

Learning Centre UNSW

Annual Report 2002

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Statement of Purpose

The Learning Centre aims to:

- Create a place where students and colleagues are supported in their independent pursuit of learning;
- Work with students to develop strategies to allow them to explore and fulfil their academic potential;
- Work closely with colleagues in faculties, schools and other units.

Executive Summary of Student Participation in Learning Centre Services at UNSW in 2002

Language, learning and communication skills support for enrolled students is provided by The Learning Centre in two modes:

- Centrally-located support
- Faculty-based support

A total of **1438** students made use of the centrally-located services at least once in 2002. A more detailed breakdown of the student demographics and support accessed is provided in Section 3.

From the available data, the total number of students accessing skills support delivered to the Schools and Faculties in 2002 on at least one occasion was at minimum **1897** (see Section 4).

In addition, skills support was delivered through a number of pre-sessional and preparatory programs to a total of **597** students (see Section 5). This figure does not include the several hundred students reached through Learning Centre inputs into the Uniprep program (see Section 12.1.1)

Several thousand students also accessed learning resources through the free brochures available to all students in print or on The Learning Centre's website (see Section 6).

In 2000, 1939 students accessed The Learning Centre at least once. This figure represented 5.7% of the total student enrolment (excluding ADFA). In 2001, 2847 students (7.9% of all enrolled students—35 903 excluding ADFA) accessed Learning Centre support on at least one occasion. In 2002, **3335** students accessed support in a face-to face mode on at least one occasion, representing 8.5% of all 39 029 enrolled students (excluding ADFA).

1. Introduction

The Learning Centre's strategic goals for 2002 developed and extended those of the previous year:

To continue the development of targeted programs and learning resources both generic and subject specific, which address students' language, communication and study skills needs at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

To continue the career development focus of Learning Centre staff development; to further develop reward and recognition initiatives and recruit high-level staff when possible.

To maintain quality assurance processes within The Learning Centre's core services.

To continue to participate in university-wide initiatives to improve the quality of learning and teaching.

To develop appropriate resources to support the academic literacy needs of students learning online.

To continue to build The Learning Centre's profile.

To maintain liaison with student services units on campus to provide an exemplary educational experience for UNSW students.

The Learning Centre reached a greater number of students in 2002 than in 2001. In 2000, 1939 students accessed The Learning Centre at least once. This figure represented 5.7% of the total student enrolment (excluding ADFA). In 2001, 2847 students (7.9% of all enrolled students—35 903 excluding ADFA) accessed Learning Centre support on at least one occasion. In 2002, 3335 students accessed support in a face-to face mode on at least one occasion, representing 8.5% of all 39 029 enrolled students (excluding ADFA).

Attendance at centrally-based services rose by 19% over 2001 and the academic skills support provided to Faculties also reflected increased demand. A formative evaluation of students' perceptions of the generic skills workshop program carried out in 2001 reported generally positive student views. Student suggestions were taken into consideration in the 2002 program planning and delivery.

Patricia Swift, who had been on secondment to Information Services, resigned and Tania Ferfolja was appointed to the vacant Learning Adviser position late in 2002. Dominic Fitzsimmons and Linda Burnett were appointed in a continuing, part-time capacity against the vacant Level 7 position. Pam Mort spent six months as an ITET fellow developing her knowledge and skills in information

technology and educational innovation. The fellowship provided funding to replace her during her absence and Helen Farrell, who took leave of absence from the University of Western Sydney, replaced Pam and contributed significantly to The Learning Centre's programs. As Helen worked three days each week, Joseph Indaimo replaced Pam for the two remaining days of the week as well as teaching on a number of workshop programs. Lyn Hallion took maternity leave in the first part of the year.

Having a full staff complement for the first time since 1999 enabled The Learning Centre to increase the number of students reached and develop new programs. The Centre's permanent and casual staff once again demonstrated their exceptional commitment to supporting UNSW students.

New initiatives included:

- Research Management for PhD students in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine
- Thesis Writing for Arts and Social Sciences research students
- Oral Communication Skills for postgraduate Demonstrators in Chemical Sciences
- Postgraduate Coursework day
- Thesis Writing for Arts and Social Sciences and Science, Engineering, Medical Sciences and the Built Environment research students over two consecutive Saturdays

The Learning Centre's profile on campus continued to grow with participation in numerous activities (see Section 12 in particular). Learning Centre involvement in the initiatives of the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) to enhance the student learning experience through improving the quality of teaching also grew in the course of the year. These initiatives are described in Section 8.

Close liaison with other student services helped to improve the overall student experience. Following up on the positive feedback from the AUQA report, the Heads of Student Services requested a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Hume, to discuss its specific recommendations. He indicated that he would ask the group to provide input into the 2003 planning process.

Internationally, the Director was invited to deliver a keynote address at the CLESOL conference in Wellington, New Zealand. She also visited the Student Learning Centre at the University of Auckland.

2. Staff

Director

Sue Starfield, BA MA PhD *Wits*, Lèsl Mèsl DEA DPFE *Paris III*

Learning Advisers

Linda Burnett, BA *Adel.*, M.LITT.*UNE* (part-time)

Dominic Fitzsimmons, BALLB (Hons) PhD *UNSW* (part-time)

Helen Farell, BA *Syd*, MA *Macquarie*, DipEd *Catholic College of Education Sydney* (on secondment for 6 months)

Gwyn Jones, BA *WLU*, BEd *Tor*, MAEdAdmin CertTESOL *UNSW*

Joseph Indaimo, BA (Hons) *Curtin*, Grad.Dip Law *Murdoch*, MA *UWA* (part-time)

Pamela Mort, BA DipProfArtStud. *City Art Institute*, GradDipEd *Nepean C.A.E.*, MA *Syd.*

Lyn Hallion, BA DipEd MEd Cert TESOL *UNSW* (part-time)

Tania Ferfolja, BEd *Syd*, MA *UNSW*

Administrative Officers

Valerie Caulcutt

Coralie Venus, BA (Hons) *UNSW*, Dip T (Prim) *SA* (Independent Learning Centre)

Publications & Web Officer

Tracey-Lee Downey, Design Cert *Syd I.T.*

Receptionist

Lagi Puni

Casual Tutors

UOSS

Linda Burnett

Ian Collinson

Nick Connor

Andrew Watts

Shivaun Weybury

APP

Linda Burnett

Ian Collinson

Farah Magrabi

Anne Phillips

Workshops

Bronwyn Phillips
Pamela Karantonis

Writing Assistants

Antira Adamedes
Nicole Barakat
Madeline Blamires
Sean Blamires
Indra Budiahardjo
Ian Collinson
Jade Gan
Shazhad Haider
Daniel Hanafi

Meredith Hughes
Farah Magrabi
Vincent Ndinisa
Marina Pozzi
Geoff Quick
Saskia Rogers
Barrett Skuthorpe
Leighana Thornton
Luisa Webb

Law Peer Tutors

Costa Argyrou
Katharine Bagot
Alix Cameron
Simon Cowan
Victoria Ann
Davidson
Jui-Chun Cally Fang
Nigel Firth
Eamon Frayne
Edward Gomes
Melissa Good
Chris Hartley
Denise King
Tram Quynh Nguyen
Johanna o' Rourke

Timothy Perry
Tai Minh Phan
Sandy Pintamalli
Melinda Roylett
Mohammed Seck
Timothy Turton
Daniel Tynan
Frances Voon
Linda Wang
Rochmad Agung
Widodo
Sarah Yap
Mi Zhou
Tai Phan

3. Centrally-based Learning and Language Support for Students

The Writing Assistant program, the generic skills workshops and the resources available for students to consult in the Independent Learning Centre (ILC) comprise the centrally-delivered support provided to students by The Learning Centre. Support delivered directly to the Faculties and Schools is described in Section 4. Tables 3.1, 3.2. and 3.3 provide a breakdown of registration at all central Learning Centre activities by gender, English language status and program level. The numbers reflect a student's initial registration for either a consultation or a workshop and not the total number of workshops or consultations attended per student. The total number of students attending at least once in one of these two Centres was 1390. This represents a 20.8% increase over 2001. In addition, 48 international students attended more intensive on-going language support (see 3.3 and 3.4).

Table 3.1 Attendance by gender at central Learning Centre support

	<i>Writing Consultations</i>	<i>Generic workshops & ILC resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
Female	294	511	805
Male	163	406	569
Not advised	16	-	16
Total	473	917	1390

Table 3.2 Attendance by English language status at central Learning Centre support

	<i>Writing Consultations</i>	<i>Generic workshops</i>	<i>Total</i>
ESB	44	276	320
NESB	269	641	910
Not advised	160		160
Total	473	917	1390

Table 3.3 Attendance by program level at central Learning Centre support

	<i>Writing Consultations</i>	<i>Generic workshops</i>	<i>Total</i>
U/Grad	260	322	582
P/Grad	157	571	728
Not known/other	56	24 (staff)	80

Total	473	917	1390
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3.1 Writing consultations

Any student may make an appointment to see a Writing Assistant to discuss an assignment on which they are working. Writing Assistants are Senior students trained by The Learning Centre. They give feedback on the organisation and structure of students' writing but do not proof-read or correct minor grammatical errors.

A total of 908 appointments took place in 2002. As 473 students registered for a consultation, a number obviously made use of the service on more than one occasion. Not all students chose to provide all details on the registration form. Table 3.4 provides a breakdown by Faculty of students who attended. The larger number of Arts and Social Sciences students making use of the service can be seen to reflect the typical nature of assignments in the Faculty.

Table 3.4 Writing assistance by Faculty—each student once

<i>Faculty</i>	<i>No of Students</i>	<i>% of students</i>
AGSM	12	2.5
Arts & Social Sciences	138	29
Built Environment	23	5
COFA	74	15.6
Commerce & Economics	48	10
Engineering	57	12
Law	18	4
NIDA	2	0.4
Medicine	36	7.6
Science	34	7
Not advised	31	6.5
Total	473	100

3.2 Generic Skills Workshops and Independent Learning Centre (ILC) Resource Access

A total of 917 students attended at least one of the academic skills workshops run by The Learning Centre and/or accessed learning and language support resources available in the ILC. Table 3.5 provides a breakdown of attendance by Faculty, while Table 3.6 shows attendance by workshop type. The various academic writing workshops continued to be very well attended and there was a continuous demand for pronunciation and conversation workshops. More critical thinking workshops were offered and were well attended. Table 3.6 shows a total of 1415 workshop attendances, indicating that a number of students would have attended more than one workshop.

In 2002, as a result of feedback from the 2001 Evaluation, support for postgraduate students was increased substantially and more courses were offered in the early evening to cater for working students. In addition, two major weekend initiatives took place:

3.2.1 Postgraduate Coursework day

Postgraduate coursework day took place on Saturday 23 March 2002. As many postgraduate coursework students experience difficulty attending workshops offered during weekdays, it was decided to offer a suite of workshops on a Saturday early in Session One. Workshops were offered on:

- Writing a Critical Review
- Advanced Reading Skills
- Essay Writing, Presentation Skills
- PowerPoint
- Word for Large Documents

In addition, the Library ran a workshop on using databases, Counselling ran a session on balancing work and study and Careers and Employment offered a career planning workshop. In total, 96 students, drawn from all Faculties, attended.

3.2.2 Thesis Writing for Research Students

Thesis Writing for Research Students comprised two strands:

- Arts and Social Sciences
- Engineering, the Sciences, Medical Sciences and the Built Environment

These covered the writing of all the key sections in a research thesis. In the afternoons, sessions were offered by Counselling on *Communicating with your Supervisor* and by the Library on using *Endnote* as a research tool. A total of 71 students attended.

Table 3.5 Attendance at generic skills workshops & ILC resource usage by Faculty (including PG coursework day & thesis writing workshops)

<i>Faculty</i>	<i>No of Students</i>	<i>% of students</i>
AGSM	5	.5
Arts & Social Sciences	218	24
Built Environment	75	8
COFA	24	3
Commerce & Economics	167	18
Engineering	211	23
Law	25	3
Medicine	59	6
Science	142	15
Sub-total	926	
Students in 2 Faculties/others	-9	
Total	917	100

The total number of student attendances at central Learning Centre support in 2002 was 2323 (see Table 3.6). This figure accounts for students attending consultations or workshops on more than one occasion.

Table 3.6 Total number of student attendances at central Learning Centre support in 2002

<i>Writing consultations</i>	<i>Generic workshops & ILC resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
908	1415	2323

Table 3.7 Attendance at Generic Skills workshops by workshop type

<i>Type of Workshop</i>	<i>Total Attendance over year</i>
Academic Writing for Postgraduates	42
Academic Writing for Undergraduates	52
Advanced Writing Development for Postgraduates	21
Advanced Writing Practice	23
Advanced Writing Program for Postgraduates	14
Applying Grammar	63
Conversation Practice	137
Critical & Creative Thinking	11
Critical Review	42
Critical Thinking	28
Developing Critical Arguments for Postgraduates	28
Developing Critical Arguments for Undergraduates	8
Editing Practice	13
Essay Writing	21
Essay Writing for Postgraduates	12
Essay Writing for Undergraduates	24
From Go to Whoa	23
General Writing Development	15
Intro to MS Word	4
Listening & Notetaking from Lectures	17
Managing PG Reading	50
MS Word for Large Documents	67
MS Word Intermediate	5
Polishing Pronunciation	128
Powerpoint	40
Practise Your Paraphrasing	3
Presentations	73
Referencing	23
Report Writing	36

The Art of Academic Listening & Notetaking	8
Thesis Proposals	12
Thesis Writing for Arts & Social Sciences	39
Thesis Writing for Sciences	11
The University Essay	56
Tips for Improving Exam Techniques	3
Undergraduate Reading	30
Writing an Honours or Undergraduate Thesis	11
Writing Conference Papers	16
Writing Practice	10
Writing to Avoid Plagiarism	29
Sub-Total	1248
<i>Weekend Workshops</i>	
Postgraduate Coursework Day	96
Thesis Writing for Research Students—Arts & SS	38
Thesis Writing for Research Students—Sciences & Engineering	33
TOTAL	1415

3.2.3 Concurrent support REGS5270

Language support is offered to international postgraduate students who are admitted with English entry-level scores below the UNSW minimum. Fourteen students attended the 28-hour course over fourteen weeks in Session One, and seven were registered in Session Two.

3.2.4 Talk, Exchange, Listen & Learn (TELL)

The TELL program offered weekly classes in language and communication skills to international postgraduates in a small group environment. Fifteen students attended in Session One and twelve in Session Two.

4. Faculty-Based Programs

4.1 Arts & Social Sciences

4.1.1 Thesis Writing for Research Students

Thesis Writing for Arts and Social Sciences research students was offered for the first time and proved to be very popular. The seven-week course, which ran for two hours each week on a Thursday morning, was attended by 39 students in total. Part-time students unable to attend during the week then requested access to the workshops, so it was decided to offer the program again on two consecutive Saturdays in August.

4.1.2 Politics and International Relations

In Session Two, ten students attended a two-hour essay writing workshop for postgraduate Masters coursework students in International Relations.

A one-hour lecture on note-taking in lectures was offered to about eighty first-year Politics students in Session Two.

4.1.3 Social Sciences and Policy

The Learning Centre ran four workshops in the Honours Thesis Workshop program for twelve Social Science and Policy Honours students. These covered:

- writing the introduction;
- critical thinking;
- organising the thesis;
- MS Word for large documents.

4.1.4 Sociology

Word for Large Documents was run for the Sociology Honours students with ten students attending.

4.2 Built Environment

Ten Interior Design students attended a one-hour workshop on critical thinking.

In Session Two, a 1.5 hour workshop on thesis writing was offered to a group of fifteen Honours students undertaking a research thesis in Landscape Architecture.

A three-hour workshop on strategies for successful students was run in conjunction with the Counselling Unit for the Masters in

Industrial Design program. Twenty students attended, and topics covered included

- writing processes and strategies;
- thesis writing;
- using feedback as a learning tool;
- developing assertive communication styles
- managing conflict.

4.3 College of Fine Arts (COFA)

The Learning Centre participated in a discussion panel on Research Skills for Design students as part of COFA's research week in Session One.

A one-hour session on APA referencing was run for fifty students in the School of Art Education.

In Session Two, ten Honours students in Art History and Design attended a two-hour workshop. Topics covered include:

- managing a project;
- working with a supervisor;
- structuring a thesis ;
- the writing process.

In Sessions One and Two, fourteen Design and Fine Arts Masters research students attended three two-hour workshops on:

- structuring a thesis;
- academic style;
- forming research aims;
- the writing process.

4.4 Commerce

A one-hour lecture on preparing and organising poster presentations was offered to sixty undergraduate students in Customer Relationship Management (MARK1014).

4.5 Engineering

4.5.1 Civil & Environmental

In Session One, two lectures on report writing and oral presentation skills were delivered to 120 first year students.

Twenty fourth-year students attended four hours over two weeks on doing poster presentations and oral presentations in Session One.

In Session One, two hours on teamwork skills for 75 fourth-year students were offered over two weeks. A member of the Counselling Unit jointly ran this workshop.

In Session Two, a two-hour lecture on oral presentation skills for 136 first-year students was delivered.

4.5.2 Chemical Engineering & Industrial Chemistry

In Session One, six hours on effective group work and oral presentation skills were offered to three groups of first-year INDC students (a total of 75). These classes made up the communication component of the course CEIC1010.

In Session Two, sixteen hours of classes for twelve third-year industrial chemistry students were delivered, and covered report writing and oral communication skills. These classes were part of the course INDC3110.

CEIC8312 is a six unit credit-bearing course for postgraduate research students which covers skills in advanced academic writing such as writing thesis proposals and literature reviews, writing for publication as well as oral presentation skills and research management. In Session Two, 23 students were enrolled.

4.5.3 Computer Science

Comp9910 is a six units of credit course for postgraduate research students that covers advanced reading and writing skills including proposals and literature reviews, journal articles and oral communication. There were 27 students enrolled in Session Two.

4.5.4 Electrical Engineering & Telecommunications

In Session One, lectures of one hour each on report writing and oral communications were offered to 350 first-year students.

In Session Two, fifteen first-year students who failed the communication component in Session One were referred to the fourteen-hour supplemental program in report writing, referencing and oral presentation skills run by The Learning Centre.

4.5.5 Mechanical & Manufacturing

In Session One, one hour on assignment writing at university was offered to 230 first-year students.

In Session Two, a three-hour lecture on thesis structure and the writing process was run for 130 fourth-year students in MECH4001.

4.5.6 Mining

A two-hour session on writing a literature review for sixteen fourth-year students was run in Session One.

4.6 Law

The Learning Centre continued to run the training program for the Law Peer Tutor program. Dominic Fitzsimmons held weekly meetings with all Peer Tutors over a three-week period at the beginning of the year, liaised regularly about the program with the Law School coordinator and tutors, and set up an email discussion list for all tutors.

A workshop on English language was organised at the beginning of each session for about twenty new international postgraduate students.

4.7 Medicine

4.7.1 Communication Skills for First-Year Students

An average of five students attended a weekly one-hour communication skills workshop from week three to week thirteen in Session One and continued in Session Two. The Faculty was very pleased with the students' performance in their courses.

4.7.2 Masters of Public Health & Masters in Health Systems Management

The Learning Centre Academic Skills Program was combined for students in the Masters of Public Health program and the Masters in Health Systems Management in Session Two. Twelve students attended the thirteen-week course for two hours each week.

4.7.3 Research Management for PhD Students

A new program called *Research Management for PhD Students* was put in place in the School of Public Health and Community Medicine to provide ongoing support for the research students. Eleven students met for two hours each week with a Learning Adviser during both sessions. The program was very positively received by the students.

4.8 Science

Several new initiatives took place in the Faculty of Science.

4.8.1 Biological, Earth & Environmental Sciences

In Session One, four hours of exam writing skills workshops were offered to 120 second-year students.

4.8.2 Chemical Sciences

A new 21-hour program that ran over fourteen weeks was developed for postgraduate Chemistry demonstrators to assist them in developing their oral communication and facilitation skills. Twelve students attended the course in Session One.

4.8.3 *Entrepreneurs in Science*

A two-hour workshop on writing research articles was run for fifteen students in this program.

4.8.4 *Food Sciences*

In a collaborative teaching and learning resources development project which aims to develop students' oral communication skills and was part of a First-Year Experience grant (see Section 8), Gwyn Jones and Julian Cox of Food Sciences team-taught 85 students for four hours per week over fourteen weeks.

A series of eight, 1.5 hour-long workshops on thesis writing was held for seventeen research students in Session Two.

4.8.5 *Pathology*

A lecture on presentation skills was given to eighty fourth-year pathology students. This was followed by a meeting with each of the twenty groups of students as they prepared for their group presentations.

5. Pre-Sessional and Preparatory Programs

The Learning Centre provides several pre-sessional and preparatory programs as described below. A total of 597 students attended these programs in 2002.

5.1 Indigenous Pre-Law Program

Thirteen indigenous students attended the 29-hour academic skills component of the Indigenous Pre-Law Program offered by The Learning Centre in January. The academic skills course was completely redeveloped and delivered in a new extended format, which was very positively evaluated by the participants.

5.2 Pre-Med

Eight students attended the twenty-hour academic skills component of the three-week preparatory program for prospective indigenous medical students.

5.3 BEPP

The Learning Centre provided the academic skills component of the new Built Environment Preparatory Program for indigenous students. Six students attended 22 hours of classes over a three-week program

5.4 Academic Preparation Program

The fifty-hour Academic English and Communication Skills component of the AusAid-funded Academic Preparation Program was again coordinated and taught by The Learning Centre. Students were taught in small groups of between 20 to 25. A total of 64 postgraduate coursework students, seven postgraduate research students and sixteen undergraduate students attended the three-week, pre-sessional program before the first session and 35 students attended in Session Two.

5.5 University Orientation and Study Skills Course (UOSS)

The Learning Centre once again delivered the UOSS component of the University Preparation Program (UPP) which is an access

program for prospective mature age students who do not meet the University's entry requirements. The UOSS course explicitly teaches the academic skills essential for university success and is run each session for fourteen weeks. Students are taught in small groups of about 25 and meet weekly for two hours. A total of 180 students were enrolled in Session One and 168 in Session Two. Student evaluations of this course are very positive.

5.6 Masters of Business and Technology Academic Skills Orientation

The Learning Centre was asked to develop and run an academic skills workshop for students enrolled in this distance learning Masters program. The 2.5 hour session was run on a Sunday morning before Session One started and was attended by about 100 students who were taught in small groups of about twenty each. The workshop was very positively evaluated by the students.

6. Learning Centre Publications & Website Use

In 2002, The Learning Centre was able, for the first time, to analyse website access. In the three-month period, August to December 2002, The Learning Centre website received 46 577 requests for pages. The daily average was 378. The most popular section of the website was the online study skills resources. This section received approximately 41 000 requests for pages and downloadable PDF files. In terms of individual page requests, the most requested page was the online study skills resources' index page. Many other sites, including the UNSW Web CT interface, link directly to it. Of the resources, the most requested were:

- The Harvard Referencing Style Guide;
- The Introduction To Essay Writing;
- Report Writing;
- Note-Taking;
- Thesis Proposals.

The other most frequently accessed pages were those containing Learning Centre Workshop information, links to other sites, and information for students. The new online workshop *Writing a Case Study Report in Engineering* received 4062 requests.

The Learning Centre website received requests from Australia (education and commercial sectors), Singapore, Canada, New Zealand and the United States' Higher Education sectors. Most users either accessed The Learning Centre website directly, were referred through Web CT or followed links from other UNSW sites. Many other users accessed the site as a result of search engines or followed links from other universities or education-focused sites.

The Learning Centre's first electronic, interactive learning resource *Writing a Case Study Report in Engineering* was developed by Pam Mort, with assistance from Tracey-Lee Downey and EDTeC and can be viewed at http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/case_study/index.htm

The following resources, available in print and electronically, were developed or substantially reworked:

- Getting started on your literature review
- Editing checklist
- APA referencing guide
- Effective note-making from written text
- Avoiding plagiarism

7. Tutor Training

Gaining the essential skills needed to run tutorials can be seen as mastering a key postgraduate attribute. The Learning Centre offered morning-long tutor training workshops in response to requests from schools or faculties.

Three tutor training workshops were run for postgraduate research students who tutor in the Faculty of Engineering. These sessions covered small group facilitation skills, promoting active learning and planning and managing a tutorial. There was input from Engineering staff on the specific nature of tutorials in Engineering. Approximately twenty students attended each session.

A similar workshop was offered in the School of Psychology to five postgraduate tutors.

8. Participation in projects of PVC (Education)

The Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) received University funding for several innovative projects to support student learning. The Learning Centre was involved in all of these projects.

Pam Mort was the recipient of an *Innovative Teaching and Educational Technology (ITET)* fellowship and spent six months as part of a group of staff from across the university investigating the contribution of technology to enhancing student learning. During this time, she was able to develop an online, interactive learning resource that may serve as a model for future Learning Centre resource development. The resource can be viewed at:

http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/case_study/index.htm

As part of the fellowship she prepared and co-presented two workshops on Student Centred Learning and Graduate Attributes to other ITET2 fellows.

Sue Starfield and Gwyn Jones participated in the four workshops run during the year to support recipients of *First-Year Experience* awards. The University awarded twenty-six, \$15 000 grants to groups of staff teaching in first year to explore innovative ways of making their courses more interesting, challenging, relevant, practical and fun. The awardees worked together to share their ideas and enhance their students' learning experience. At the *First-Year Forum* in December, awardees presented their projects to an audience of approximately one hundred university colleagues. Gwyn Jones was a joint awardee, with Dr Julian Cox of Food Sciences, of a grant to develop innovative learning and teaching materials to enhance students' oral communication skills in a first-year Food Sciences course.

Sue Starfield met with several grant holders to discuss their projects and provided training for the student demonstrators in the Mechanical Engineering project.

Sue Starfield participated in facilitating the initial session of the week-long *Foundations in University Teaching (FULT) program*.

Sue Starfield was a member of the Advisory Committee of the Peer Mentoring Project and Dominic Fitzsimmons worked with Julie Grove of Counselling to develop appropriate materials to be used by the peer mentors. The *Peer Mentoring as Support for First Year Students* is a major project which involves the support of mentoring schemes in most Faculties, whereby senior students are trained to act as mentors for groups of first-year students in helping students in their transition to University.

Sue Starfield was involved in discussions with members of the Academic Board and the PVC (Education)'s office regarding the development of the Graduate Attributes of UNSW students. These include problem solving, critical thinking and reflective skills, oral and written communication skills, group and interpersonal skills, and skills of lifelong learning and information literacy.

9. Research Supervisor Workshops

The Staff Development Unit held several workshops for supervisors of research students during the year. The Learning Centre was asked to participate in a workshop for postgraduate supervisors and students in the Faculty of Sciences entitled *Ensuring a Quality Postgraduate Research Experience* and in a similar one in the Faculty of Medicine and at the AGSM.

The Centre also participated in a panel discussion on student support at a workshop on supervision for new academics titled *Developing Skills in Postgraduate Supervision* in March, and in a supervision training workshop for academics in the Faculty of the Built Environment in July.

10. Conference Presentations by Learning Centre Staff

Learning Centre staff presented at several local and international conferences in 2002.

Tania Ferfolja

The implications of harassment, discrimination and surveillance on managing one's sexuality in the school environment. *American Education Research Association (AERA) Conference*, New Orleans, April 2002.

The hidden violence against lesbian teachers in NSW high schools: Understanding the complexities of violence against women. *Meanings-Cultures-Differences Conference*. University of Sydney, February 2002.

Pam Mort

Teaching Writing Skills to Postgraduate Students. *Quality in Postgraduate Research: Integrating Perspectives Conference*. Adelaide, April 2002.

Writing a Case Study Report in Engineering. *Communication Skills in University Education: Open Space Conference*. 3-4 October 2002, The University of New South Wales.

http://skillcity.iaaf.uwa.edu.au/material_info.aspx?id=26&uses=1,6,8&type=Teaching+resource&typeID=1

Writing a Case Study in Engineering presented at *ITET2 Symposium*. 25 July 2002 at The University of New South Wales.

Co-presenter of workshop on *Student Centred Learning* for conference participants at *ITET2 Symposium*.

Innovative teaching and educational technology *ITET* symposium.

Gwyn Jones

Gwyn Jones & Julian Cox: Developing students' oral communication skills in science. *First-Year Forum*. University of New South Wales, 5 December 2002.

Sue Starfield

From concordancing to critical literacy. Invited presentation in Panel on Research Literacies at *Quality in Postgraduate Research: Integrating Perspectives Conference*. Adelaide, April 2002.

Invited keynote address 'Writer Identity and Academic Writing' *8th National Conference on Community Language & ESOL (CLESOL)* Wellington, July 2002.

11. Publications by Learning Centre Staff

Robinson, K., Irwin, J. & **Ferfolja, T.** (Eds.). (2002). From here to diversity: The social impact of lesbian and gay issues in education in Australia and New Zealand. New York: Harrington Park/Haworth Press.

Gietzelt, D. & **Jones, G.** (2002). What Language? In *Communication for Health Care*, C. Bergund & D. Saltman (Eds.). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Cox, J. & **Jones, G.** (2003). Developing students' oral communication skills in science. In *Exciting and engaging our students in their first year at UNSW*. S. Wilson, M. Scoufis & B. Weiss (Eds.), pp.76-80. Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education & Quality Improvement).

Starfield, S. (2002). "I'm a second-language English speaker": Negotiating writer identity and authority in Sociology One. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 1(2), 121-140.

12. Contributions to the University, the Profession and the Community

The Learning Centre was involved in a wide range of activities that enhanced students' experience of learning at the University of New South Wales.

12.1 Orientation Week Activities

12.1.1 Uniprep

The Learning Centre ran sessions on essay writing, note-taking and English language support during 'O' week, and participated in the new morning-long orientation for postgraduate coursework students organised by the Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education) in conjunction with other student services units. Talks were also given in the orientation for Session Two. The Learning Centre also participated in COFA orientation activities.

12.1.2 International Students

The Director participated in orientation sessions organised by International Student Services.

The Learning Centre ran orientation sessions in the Independent Learning Centre for new international students.

12.1.3 Meeting with international students at COFA

The Learning Centre attended a two-hour meeting with about sixty international COFA students to discuss how its services could be of use to them.

12.2 Research Students Welcome Day

The Learning Centre was invited to take part in the new orientation sessions for research students run by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

12.3 Workshops for Mature Age students

The Learning Centre ran workshops on note-taking, essay writing and exam preparation as part of a series of transition workshops organised by the Counselling Service. An average of ten students attended each session.

12.4 Mentor Training for Medical Students

The Director was asked to participate in the training program for new student mentors in the Faculty of Medicine, which ran over several evenings.

12.5 Info Day

The Learning Centre staffed an information stall at Info Day in January and offered talks on how to be a successful student.

12.6 Courses and Careers Day

The Learning Centre participated in Courses and Careers day, held on September 1 2002, and offered a talk on managing the transition from school to university.

12.7 Workshop for Basser College

An essay writing workshop was requested for students in Basser College. It was attended by fifteen students.

12.8 Supporting Students Forum

The Supporting Students Forum is an informal grouping of Heads of Units that are involved in directly supporting students and has been meeting regularly for several years to enhance support provision on campus. In 2002, the members of the Forum organised a one-day workshop with an external facilitator to enable reflection, future planning and the development of clear goals and objectives. It was agreed to follow up the AUQA report feedback on student services and request a meeting with the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Hume, to discuss the feedback and to introduce the group and its services. The Vice-Chancellor requested that the group participate in the university-wide planning process which was about to commence.

Extensive collaborative work took place over the latter part of the year to develop the UNSW Life component (Managing Your Academic Life) of the new UNSW corporate website.

Regular meetings were also held with student representatives of various organisations.

12.9 Membership of University Committees and Working Groups

- Sue Starfield was a co-opted member of the Undergraduate Committee.
- Gwyn Jones and Sue Starfield were members of the University Preparation Program Management Committee.
- Sue Starfield was a member of the Student Equity Network and the Rural Students' Network.
- Sue Starfield was a member of the English Language Working Party set up by the Academic Board to investigate ways to ensure that students who need English language support receive it, and how to identify those students initially.
- Sue Starfield and Pam Mort joined the Postgraduate Research Interest Group (PGRIG), a cross-faculty initiative formed to discuss issues and policy for postgraduate research students and supervisors.
- Sue Starfield was a member of the Library Reference Group in regard to the procurement of the new information management system.

12.10 Workshops for Staff Development Unit

An orientation to academic study skills workshop was again offered to UNSW general staff members enrolling in MBT courses. Ten staff members attended the two-hour session.

12.11 Briefing for new Deans

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) invited the new Deans to a briefing by the Heads of the Units that comprise the Division. The Director represented The Learning Centre and outlined its key activities.

12.12 HERDSA SIG Meeting

In November, The Learning Centre hosted a half-day meeting of the NSW Language and Learning Special Interest Group of HERDSA (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia). Over thirty Learning Advisers attended. The meeting's theme was '(Sub)version & (re)production'. Annie Bartlett (ANU) presented a talk entitled: 'Some thoughts on language and academic skills professional practice with respect to editing/proof reading'. Celia Thompson (University of Melbourne) spoke on 'Promoting uni(con)formity or difference? Critical discourse acquisition in university student writing' and Pam Mort and Sue Starfield (UNSW) discussed the topic 'Writing the thesis/writing a thesis/writing my thesis'. Copies of the presentations are available at:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/herdsa/herdsa.html>

12.13 Sydney Girls High School request

Sydney Girls High School asked to link their intranet to The Learning Centre's website as they felt it would be of benefit to their year 12 students who need to do independent research projects.

13. Visitors to The Learning Centre

A delegation led by Dr Watana Padgate of the Department of Languages, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Naresuan University, Thailand visited The Learning Centre in September.

Dr Mike Hart of the School of Language, Culture and Communication, University of Natal, South Africa visited The Learning Centre.

Dr Emanuel Manalo, head of the Student Learning Centre at the University of Auckland and colleagues visited The Learning Centre in October.

Dr Carol Wexler from Tel Aviv University visited The Learning Centre in February

14. Professional Development of Learning Centre Staff

Gwyn Jones was awarded a First-Year Experience grant in conjunction with Dr Julian Cox of Food Sciences to work on the development of a presentation skills CD-Rom package for first-year students. This entailed her being seconded for one day a week in Session Two to work on the project. A presentation on the outcomes of the project was made at the university-wide *First-Year Forum* in December.

Gwyn was also invited to be a member of *WomenResearch21*, a year-long development program designed for beginning and early career women researchers at UNSW to improve their research effectiveness, confidence and productivity. Through this project the woman researcher is paired with a more senior researcher to work on a specific project in addition to attending several support workshops during the period of the fellowship.

Pam Mort was awarded an *Innovative Teaching and Educational Technology (ITET) Fellowship*. In this scheme, groups of fifteen staff from across the university work together on an intensive program to increase their knowledge of best practice in learning and teaching, develop skills in educational technology, and work on a special online project. This led to the production of The Learning Centre's first online, interactive resource (see Section 6). One of the aims of the scheme is that the staff member involved then shares the skills acquired with colleague. Pam also attended a workshop on information literacy run by the Library.

Sue Starfield and Pam Mort attended a day-long retreat organised by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) to discuss ways of enhancing the overall functioning of the Office.

Sue Starfield attended the Ombuds and Deans of Students conference in Brisbane.

Sue Starfield attended one morning-long workshop on managing workplace discrimination and grievances and another on managing difficult employees.

Sue Starfield attended the AUTC National Teaching Forum in Canberra in December and the Prime Minister's Teaching Award ceremony.

In 2002, The Learning Centre instituted its own professional development program for its staff. Tania Ferfolja took responsibility for its organisation. Workshops were organised on the following topics:

- What is Universitas 21?
- Developing critical thinking in our students
- Word for large documents
- Using PowerPoint
- Spin and other research databases
- Using Eudora email effectively
- Using mind-mapping software
- Introduction to WebCT

The final event of the year was an all-day workshop with an external facilitator at which a statement of purpose for The Learning Centre was agreed upon; the year's progress reviewed and strategic options discussed.