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Are we all on course? A curriculum mapping comparison of three Australian university open-access enabling programs.

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The curricula in higher education not only provides guidance and direction for students, but aligns with industry standards to safeguard quality offerings in specific programs. While there has been increasing focus on the importance of the curriculum particularly for first year university students, very little is known about the curriculum and design principles that exist in open-access enabling programs in Australia. In the following paper, a comprehensive examination of the curriculum of three large open-access enabling programs is presented. The research team explored the curriculum design via a rigorous

mapping exercise to establish potential principles to guide enabling curriculum design. In developing the curriculum-mapping tool for this research project, it became apparent that limited attention has been given to enabling curriculum design in the academic literature. Given increasing attention towards Australian enabling education, the findings of this study emphasise the importance of clarity between the intended and the enacted curriculum, such as in unit learning outcomes and program attributes.

Keywords: *enabling education, open access, curriculum mapping, higher education, intended curriculum, enacted curriculum*

Introduction

University enabling programs have provided an important pathway to higher education (HE) for 'second-chance' students and those from disadvantaged and equity backgrounds since their inception in the early 1970s (Hodges, Bedford, Hartley, Klinger, Murray, O'Rourke, & Schofield, 2013). In doing so they address the widening participation agenda of the Bradley Review (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008; Lomax-Smith, Watson, & Webster, 2011). Enabling programs have increasingly found their place in the HE landscape of Australia (48 enabling programs in 27 universities [Devlin, 2015]) and the recent Demand Driven Funding System review emphasised continued growth in this area – reporting that an additional 3000 students enrolled in enabling programs in 2012 compared to 2009 (Kemp, & Norton, 2014). Quite often enabling program development has occurred within the framework of universities, but not always under the guidance of specific faculties (Baker, & Irwin, 2015), thus criticism exists that these programs can be seen as outliers (Shah, & Whannell, 2017) within the increasingly benchmarked curricular landscape of HE (Pitman, Trinidad, Devlin, Harvey, Brett, & McKay, 2016). Despite this criticism, Kemp and Norton (2014, p. 61) suggested that given the success of enabling students in undergraduate courses (Department of Education, 2014), there would be 'more risks and fewer benefits' from the inclusion of enabling programs into the demand driven system and any associated scrutiny by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

(TEQSA). Any such move towards standardised auditing of enabling programs has been difficult, firstly by the large number and great diversity of programs on offer (Hodges et al., 2013; Kemp, & Norton, 2014) and secondly by a lack of research into what enabling curricula is and should be (Kift, 2016).

Although recent research has explored the benefits of enabling programs and how success can be measured (Bennett, Hodges, Fagan, Hartley, Kavanagh, & Schofield, 2013 Hodges et al., 2013), there is limited research that examines the curriculum design of enabling programs (with the exception of Baker & Irwin's [2016] thorough exploration of the placement of academic literacies in Australian enabling programs). While enabling educators have undertaken isolated research exploring their own practice (Burgess, & Relf, 2014; Sharp, O'Rourke, Lane, & Hays, 2014), no research exists that compares the curriculum across a variety of enabling programs. Further, very little has been written about the processes that ensure that the education provided meets the key competencies anticipated of students 'graduating' from these programs. This paper, an Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) funded 'seed' project, was undertaken to address these gaps and establish a deeper appreciation of the commonalities and differences between the enabling curricula offered at three large open-access university programs. The research builds on Hodges et al's, (2013, p. 6) recommendations that the unique challenges associated with teaching and learning in enabling programs be explored in more depth. Further, the study addresses the acknowledged lack of research into curriculum design within enabling programs (and HE in general) (Andrewartha, & Harvey, 2014; Barnett, & Coates, 2005). Finally, it aims to address the knowledge deficit about enabling programs, in general, identified in recent government reviews (Kemp, & Norton, 2014; Lomax-Smith, Watson, & Webster, 2011).

What is enabling curriculum?

Curriculum is often defined and understood in quite narrow terms, typically as the formal material that teachers deliver in order for students to gain knowledge or skills, and achieve certain learning outcomes (Ebert, Ebert, & Bentley, 2011; Foreman, & Arthur-Kelly, 2017). In such definitions, the focus is on the explicit information that course designers intend for educators to teach and students to learn. Arafeh (2016, p.3) on the other hand extends such definitions beyond

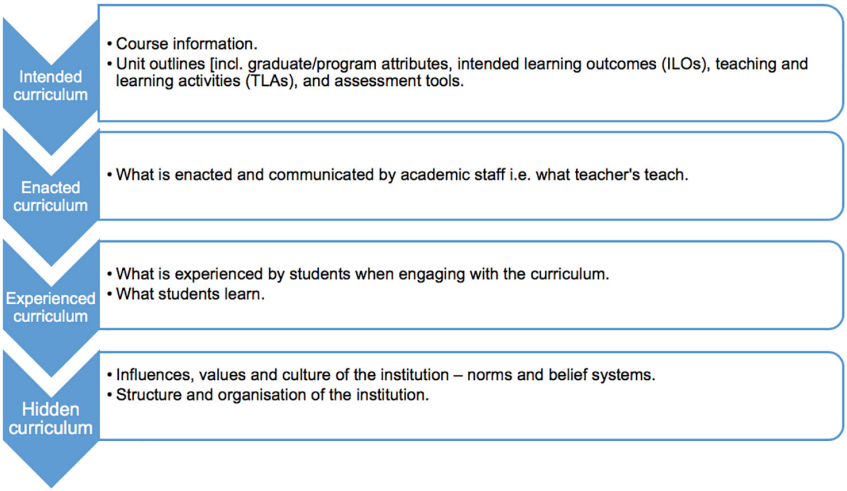
the necessary course content towards the processes and interactions required to deliver the new knowledge or skill. Carpenter and Lee (2010) while acknowledging curriculum is the formal documentation of programs, argue that it is also 'How content is presented, why, by whom, where, when, with whom and for how long' (p. 100). Despite the ubiquity of the curriculum on the HE landscape, debate within the academic literature about the nature of it within open-access enabling programs is limited. This lack of attention is particularly concerning as the diversity of students within enabling education necessitates the development of new ways to 'design, deliver and support' learning (Baker, & Irwin, 2015, p. 3).

What multi-layered discussions about curricula mean within enabling education is worth reflection, particularly as program content (with exceptions) has historically focussed on developing academic literacies. Baker and Irwin (2014) in their comprehensive examination of enabling curricula, argued that the 35 Australian enabling programs reviewed could be categorised into five separate curriculum models in which language and literacies were invariably at the core of the offerings (pp. 27–29). They found that the most common curriculum genres taught and assessed were argumentative essays and scientific reports. While study skills' such as 'time management, study planning and becoming familiar with university culture and systems, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS) (e.g. Blackboard) or the university library' (p. 25) were also commonplace. Not surprisingly, the bulk of Australian enabling education research to date has been qualitative with a focus on specific elements of program curriculum and design, rather than a broad sense of what the curriculum *attempts* to deliver (Crawford, 2014; Jones, Olds, & Lisciandro, 2016; Klingner, & Murray, 2012; Willans, & Seary, 2011). Thus, while the development of key competencies are necessary to progress through enabling programs, it is reasonable to suggest that the curriculum must be more than the presented content if it is to provide the transformative student experiences these programs are renowned for (Willans, & Seary, 2007).

This paper describes one component from a broader research project investigating curriculum design principles for open-access enabling programs (see Relf, Crawford, O'Rourke, Sharp, Hodges, Shah, & Katersky-Barnes, 2017). For the purpose of this broader research we adopted a definition of curriculum incorporating four inter-

related aspects: the intended curriculum; the enacted curriculum; the experienced curriculum and the hidden curriculum (Arafeh, 2016) (see Figure 1 for elaboration of the inter-related parts). While analysis of enabling student surveys and staff focus groups provided information about the enacted, experienced and hidden curriculum; it was anticipated that the mapping process would not only reveal how three large enabling programs delivered competencies, but would also identify gaps and areas of improvement that may be required. Thus the intention of *this* paper is to focus on the mapping of the *intended* curriculum. The specific aims of the curriculum mapping exercise were: firstly, to develop a curriculum mapping tool suitable for comparing the intended curriculum of diverse enabling programs; secondly, to examine approaches to curriculum design in the enabling programs of three tertiary institutions; and finally to use the findings from the curriculum mapping exercise to articulate guiding curriculum principles that may benefit other open-access enabling programs.

Figure 1: Four inter-related aspects of the curriculum



Method

Participants

Three large Australian university enabling programs, all long-term providers of enabling education, participated in this multi-institutional

research project (Edith Cowan University [ECU], University of Newcastle [UON], and the University of Tasmania [UTas]). Each enabling program differed in terms of its structure of units. UON offered a broad range of discipline specific units (23 discipline specific units, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, Australian Studies Business Organisation and Management, Classical studies, Chemistry and the Life Sciences, etc.), while ECU and UTas engaged students in a program predominately built around the development of generic skills required in higher education (such as learning skills, academic writing skills, mathematics, communication skills) (see Table 1). Whilst the enabling programs at ECU and UTas included a specific academic literacies unit, UON delivered its content via discipline-based units and subsequently the learning was directed towards a more basic understanding of the pathway program they selected. ECU required students to select a humanities or science elective thus providing some initial discipline focus to their learning. Both ECU and UTas provided some contextualised learning via more flexible and open-ended assessments i.e. for example at ECU students made a choice from several topics related to their future studies. Thus, the purpose of the curriculum mapping exercise was to determine the extent to which the *intended* curriculum within these programs had the potential to deliver expected learning outcomes to students.

Table 1: Structure of open access enabling programs

	Edith Cowan University	University of Newcastle	University of Tasmania
Structure of units	4 units (skills and disciplines) 3 x generic academic skills 1 x discipline choice (from 2 choices)	4 units (discipline) Selected from 23 discipline specific programs	8 units (skills) Selected from 9 generic academic skill units
Mode	Full-time – 1 semester Part-time Online/on-campus/mixed mode	Part-time – 2 semesters Full-time – 1 semester Online/on-campus/mixed mode	Full-time 1 year Part-time 2 years Online/on-campus
Campuses	2 x metro 1 x regional	2 x regional	3 x regional
Entry into undergraduate course	Completion of 4 units	Completion of 4 units	Completion of 8 units

Curriculum mapping

As there are no formal requirements for standardisation in enabling programs, curriculum mapping with its focus on program transparency presents as a preferred tool over program benchmarking. Although Davis, Syme and Cook (2017) benchmarked key features of three university enabling programs, with a particular focus on quality, equivalence and equitability, it is difficult to imagine that the diversity of student cohorts and the necessity for enabling educators to understand and connect with their communities (Andrewartha, & Harvey, 2014), would or should result in standardised offerings to benchmark against. Thus at this point, curriculum mapping provides enabling programs with the opportunity to 'demonstrate their curricular and teaching quality to potential students' and for those teaching in the programs to 'regularly review and update their curriculum design according to student requirements' (Wang, 2015, p. 1550). More succinctly, Harden (2001) views the curriculum map as the glue that binds all program elements together. While curriculum mapping can promote 'curriculum evaluation and quality assurance' for students, it also draws up a learning journey with a prospective 'vision' of what is required by students for a promising future (Wang, 2015, p. 1553).

While being a step towards improved transparency in programs, determining how elements of the curriculum are linked via mapping provides challenges for enabling educators, as (a) typical undergraduate programs have three to four years to unpack content and employ sophisticated spiral curriculum approaches (Bruner, 1966; Harden, 2001; Woolfolk, 2011), while enabling programs have much shorter time durations (typically one or two semesters) and (b) many enabling programs (not all) have an overall focus on skill development and what might be required for future academic success, whereas undergraduate programs look longer term at what might be required beyond the course. How enabling educators present material that is accessible enough for an 'at-risk' cohort of learners in a limited time-frame, yet deep enough to provide the resilience, openness, self-discipline, integrity and authenticity that Barnett and Coates (2005) ascribe to quality curriculum, is a worthy investigation.

No curriculum-mapping tool exists specifically for enabling programs. As a result, the selection of an appropriate tool for this research needed to be based on: where and to what extent curricular outcomes could be mapped

against the program syllabus; whether the model chosen was empirically sound (used in previously published HE research); and whether it provided a straightforward process that would facilitate the general aims (and timeframes) of the overall pilot project. Ervin, Carter and Robinson (2013), in an extensive search of the academic literature, identified three curriculum mapping tools that provided the type of detail that would allow for replication of the processes; Snoke (2004), Stoof, Martens, and Van Merrienboer (2007) and Sumision and Goodfellow (2004). Of these only Sumision and Goodfellow (2004) and in more recent times Joyner (2016) conducted mapping within undergraduate programs. After an extensive review by the research team, it was felt that not enough detail was provided in either of these papers to efficiently and time effectively reproduce the processes and, as such, it was felt that the evidence-based mapping tool developed by Cuevas and colleagues (presented in a series of presentations for the Southern Connecticut State University) would be suitable for our research objectives (Cuevas, & Feit, 2011a; Cuevas, Matveev, & Feit, 2009; Cuevas, Matveev, & Miller, 2010). While the model had no connection with enabling curriculum, its method of matching desired outcomes, objectives and attributes to determine the sequence and scope of the curriculum via a simplified matrix format (Arafeh, 2016) promoted a thorough approach with which to map the selected curriculum of the three participating enabling programs.

Curriculum mapping the three enabling programs

Following a modified version of Cuevas and Feit's (2011a) process, we examined the following: What students are expected to be able to do with their gained knowledge at the completion of units and the program itself (unit learning outcomes and program attributes), the documentation created to inform students of details around learning outcomes (i.e. syllabus information) and how these are realised (the unit outlines and any supporting information; that is, associated learning management systems), and unit assessments, including specifically developed rubrics. Prior to commencing the mapping exercise, mapping templates developed by Cuevas and Feit (2011a) and Arafeh (2016) were modified to suit the purpose of the project as illustrated in Tables 2 to 4.

Table 2 illustrates the template developed to map the alignment of each institution's enabling program outcomes with the learning outcomes for each unit, as described in the unit outline documentation. Information

about each assessment task was placed in a separate table template (Table 3). Table 4 illustrates the template developed for mapping unit learning outcomes to assessment items. Thus, following Cuevas and Feit's (2011a) guidelines, the syllabus was reviewed to examine unit outcomes in the context of the overarching program outcomes. As each university presented quite unique offerings to their students, the units selected for mapping were core units representing those that most students were likely to encounter during their time in the different programs.

The curriculum mapping exercise was conducted by a research assistant (RA) not familiar with the enabling programs offered by the three universities, and involved determining whether unit learning outcomes and enabling program attributes were identified within curriculum documents and assessment tasks. Sumsion and Goodfellow (2004) suggest that invariably course mapping exercises are conducted by staff members who have intimate knowledge of the courses, but earlier trials by project researchers revealed that when such staff explored their own offerings there was a *blurring* of measurable objectives/learning outcomes (as described by Ervin, Carter, & Robinson, , 2013); that is, they were more likely to 'tick-off' outcomes such as 'students working collaboratively' because of in-class experiences rather than articulation of them in course documentation.

In the mapping exercise conducted by Arafeh (2016) outcomes were recorded using the term *explicitly* (states outcome overtly) (E) or *implicitly* (alluded to outcome) (I). However, in this project, given the timeframes of the pilot study and the utilisation of the unit outline as the key syllabus document, a notes section was included in the matrix to query non-aligned outcomes (see Tables 2 and 4). Additionally, previous mapping research has used the terms such as I introduced, *E* emphasised, *A* advanced and *R* reinforced, as a measure of outcome engagement, more often than not to identify the way students move through different levels of competency throughout a course (Arafeh, 2016; Hale, 2008). Given the compacted nature of enabling programs such scrutiny is not possible. Nonetheless, in this mapping exercise, the unit learning outcomes and the assessment tasks (i.e. the information presented in the unit outlines) were explored by the RA (see final column Tables 2 and 4).

Results

The initial exploration was to determine if the three enabling programs'

program attributes were aligned with learning outcomes for core units. It is worth noting that of the three universities, only one had specifically developed program attributes for their enabling program. The University of Newcastle had a specific set of 'enabling attributes' that lay behind the program documentation (Relf et al., 2017) and reflected the notion of 'fostering' attributes rather than achieving them. Firstly, in the example presented below (see Tables 2, 3 and 4), the RA explored an academic writing unit, a standard offering within enabling programs (Baker, & Irwin, 2014) to determine if the learning outcomes of the unit were in line with expected program attributes. Secondly, the unit was mapped to determine if the unit learning outcomes were aligned with the unit assessments.

Table 2: Template for alignment of unit learning outcomes (LO) and enabling program attributes (PA)

LO	Description	PA 1 Ability to communicate	PA 2 Ability to work in teams	PA 3 Critical appraisal skills	PA 4 Ability to generate Ideas	PA 5 Cross cultural and international outlook	RA Notes
1	Construct sentences and paragraphs with improved grammar and punctuation;	✔	✔	-	✔	-	
2	Analyse assessment requirements appropriately.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	If PA1 includes receptive language skills e.g. comprehension.
3	Understand the structure and purpose of abstracts, literature reviews, lists of references, appendices, and other specified components of research reports.	-	-	-	-	-	Only referencing is assessed or addressed in the unit content.
4	Prepare written assessments in a range of academic genre relative to their undergraduate field of study including: reports written in the third person, essays and annotated bibliographies.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	Re LO4: reports do not appear to be addressed in the unit. RE PA5: diversity is encompassed in essay topics.
5	Reference competently using the APA 6th referencing format.	✔	✔	-	-	-	

Table 3: Template for unit learning outcomes

Academic writing unit	
Task number	**Assessment**
Task 1a	Comprehension test
Task 1b	Peer reviewed argumentative essay plan
Task 1c	Argumentative essay
Task 2	Final examination

Table 4: Template for alignment of unit learning outcomes (LO) and assessment tasks

	Learning outcomes	**Measured?**	**Assessment tasks**				**Notes**
			1A	**1B**	**1C**	**1D**	
1	Construct sentences and paragraphs with improved grammar and punctuation.	yes	-	✔	✔	✔	
2	Analyse assessment requirements appropriately.	yes	✔	✔	✔	✔	
3	Understand the structure and purpose of abstracts, literature reviews, lists of references, appendices, and other specified components of research reports.	no	-	-	-	-	Note 1. Insufficient information to determine if this is addressed in Task 1. Note 2. Only referencing is assessed in Task 2 or addressed in the unit content.
4	Prepare written assessments in a range of academic genre relative to their undergraduate field of study including: reports written in the third person, essays and annotated bibliographies.	yes	-	✔	✔	✔	Note 1. Insufficient information to determine if this is addressed in 1A. Note 2. Reports are not assessed or addressed.
5	Reference competently using the APA 6th referencing format.	yes	-	✔	✔	✔	

Overall, the exercise revealed that for the units mapped, the unit learning outcomes and program attributes were generally aligned, and most content was assessed appropriately. What was noticeable, however, was that outcomes requiring students to demonstrate an understanding of more abstract concepts such as 'understanding and appreciating the university's learning environment', 'academic integrity' and 'ethical conduct', or the way in which a subject operates or plays a role within society at large, were rarely measured. Secondly, there was a number of outcomes and attributes not measured within the presented curricula which appear to be integral to student success. Examples of these included online communication, the ability to research and understand different academic sources, and the pragmatics of scholarly behaviour (practical skills such as note-taking, presentation strategies).

Discussion

Enabling educators have been productive in recent times in describing small-scale overviews of the good practice that exists (Burgess, & Relf, 2014; Sharp et al., 2014), while highlighting the uniqueness of enabling programs compared to undergraduate offerings (Hodges et al., 2013); it is now time to provide clarity on what is being delivered and how this impacts student learning and later success. Enabling programs are unique entities within the university setting (Hodges et al., 2013) and thus the adoption of undergraduate program/graduate attributes (as evidenced in two of the three universities in this mapping exercise), is an indication that more thought needs to be given to the relationship between the *intended* curriculum and the expected outcomes for their students. As Wang (2015, p. 1556) identifies as a shortcoming of HE curriculum mapping; universities focus specifically on what the students are being made to learn – rather than what they are learning. She suggests that it is only when students exceed the limits of their study that their learning is enriched. Thus, enabling education operates within the tension between set-skill development, and the broader curricula question, 'why we do what we do'?

Being informed by the curriculum mapping results and integrating and re-casting each institution's principles (see Relf et al, 2017, p.16), the research team derived a set of six underlying principles for the intended curriculum as presented below. It was the research team's intent that these could provide clearer direction for enabling educators:

Principle one: Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational level competence in key academic writing, research and communication.

Principle two: Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational awareness of salient knowledge across relevant academic content areas.

Principle three: Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational understanding of academic integrity and ethical conduct requirements in the university context and more widely.

Principle four: Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational ability to successfully engage with the university teaching and learning environment.

Principle five: Enabling curricula foster the development of a foundational ability to work in teams, specifically to effectively collaborate and contribute within small groups in order to develop academic skills.

Principle six: Enabling curricula foster the development of a cross-cultural and international outlook, specifically the ability to engage productively and harmoniously with diverse cultures considering alternative cultural perspectives.

The term foster appears prudent in underpinning principles for curriculum design in enabling programs because it characterises the developmental nature of enabling programs and separates their aims and outcomes from those expected from undergraduate programs. Undergraduate program attributes are aligned to curriculum built around professional standards; and designed for students on a continuum of learning growth over a three to four year period.

The curriculum mapping exercise additionally revealed that the three institutions generally measured unit outcomes and program attributes effectively. However, those outcomes that explored a broader outlook (such as global perspectives) or self-regulatory skills (such as time management, co-operative interactions with fellow students) often remained unmeasured in the presented curricula. While acknowledging that such intangibles when presented as unit outcomes or program attributes warrant more thought in terms of measurement, Ervin et al., (2013, p. 310) point out that outcomes and attributes that are acceptable

across all university programs are too generic for enabling programs and do not allow such programs to clearly demonstrate what constitutes the *intended* curriculum. Barnett and Coates (2005) might describe this as a curriculum missing the element of *knowing* and *being*; that is, for what purpose are we learning these skills? These elements, that can appear external to content of courses/units, are nonetheless integral and may be the *raison d'etre* for much course content. Without close observation of enabling program staff delivering unit material, the curriculum mapping process described herein struggled to determine whether more intangible content was delivered to students.

Given the paucity of research surrounding enabling curriculum design, Table 5 presents thoughts surrounding the gaps identified in the mapping exercise and suggestions for consideration.

Table 5: Curriculum mapping findings and curriculum design suggestions

Enabling curriculum designers should:	**Curriculum mapping results**
Develop enabling program specific graduate outcomes that reflect the developmental nature of these programs.	ECU and UTas used program attributes designed for undergraduate and post-graduate students. These attributes do not reflect the developmental stage most enabling students are at. Mandated university attributes do not set a tone that captures the nature of enabling programs, nor highlight the education pathway enabling students may be on. UON with purposefully constructed program attributes was able to align 89% of content to these attributes, while ECU could only align 69%.
Explicitly articulate the enacted curriculum in unit documentation to reveal content that is sometimes 'hidden'.	In some instances aspirational goals (such as global citizenship often included in program attributes) were rarely mentioned in course documentation.
Present the intended curriculum so that students are clear about program expectations and unit content.	Unit outcomes were not always measured in assessment items (on average 37% of unit learning outcomes were not measured). While not all assessments measure all outcomes, and this finding may reflect anomalies of the mapping process, course designers should be cognisant that assessments represent what students are expected to learn and demonstrate.
Recognise that there are many sources and repositories of documentation that support the student learning experience.	Unit documents did not always convey pathways to program attributes and learning outcomes. Enabling program designers need to ensure that students are able to locate or are guided towards supporting material that relate to course learning (such as assessment rubrics) via the unit outline.

Limitations

The limitations to this study need to be considered before generalisations can be made. The three enabling programs reviewed in the study had different curricular approaches (from a skills focus to a discipline specific focus), and while being representative of the diversity of enabling programs within Australia, no specific curriculum mapping tool existed to map their *intended* curriculum. As such, to determine the validity and reliability of the modified version of Cuevas and Feit's (2011a) mapping tool, a thorough pilot test using a larger sample would be necessary (Ervin et al., 2013). Secondly, this study was undertaken within a twelve month time frame, with this component being the initial undertaking. This did not allow the type of in-depth curriculum mapping that is necessary to fully articulate design principles for enabling programs in general. The findings of this overview would need to be confirmed in a larger study involving other university and non-university enabling programs to develop a clearer appreciation of what is offered in the enabling education field.

Conclusion

In light of gathering interest in the success of enabling programs (James, 2007; Seary, Willans, & Cook, 2016; Whannell, Whannell, & Bedford, 2012) and the need for a deeper appreciation of the learning opportunities enabling programs present (Kemp, & Norton, 2014), it is revealing that there appears to be little guidance towards thorough examination of enabling curriculum in the academic literature. Further complicating movement towards extensive mapping of enabling programs is that there is little evidence of methodological rigour and validity of tools associated with this process in HE environments (Ervin et al., 2013) and none that relate to enabling education. Finally, as Wang (2015) argues, mapping or benchmarking is not what is required, perhaps curriculum that matches a series of competencies addresses the universities view of the world, but may not meet an individual's requirements in an increasingly complex world. Thus, it would appear that more attention is required if enabling educators throughout Australia are to identify the gaps, opportunities, and nuances that exist in the variety of offerings presented to their students.

This initial foray into identifying aspects of curriculum in three separate university enabling programs revealed that these programs need to be clearer on the outcomes expected of students by establishing specific program

attributes rather than simply aligning student efforts with university-wide graduate attributes. Additionally, the mapping exercise revealed that the intangibles of the programs such as a deeper understanding of the processes of learning were not always presented in course material and that this aspect of 'knowing and being' (Barnett & Coates, 2005) is critical for the student group that invariably make up enabling programs. Thus, while the efficacy of enabling programs throughout Australia in achieving university-ready skills and literacies is being increasingly appreciated (Hodges et al., 2013; Kemp, & Norton, 2014; James, 2007), in a climate moving towards increased transparency and accountability (Bennett et al., 2012; Shah, & Wannell, 2017), enabling educators could articulate with more clarity what it is that underpins the intended curriculum in course related documentation and how this prepares students for a competitive global community.

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