

# CQUniversity

## ***‘Find your place in LACE’***

**Val Cleary (Head of services, ALC)**

**Academic Language and Learning conference  
Geelong, 1-3 November, 2017**



**BE WHAT YOU WANT TO BE**  
**cqu.edu.au**

# By the end of this session you will have a better understanding of ...

## The LACE program- Language and Cultural Exchange for recent migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

- What is it?
- How did it come about?
- Where is it at?
- How can it move forward?
- How other universities (**YOU!**) can get involved.

# CQUniversity

- 30,000 students
- 25 campuses and locations Australia-wide



# CQUniversity

- Highest ratio of students from low socio-economic, mature age, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and first-in-family backgrounds (Australia's most inclusive university)
- Top two per cent of universities worldwide (Times Higher Education 2017)
- Australia's first and only Changemaker Campus-global social innovation group Ashoka U

# Engagement at CQUniversity- strategic level

- **Goal:** To become Australia's most engaged university by 2020
- Change in institutional focus from educators and research generators to orchestrators of social change (Watson, Hollister, Stroud & Babcock 2011)

# Engagement at CQUniversity- strategic- personal level

3 pillars of engagement	Academic learning advisor contract
Engaged Learning and Teaching	60%: teaching
Engaged research	20% research
Engaged service	20% service

# Engaged service

- Promote and encourage staff **to share their expertise with the wider community** by participating with members of community groups, committees, boards and professional bodies
- Involve **sharing institutional resources with external communities** and stakeholders e.g. using CQUniversity facilities





Figure 1: Syrian refugees in Australia  
Source: The Australian 2014

12,000 humanitarian places-refugees from Syria and Iraq



# The Six Stage Model of Social Innovation



(Murray, Caulier-Grice & Mulgan 2010)

# Stage 1: Prompts

## Factors which highlight the need for innovation

- CQUniversity's expectations for staff to engage
- Humanitarian crisis

## Diagnosing the problem

- Refugees, asylum seekers and other 'new Australians' need language support, particularly those ineligible for government funded English classes

## Formulating the question

- How could ALA skills and the universities' physical space be best used to help develop 'new Australians' communication skills, language competence and cultural awareness to help them get by in Australia?

# Stage 2: proposals and ideas

## Where?

- Sydney campus

## Who?

- Recent migrants ineligible for government funded AMEP program
- 3 ALA advisors
- Partnership with Mission Australia – AMEP provider NSW

## What?

- Language lessons based on tutor materials from the AMEP program
- Two levels- beginner and intermediate
- First class to provide lower level students with functional English practice and settlement skills; the second class to develop higher level students' communicative competence

## When?

- 12 week terms ( 2 hours each Friday for each group)

# Stage 3: Prototypes, pilot and trials

- Started in July 2015- 2 students from Mission Australia
- Now completed 8 terms-over 50 people from 12 countries
- Offered to 34 organisations- primary partners Mission Australia (AMEP provider), Newtown Asylum Seeker Centre, Settlement Services International and STARTTS
- Trialled in Melbourne in partnership with Footscray Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Term reduced from 12 weeks to 10 weeks to 8 weeks
- Curriculum updated each term

# Curriculum- beginners

AMEP materials → General English  
Conversation-daily transactions and themes  
Cultural understanding

	Date	Topic
Week One	Friday 17 July	Getting to know each other and the university
Week Two	Friday 24 July	Money
Week Three	Friday 31 July	Education
Week Four	Friday 7 August	Health
Week Five	Friday 14 August	Housing
Week Six	Friday 21 August	A new life
Week Seven	Friday 28 August	Transport
Week Eight	Friday 4 September	Work
Week Nine	Friday 11 September	Environment
Week Ten	Friday 18 September	Leisure
Week Eleven	Friday 25 September	Law
Week Twelve	Friday 2 October	Term review

# Curriculum- Intermediate class

AMEP materials → General English → IELTS

Work related → IELTS themes

Cultural understanding

Week One	Friday 17 July	Getting to know each other and the university
Week Two	Friday 24 July	Present/past employment/future goals
Week Three	Friday 31 July	Job advertisements
Week Four	Friday 7 August	Employment and working conditions
Week Five	Friday 14 August	Applying for work- job application forms
Week Six	Friday 21 August	Writing a covering letter
Week Seven	Friday 28 August	Covering letter- review and practice
Week Eight	Friday 4 September	Writing a CV
Week Nine	Friday 11 September	CV review and practice
Week Ten	Friday 18 September	Job Interviews
Week Eleven	Friday 25 September	At work
Week Twelve	Friday 2 October	At work

see sample curriculum



# LACE Testimonials

How did you feel before  
the classes?

*"Hopeless"*

How do you feel now?

*"Hopeful"*

I have been to many refugee  
classes in Sydney and this is  
the best. The presentations,  
the teacher, the content, just  
everything is so useful and  
helpful. Thank you from my  
heart for the opportunity to  
learn, for showing you care  
and for doing it for free.

It takes my  
English to the  
next level.

I want to  
integrate into  
society here. I  
am glad to see  
my progress.  
Thank you!

I do not have confidence and cannot  
speak language. I am not feeling good on  
the first day, but now I have a little bit  
confidence and I can speak English a little  
and I am feeling better than before.

Before I started this  
class I was so ashamed  
of my English that I  
covered the TV. Now I  
watch the news to  
improve my listening  
skills and build  
vocabulary. I was also  
unhappy being so reliant  
on my daughter but now  
I am confident enough to  
do my own shopping and  
banking and that makes  
me happy.

I love Australia. I want  
to socialize with  
others. This class  
helps me which is  
pretty cool.

I was very excited on the  
first day because I have  
not communicated with so  
many different lecturers  
that speak different  
languages and have  
different backgrounds.  
English is a headache for  
us, but we want to keep  
learning.

Lecturers are full of experience  
and extremely patient.

Lecturers are responsible and full  
of passion.

Lecturers are active and their  
attitude and teaching styles are  
very good.

I like lecturers here, but I am  
even more into the environment  
of the University.





# LACE Testimonials

## Staff:



"I enjoy teaching into the LACE program because the students are really keen to learn and we all have a lot of fun. More importantly, I feel that the English lessons we provide represent their desire to connect with the greater community. Many of them have told me (when I try to justify my 'English Only Policy' in class time) that they rarely get a chance to practice or learn English other than in the LACE classes - so they really value the opportunity. It gives them more confidence in their daily lives to interact in English. It is the essence of community engagement" - Ed

"I started the LACE program as I wanted to show asylum seekers and refugees that they were welcomed and valued. Facilitating the program has been a lot of work but the rewards have been manifold. It has broadened my understanding of issues relating to immigration and brought me into contact with people whose bravery and courage I am in awe of. It has given me the opportunity to use my skills to empower others to realise their potential and live a more fulfilling and integrated life. This feeling that I am making a real difference in a real world context inspires me to not only continue the program, but to build on its current growth, so that it engages as many people as possible and helps them on their journey to be what they want to be." - Ruth



"Participating in the LACE program is strengthening my sense of purpose about my role as a teacher. Having taught English for many years, the extension of the benefits of my teaching beyond the classroom and into the community has never been clearer. Improving the conditions of other human beings and especially in the context of the current world refugee crisis, is both empowering and rewarding." - Gabby



## Partners:

"The classes we run at the centre only cover Monday to Thursday, so to be able to refer asylum seekers to a course on Fridays has been really useful. Everyone has returned very enthusiastic about the classes! When the 8 weeks is over, we often get requests asking when the next course will start. I think a bonus of them being in the city is that it gives them another chance to mix with others and make some more connections to the city. Often once asylum seekers have tried a course outside our community centre, it gives them more confidence to approach other classes too, so it's a good stepping stone while they wait for access to other services. Once granted refugee status, there is government support for English lessons, but until that time there is not much available. It is critical to get asylum seekers engaged in learning English early, especially as the process of seeking asylum is so long and it is easy to get discouraged. These classes therefore have helped to fill a gap and we much appreciate them.

Thank you" - The Asylum Seekers Centre: Jenny Tracey- Education and social support service manager



Nsw Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

"Many of my clients have been exposed to traumatic events including torture and severe human rights violations. Arriving in Australia they have to deal with this pain whilst also coming to terms with a new language, culture and systems. CQU English classes are a great initiative as they allow participants to branch out of their routine and build contacts and confidence which contributes significantly to their mental health. Thank you!" - Atia Tani: Counsellor- STARTTS



# Stage 4: Sustaining

- Term 7- 8: cohort changed- almost exclusively attended by established Chinese migrants.
- The original target group of refugees and asylum seekers were not engaging.
- For the project to remain viable, it needs to address the social need originally identified; it needs to be adapted based on **evaluation**

# Stage 4: Feedback from target audience

- No longer need class- jobs/full time study/other
- Too far to travel into CBD
- Too expensive to travel into CBD
- Too generic; they need more personalised help



# Stage 4: Response

- More targeted community partnerships
- Sessions in community facilities
- More flexibility re. sessions- individual student consultations/classes as needed
- More volunteers needed- cross institutional approach
- ‘Generative diffusion’- Stage 5.

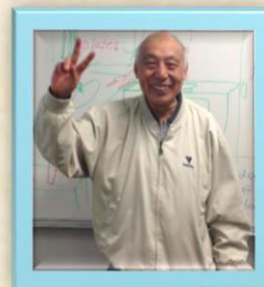
# Conclusion

- LACE evolved as a program to fill a need
- Successful- attendance and feedback
- Incredibly rewarding and enjoyable
- Needs to be adapted
- Opportunity to give back, satisfy engagement obligations and for research

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# LACE Program Photo Wall:

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# Questions





# References

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