression rate for T2, 2020 is 81% (11 % above target) and 2% up from T3, 2019 and T2, 2019**. This indicates a continuing improvement in the performance of UBSS students across all programs. This improvement in performance in Trimester 2, 2020 -the first full online trimester delivered - shows the UBSS planning and online capabilities have been able to deliver a quality teaching and learning environment for UBSS students. UBSS continues to monitor these and other key indicators closely to ensure the best outcomes for UBSS students.

Conclusion

Evidenced through SFUs, grade distributions, benchmarking activity and alignment with TEQSA good practice guidelines, UBSS is very well placed to teach on line. UBSS has demonstrated capacity and capability to successfully deliver online as proposed in the Material Change of October 2019. The student experience remains positive.

Emertius Professor Greg Whateley is Executive Dean, UBSS and an Executive Director, GCA

Associate Professor Andrew West is the Director, Centre for Entrepreneurship

Anurag Kanwar is the GCA Director of Compliance