1982

Report on a seminar workshop on the General Education Certificate and Advanced Education Entry Certificate Courses

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REPORT ON A SEMINAR WORKSHOP
ON THE
GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE
AND
ADVANCED EDUCATION ENTRY CERTIFICATE COURSES

HELD AT THE
MOUNT LAWLEY CAMPUS
OF THE
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION
NOVEMBER 28, 29, 30, 1982

PREPARED BY PAT GRIMOLDBY AND DOUG HUBBLE
We have pleasure in forwarding to you a copy of our report on the recent Review Workshop of Advanced Education Entry and General Education courses. We regret the delay in the preparation of this report. Your participation in the weekend workshop was appreciated and your further comments on the courses would be welcomed.

Yours faithfully

PAT GRIMOLDBY
WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

DOUG HUBBLE
AEEC & GEC COORDINATOR
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ADVANCED EDUCATION ENTRY CERTIFICATE (AEEC) AND GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE (GEC) COURSES

REVIEW WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION

1. The Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) of Mount Lawley College has been responsible for the development of two correspondence courses for adult Aboriginals since 1978. Over the past four years the initial concept of a one year external study course bridging through to tertiary study courses for Aboriginal "aides" has broadened considerably, and encompasses two programs each of 4 units of study available to all post school Aboriginals.

In the first year of the course operation ATEP commissioned an initial feasibility research study and since that time no further studies of the program has been undertaken. The courses have changed dramatically from the initial units offered, as has the student population by its location, employment, educational backgrounds and aspirations.

A need was seen to consider whether the changes which had taken place were still serving the objectives of the program and what directions the courses should follow in the future. The initial objectives of the project were:

1. To provide students with an opportunity to develop their personal educational status through a course of study appropriate to their ability.

2. To allow students to develop skills and attitudes related to their present employment in their liaison capacity within their community.

3. To enable students to remain living and working in their home communities and

4. To give students the opportunity to gain sufficient education status to be considered for entrance into tertiary institutions (eg CAE's, WAIT) to undertake full professional training.
These had not been reconsidered in depth since the initial days of the project and was an example of the questions such a review would seek to answer.

For such a review to be meaningful and realistic in its deliberations, it was hoped the following groups will be represented for all or part of the weekend.

1. Mount Lawley College Administration

2. ATEP Administration and Aboriginal Advisory Committee

3. AMEC and GEC Staff

4. Course writers and markers

5. Tutors (both metropolitan, SW and remote)

6. Students and graduates

7. Employing authorities

8. Funding Bodies

9. Other Adult Aboriginal Education courses.

With the above in mind, a weekend seminar was arranged as follows -
Date: November 27, 28 and 29, 1981.

Venue: Intercultural Studies Centre, Mount Lawley Campus  
Western Australian College of Advanced Education

Workshop Co-ordinator: Mrs Pat Grimoldby  
Community Services Training Centre.

Program:

Friday November 27

Afternoon Representatives of employers, funding bodies,  
other courses, Mount Lawley Campus ATEP staff  
and Aboriginal Advisory Committee to consider issues of course outcomes/expectations, future viability, co-ordination  
with other programs (vocational and funding.)

Saturday November 28

AM AEEC/GEC course writers, markers, tutors,  
students to consider course objectives,  
structure, outcomes and expectations.

PM As above examining course content, unit  
organisation, resources, compatibility and  
compatibility of units and courses.

EVENING Social Function.

Sunday November 29

AM Redefinition of course objectives,  
implications, for course structure, content,  
organisation.

PM Conclusion of activities. Formulation of  
recommendations for implementation.
Representatives were invited from:

Mount Lawley College: Administration, Applied Science, External Studies, English, Speech and Drama, Intercultural Studies, ATEP, Aboriginal Advisory Committee, AEEC and GEC Staff.

Tutors

Students - A.E.E.C.
- G.E.C.

Department of Aboriginal Affairs
Commonwealth Department of Education
Education Department of WA
Catholic Education Commission
Community Services Training Centre
Aboriginal Access, Technical Education Division
Aboriginal Bridging Course, WAIT Aid Ltd
Department of Corrections
Commonwealth Public Service Board

Those who actually attended are listed in Appendix I.
2. Strategies

As stated above there was a need to consider whether the changes which have taken place over the past four years in the AECC and GEC programmes have had any radical effect on the courses as a whole. In other words, are the courses still serving the objectives delineated. Following on from this question there needed to be asked questions concerning the future directions of the courses.

It was considered by the Intercultural Studies Centre that a non-hierarchical approach should be taken when exploring the courses as currently presented, and future directions - that is equal access to decision making should be given to students, tutors, course-writers, course markers, administrative officers, funding agencies and employing agencies. Such a task appeared daunting, expensive and time consuming but nevertheless it was considered that it should be attempted.

The first part of the exercise was to select a person from outside the College who could be consulted on the strategies to be utilised and who could coordinate the proposed review. As the Coordinator of the AECC/GEC Courses wrote:

'I am concerned that we can obtain the services of a facilitator for the review who is not directly involved in the course but has sufficient involvement in the area of adult education and training to direct the program'.


The invitation to act as facilitator of the programme was accepted by Pat Grimoldby and planning began in earnest.

Owing to Pat Grimoldby's other involvements in the North of the state there was not as much contact between the Coordinator of the Courses and herself as was initially desired, however most problems were overcome and final strategies were evolved.

With such a wide and disparate selection of people invited to participate in the review and with the stated desire to have a non hierarchical approach it was necessary to evolve a technique that would allow everyone to participate without feeling threatened in any way, or without 'holding the floor' to the extent that others could not have their say.
The model that was developed owed a great deal to the polyarchic approach developed by a visiting management and welfare administration consultant (Clive Miller). This meant breaking people up into small groups of not less than nine and not more than fifteen and asking them to develop an objective 'tree' using a specific series of tasks. An outline of the task given to each group is attached (Appendix II).

The Coordinator and overseeing of the development of objectives - for both AEEC and GEC was considered to be too great a task for one seminar coordinator on the first afternoon, and an invitation to assist Pat Grimoldby was accepted by John Sherwood. (John Sherwood is the head of the Intercultural Studies Centre and is currently on leave).

Although it was anticipated that up to 75 people would be attending the seminar in the final event there was attendance of 54. This meant dividing into four groups - two groups considered AEEC and the other two considered GEC.

Allocation to groups was arbitrary and decided by a colour code, allocated alternatively to people as they came into the main lecture hall.

A negative aspect of such arbitrary allocation was that there were people in some groups who would rather have been in another because of their familiarity with that group's task - eg allocated to an AEEC group when GEC would have been preferred.

A positive aspect was that the tasks were set and everyone in a group had an opportunity to have their views considered. Another positive aspect was that only aims, objectives and tasks were considered - anything related to what was seen as a negative aspect was not considered at this time.

The strategy adopted for the introduction of the session is described in Appendix II.
3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The contribution that could be made by students in remote areas was considered to be vital to the seminar. With this point in mind a letter from the Seminar Co-ordinator was sent to AEFC and GEC students in remote areas asking for specific comments on the courses in which they were enrolled.

A copy of the letter follows -

"TO ALL STUDENTS IN THE ADVANCED EDUCATION ENTRY CERTIFICATE AND THE GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE COURSES, MOUNT LAWLEY COLLEGE.

I work at the Community Services Training Centre in Mount Hawthorn and have been invited to co-ordinate a workshop for Mount Lawley College.

You will have seen by the material sent to you by the Co-ordinator of the AEFC and GEC courses at Mount Lawley College - Doug Hubble - that people involved in these programmes will be meeting together over two days on 28-29 November 1981. The purpose of the meeting is to find out from students, tutors, curriculum developers and course writers and employers something of what they each expect of these courses and the way they are organised and carried out.

Because of distance it is not possible for you all to be present in person at this meeting; however as Co-ordinator of the meeting I would like to ensure that you have had the opportunity to put your points of view forward on all matters that interest and concern you.

We don't always want others to know just who is making some statements and sometimes it is a good idea to get together with other people to talk things over and then to make a joint statement which does not identify any one of us as an individual, but rather allows us to speak as a group with similar interests.

I thought therefore that it would be very helpful and useful to the seminar proceedings and final outcome if the students in your town could get together and talk about some of the issues to be discussed, and forward the results of this meeting by 25 November 1981.

Your discussion points will then be put together with those of other students living in distant areas, and will become part of the seminar proceedings, for further discussion.

Some of the points you might like to consider are those relating to:

**COURSE CONTENT:**  
Is the course material what you expect?  
Do you get enough course material?  Or too much?  
Does it come frequently enough?  
Are you able to get through the material in a reasonable time?  
Have you got easy access to things like library books?
TUTORS: For instance is your tutor available at times that suit you? Is your tutor able to give you sufficient time? Do you have many changes of tutors? What do you think your tutor expects from you?

EMPLOYMENT AND PRACTICE:

If you are working are you able to practise some of your new skills in your work? Are you encouraged to do this? Does your boss expect you to do the course? Does your boss expect you to complete the course? In any particular time? If you are not working are you able to practise some of the new skills in any other situations? What would you like to be doing with your new skills?

OTHER POINTS:

There may be other issues that I have not thought about. If so, could you note these and what your thoughts are on them.

There is no need for you to identify who are the members of your group; however, it would be helpful if you could state what kind of community you live in - such as remote Aboriginal community, north coastal town, south west community and so on, and the level of courses you are involved in.

I look forward to hearing from you.

PAT GRIMOLDBY
CO-ORDINATOR
AEEC & GEC REVIEW WORKSHOP

16 November 1981

In addition, an outline of issues to be considered, was sent with all invitations with a request for comment - either in writing or at the seminar itself.

These issues were:
ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Do we need a formal statistical evaluation of courses?
   (a) If so, what information needs gathering?
   (b) How should this be prepared so that it's of greatest benefit to
       (i) Intercultural Studies Centre;
       (ii) Employers?
       (iii) Tutors and students?

2. Does GEC lead into AEEC? Is the gap in skills levels too great?

3. What should, if anything, be provided for students of very limited skills, ie bordering on illiteracy?

4. (a) Should another course be introduced to provide a "middle group" of skills?
   (b) If so, should 3 units, communications/maths, be included in AEEC and 2 in GEC, or vice versa (vice versa more or less dependent on (3)

5. (a) What skills/attitudes do you think the students need in
       (i) GEC
       (ii) AEEC
   (b) What skills/attitudes do you think the students learn in
       (i) GEC
       (ii) AEEC
   (c) What are employers' needs?
       (i) How do you perceive these needs within the employees' on the job training currently offered by employers?

6. (a) What do think tutors need?
   (b) What do you think tutors learn?
   (c) Are tutors able to accept responsibility for interpreting the course commensurate to their students' needs?
   (d) What problems does this present, if any?

7. What should be our priorities in determining outcomes of AEEC?

8. How could the quality of course content be improved with specific reference to audio visual support material.

9. (a) How should students be assessed at (i) GEC
       (ii) AEEC
   (b) Should tutors accept a greater role in the assessment of students?
   (c) Is there a place for student self-evaluation?
10. (a) What skills should receive greater emphasis in units within:
   (i) GEC Communications;
   (ii) GEC Mathematics;
   (iii) GEC Community Studies;
   (iv) AEEC Communications;
   (v) AEEC Mathematics
   (vi) AEEC Community Studies

(b) What other skills, if any, should be included in each of the above?

(c) (i) Do you think that the skills covered in each of the above are sufficiently sequential?
   (ii) Is there sufficient skills' consolidation?

11. What are realistic expectations/outcomes of correspondence courses?

12. Are you aware of any resources which could realistically be included within the courses?

13. What outcomes would you like to see come out of this workshop?
4. **GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE**

(a) The original aims and objectives of the General Education Certificate were as follows -

TO PROVIDE A PART-TIME LOCALLY-BASED EXTERNAL STUDIES PROGRAMME

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1. TO IMPROVE GENERAL EDUCATION STANDARD.</th>
<th>2. TO RELATE TO PRESENT ABILITIES OF EACH STUDENT.</th>
<th>3. TO PROVIDE JOB-RELATED SKILLS.</th>
<th>4. TO GIVE QUALIFICATIONS RECOGNISED BY EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>5. TO LOCATE STUDIES IN HOME LOCALITIES</th>
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<td>i) To give a preparatory background for other special courses.</td>
<td>i) To offer units in manageable sections.</td>
<td>i) To offer units in communications basic maths &amp; social studies.</td>
<td>i) To award certificates of GE on successful completion.</td>
<td>i) To employ tutors.</td>
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<td>ii) To consider Aboriginal culture and history.</td>
<td>ii) To accommodate differences between students.</td>
<td>ii) To develop links with employers.</td>
<td>ii) To award certificates as Pass and Credit levels.</td>
<td>ii) To select tutors for their ability to support students.</td>
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<td>iii) To develop an awareness of wider issues.</td>
<td>iii) To divide units into 3-4 self-contained sections.</td>
<td>iii) To maintain liaison with other courses offered by Technical Schools.</td>
<td>iii) To keep employers informed of course content and levels.</td>
<td>iii) To arrange visits to students where no tutors available.</td>
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<td>iv) To arrange visits by students to other centres where fellow-students are located.</td>
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<td>v) To encourage contact between course participant.</td>
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<td>vi) To use supplementary teaching aide e.g. audio-visual especially.</td>
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During the initial aims and objectives exercise on Friday, 27, two alternative sets of aims were developed. These were:

**GENERAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATE**

1. **TO GAIN SELF-MANAGEMENT BY THE ACQUISITION OF APPROPRIATE SKILLS**

   1. **TO DEVELOP STUDY SKILLS FOR USE IN FURTHER STUDIES**
   
      i. To develop skills of self education.
   
      ii. To develop study habits for use in further education.
   
      iii. To provide a bridging course to the AEEC.

   2. **TO EQUIP STUDENTS WITH RELEVANT SKILLS REQUIRED FOR ACHIEVABLE EMPLOYMENT**
   
      i. To give grounding especially communications/maths for variety of employment opportunities.
   
      ii. To orient students to achievable employment.
   
      iii. To enable students to gain employment skills.

   3. **TO DEVELOP EVERY DAY SKILLS MAKING INDIVIDUALS MORE EFFECTIVE IN COMMUNITY**
   
      i. To adequately understand written material required in daily life.
   
      ii. To provide skills necessary to aid other Aboriginal people.
   
      iii. To provide skills for every day living.

   4. **TO GIVE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR OWN LIVES**
   
      i. To facilitate the development of the student's own community.
   
      ii. To contribute to the personal development of the Aboriginal participants.
   
      iii. To facilitate community development through the personal development of participants.

   5. **TO DEVELOP A POSITIVE SELF CONCEPT THROUGH MASTERING BASIC LITERACY SKILLS**
   
      i. To de-mystify the learning process.
   
      ii. To give Aboriginal people confidence in themselves/their education abilities.
2. TO HELP ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIAL THROUGH EDUCATION

1. TO PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY TO MOTIVATE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE FOR FURTHER EDUCATION
   i. To provide an opportunity for Aboriginal people in further education.
   ii. To encourage students to continue.
   iii. To prepare students for advanced education.

2. TO HELP ABORIGINAL PEOPLE TO DEVELOP NUMERACY SKILLS
   i. Develop basic maths skills for budgetting.
   ii. Develop numeracy skills (computing, calculators etc.) to keep up with improved technology.

3. TO DEVELOP SELF CONFIDENCE
   i. To develop self-esteem.
   ii. To help Aboriginal people to communicate.
   iii. Aboriginal people have special abilities. The GEC courses should cater for these abilities.

4. TO PROVIDE FOR AND IMPROVE SKILLS FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE SEEKING EMPLOYMENT
   i. To prepare for employment.
   ii. To provide on-the-job education.
   iii. To improve employment chances.

5. TO PREPARE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE FOR FURTHER STUDIES
   i. To be able to prepare students for further studies.
   ii. To encourage (further) participation in tertiary studies.
   iii. To give Aboriginal people access to tertiary institutions.

6. TO PROVIDE RE-ENTRY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL STUDENTS
   i. To provide education which is successful and confidence building.
   ii. To provide education for Aboriginal students who may have had a minimum of secondary education.
   iii. To provide education for Aboriginal students who may have left school.
DISCUSSION

The main points that emerged were that:

i) opportunity to improve on existing knowledge was provided locally.

ii) this education opportunity be appropriate to the needs of the individual student - in other words, that the course be flexible to accommodate differences in background and aspirations;

iii) the course develops a basis for further studies;

iv) that employment potential be enhanced.

v) the course contributes to the personal development of students.

During general discussion on the aims, the point was made that the fourth aim in the second set of alternative objectives e.g. "to provide the opportunity to motivate Aboriginal people for further education" was paternalistic and unacceptable.

Responses from tutors relating to the General Education Certificate are included in Section 7 related to specific issues.
5. ADVANCED EDUCATION ENTRY CERTIFICATE AND GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

5 (a) The current aim and objectives for AEDEC are:

TO PROVIDE A COURSE WHICH AIMS TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR TERTIARY LEVEL STUDIES

1. To equip Aboriginal students academically to enter tertiary institutions.
2. To provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to manage the demands of tertiary level studies.
3. To prepare students personally for the substantial change and possible strain of studying and living away from their home environments.

4. To provide students and tertiary institutions with a reliable assessment of ability and potential to succeed at tertiary level.

5. To allow students to undertake the course within their own communities and without the need to move to a major urban centre to gauge whether they were able to undertake a tertiary level course.
During the initial aims and objectives exercise on Friday, two alternative sets of aims were developed. These were:

1. **To provide tertiary opportunities, employment skills, self-confidence and community commitment**
   - **To give Aboriginal people access to tertiary institutions through external studies**
     1. To provide part-time studies.
     2. To provide study skills and support.
     3. To encourage persistence and sense of achievement.
   - **To improve employment skills for Aboriginal people**
     1. To enable Aboriginal people to pursue vocations as they desire.
     2. To provide students with the skills required by their job.
     3. To improve employment opportunities and skills for Aboriginal people.
   - **To develop self confidence and a community commitment**
   - **To provide educational opportunities for mature Aboriginals to tertiary level**
     1. To increase pride and self-confidence in Aboriginal people for general living.
     2. To give a person confidence in their ability to achieve.
     3. To present a broad spectrum of general knowledge.
(2) TO PROVIDE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINALS
TO DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL

TO IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT SKILLS THEREBY PROVIDING GREATER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1. Education means more job opportunities.
2. To improve employment skills for Aboriginal people.
3. To provide a broad course that would improve employment skills.

TO DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF LOCATION

1. To employ local tutors to assist students in their studies.
2. To be aware of problems Aboriginal people confront in schools. Reasons for high drop-out rates.

TO DEVELOP A LOCAL EXTERNAL COURSE RELEVANT TO ABORIGINALS

1. To provide on-the-spot relevant educational opportunities for Aboriginal people.
2. To provide Aboriginal people with opportunities to gain adult education or mature studies.
3. To motivate Aboriginal people to further education.

TO MAKE AVAILABLE A PERSONALIZED RELEVANT FURTHER EDUCATION PROGRAM LOCALLY

1. To provide the academic support required for student success.
2. The continuation of a personal development program.
3. To serve a personal purpose with understanding people.

TO ALLOW PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A RELAXED LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

1. To make students familiar with standard of tertiary study.
2. To prepare Aboriginal people to succeed in tertiary institutions.
3. To give Aboriginal people access to tertiary institutions.

TO DEVELOP A LOCAL EXTERNAL COURSE RELEVANT TO ABORIGINALS

1. To prepare Aboriginal people for professional studies.
2. To encourage Aboriginal students to enrol for further education.
3. To encourage learning regardless of where it leads.

TO PROVIDE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINALS TO DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL

1. To provide on-the-spot relevant educational opportunities for Aboriginal people.
2. To provide Aboriginal people with opportunities to gain adult education or mature studies.
3. To motivate Aboriginal people to further education.

TO ALLOW PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A RELAXED LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

1. To make students familiar with standard of tertiary study.
2. To prepare Aboriginal people to succeed in tertiary institutions.
3. To give Aboriginal people access to tertiary institutions.

TO PREPARE ABORIGINALS FOR TERTIARY STUDIES THROUGH PART-TIME SUPPORTED STUDY

1. To provide external studies for mature age students because of environment.
2. To provide the academic support required for student success.
3. To serve a personal purpose with understanding people.

TO PROVIDE LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINALS TO DEVELOP EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL
5 (c) DISCUSSION

From the foregoing it can be seen that issues relating to the GEC course were considered along with AEEC issues, thus diffusing some objectives that were solely related to the AEEC course.

The reason for this was no doubt due to the arbitrary nature of allocation to groups. If such an exercise is to be conducted again, it is recognised that it would be helpful if group allocation was made according to areas of interest or experience.

The main aspects of the current AEEC course are that -

i) Students may remain in their home environment;

ii) Students are prepared for tertiary studies.

The AEEC related points which emerged on Friday were that -

i) There be access to tertiary institutions.

ii) Remoteness from education institutions is not a barrier to pre-tertiary studies.

iii) The course is relevant to the needs for Aboriginal students.

Interest in all the above is an additional objective - that is the development of self-confidence, especially in a further education environment.

The fact that the AEEC course has a clearly defined objective - e.g. tertiary entrance, means that the objectives and subsequent tasks are readily definable. This contrasts to the more general nature of the aims of the GEC course.
6. STUDENT RESPONSES

The GEC and AECC students who participated on campus, met with the seminar coordinator and a tutor-course writer on Saturday afternoon. Points raised by these students concerning the two courses were:

- GEC helps brush up literacy skills; gives student confidence.
- Need to be able to "jump out" of GEC into AECC without going all the way through GEC. If students and tutor agree that student is ready for AECC.
- Communications II should be something like Communications C15 - allows greater challenge*.

* This course has been re-written and the students were speaking of the old CII. There should be sufficient challenge in the re-written course. (Course writers).

ASSIGNMENTS

Taping - Students do not like making tapes
- They do not like doing interviews
- They are reluctant to interview friends and relatives for fear they think they are prying.
- Questions were asked relating to the privacy of interview tapes, who would hear them would they be wiped etc.
- Students generally don't like talking into tape recorders
- Students found it hard to get interview respondents.

NOTE: The current practice with student tapes is that they are either returned direct to students or wiped if the tape belongs to the College.

RELATIONSHIPS AND TUTORS

Tutors and Markers: Need to get to know your students
- Should not compare students, students should be treated as individuals.
- Students do not like changing tutors, however there did seem to be some merit in having a change of tutors if a student had been with one tutor for a long time
- Students sometimes get too much help from tutors, the work sent in is not really the work of the students.

SPECIFIC UNIT COMMENT

Course Content: Good to hear for the first time, "to be hit" straight away with Aboriginal recent history
- The course is unfinished, "you keep on asking questions, it makes you want to ask your parents about your background".
- The question of identity, am I Aboriginal or am I white is being asked.
- GEC and AECC make you realise there is no shame in being Aboriginal
- During enrolment in the course the distinction between Aboriginal descent and Aboriginal identity needs clarification.
NOTE: Most of the comments on the previous page related to the Community Studies C20 unit of the AEBC course.

REMOTE STUDENT COMMENTS

Comments were received from an AEBC graduate in Derby. Both courses were seen as valuable to Aborigines in that they allow them to develop their education, and improve their career opportunities. She took the courses to enter teacher training which she has now done.

One criticism was that there is no follow up course after AEBC.

Comments from other students in remote areas were made through their tutors and these are included in the next section.
7. SPECIFIC ISSUES

Arising from the exercise on Friday afternoon in which revised aims and objectives of the course were prepared, some specific issues arose which required further discussion. The seminar participants initially approached their issues as one group before breaking up into two discussion groups, each focusing on either the GEC or AECC course. The following issues arose from the discussions -

7.1 TUTOR ISSUES

(i) Tutor Selection

The present methods of tutor selection were discussed and the following points were compiled:

* tutor positions are passed from one to another, by virtue of a position held e.g. Aboriginal Access teachers.
* tutors are recommended by personal contacts.
* tutors are sought by the College representatives
* tutors are nominated by students

The question of developing a pool of tutors in a town arose and was considered desirable to cover contingencies such as incompatibility between tutor and student and the unexpected transfer of a tutor. [REC. 1]

(ii) Tutor Orientation and Support

Support for tutors needs to cover the tutor role and the expectations of both the student and the College. Special attention needs to be paid to the student-tutor relationship. This will include areas such as encouragement and flexibility, whilst at the same time considering course needs and objectives. Another aspect of the tutors' role is providing feedback to course writers where required. This is important for the purpose of assessment within the present courses and appropriateness of future courses. [RECS. 2, 3]

Familiarisation

It was agreed that tutors need to be familiar with the course notes they are presenting to students. Tutors who have not had previous teaching experience and may be unaware of current approaches in adult education, may need additional guidance and support from the College. [REC. 4]

Feedback

Tutors in both courses feel the need for greater feedback from markers to tutors and indicated comments to tutors should draw attention to specific weaknesses. The tutor is then in a position to make appropriate comments to the student. [REC. 5]
Students and Self-discipline

AEEC tutors felt the skills and attitudes developed in the course needed to be developed more formally. In the formal situation students need to be encouraged to work alone and learn self discipline in order to meet study goals and timetable commitments. (REC. 3)

Counselling

Tutors frequently found they became counsellors more than tutors. They often became so involved in counselling there is a danger they may lose sight of their tutoring role. (REC. 2)

Tutor Network

It was suggested that one way of overcoming these difficulties is to develop an informal network with other tutors in which problems can be shared and support given from an experiential base. (RECS. 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6)

(iii) Discussion

Student Progress

When all the above was discussed with course writers and markers, markers too expressed the need for feedback from tutors. This would indicate general student progress and how students react to the criticism of markers. Tutors are the appropriate people to approach in this regard as they are aware of the students circumstances, possible problems and can pass on to the markers comments at an appropriate time in a positive manner. (REC. 5)

Assignment Return

Some tutors and students had experienced unnecessary delays in the return of assignments. Such delays result in subsequent delays in the completion of following assignments and delay student progress, and interest may wane. Students seek feedback as soon as possible and are usually not prepared to continue with assignment work until earlier material has been returned.

Awareness Concerning Cultural Difference

Tutors indicated there was a need to be aware of cultural differences in learning patterns that could be influencing student responses. Most tutors indicated that although they learn about these differences through their involvement in the course, they would have appreciated some preparation in this area. (REC. 4)

Preparation of Assignments

Some concern was expressed by course markers regarding the difficulty in knowing whether the tutor or the students work is being presented for assessment. An approach was suggested whereby students submit a draft of their essay to the tutor for comment and then after revision submit the work to the College. By tutors limiting their assistance up to and including the draft stage, it is hoped the final submission will more accurately reflect the students ability.
Contact with Mt Lawley College Staff

The isolation of many tutors and students was emphasised and the need for personal contact with College staff was raised. (REC. 6)

7.2 RESOURCES

(i) Availability

Some concern was expressed about the availability of some reference materials and other resources required for the course. The College, through the External Studies Library, makes most of the texts and references available on loan and there appears to be delays in making these available to students. (REC. 9)

(ii) References

More use could be made of supplementary materials where applicable. The newscutting service has been well received and greater use could be made of this in the course notes and other reference materials. The use of reference materials provided is sometimes under-utilized as they are insufficiently crossreferenced in worksheets. (REC. 10)

(iii) Audio-Visual Material

Audio visual materials were considered desirable, especially by those in remote areas. Comment was made about the need for slower and clear speech by those preparing audio-tapes. The possibility of preparing transcripts to accompany tapes was suggested as a way of overcoming the difficulties.

Video tapes are seen as highly desirable and there presently appears to be difficulties in making these available to external students. (REC. 11)

7.3 EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

For some time there has been some concern regarding the use of the courses by some employing authorities. The courses are not designed for employers' benefit, rather they are for the benefit of individual students although where employers have supported employees it usually has had a positive effect. There needs to be some form of assurance that students wishing to enrol in the course are not co-erced by employers.

Likewise, there is a need for employers to support the courses actively, particularly in dealings with the funding authorities. Once students are enrolled through their employer, there needs to be continuing support for students from their employer.
Efforts should be made to encourage employers to allow students:

* time off to study;
* a quiet corner or place to study;
* release to attend course seminars and workshops; and
* general encouragement in their studies.

Employers need to be aware of the flexibility inherent in the courses and the inadvisability of pressuring students by placing unrealistic expectations on them.

Should employers seek to develop the courses into a more specialized vocational function, this should be negotiated with the College, however, the present generalist nature of the courses should not be changed.

7.4 GENERAL COURSE ISSUES

(i) Course selection

Although the present selection system of students generally operates well there are from time to time students who may not be obvious AEEC or GEC candidates. A worksheet equivalent to the standard at the end of the GEC course should be developed and sent to those students who upon applying for the courses are neither definite GEC or AEEC candidates.

(ii) Course Promotion

The present enrolment is currently at least two-thirds female and the majority of males are from the prison populations. It was suggested the course be promoted among Aboriginal men. It is recognized that the employing agencies supporting the courses engage a greater proportion of women than men. (i.e. health services and schools).

(iii) Course Assessment

It was noted that not all students enrolling in the AEEC course intended continuing on to tertiary studies. Consideration could be given to recognizing the aims of some students who may be enrolled in AEEC for purposes other than achieving tertiary entry qualifications.

At the conclusion of AEEC studies it has been suggested that an independent formal assessment programme be developed. This should occur independent of tutors and could also be used as a preparation for tertiary studies.

For students enrolled in GEC, a formal evaluation of their studies was considered desirable. Reports of progress could be issued at the conclusion of individual units and the course.

NOTE: In second semester 1981 an on campus week was held for all students completing the AEEC course. This included some formal testing of students, revision of units and orientation to tertiary studies.

The course co-ordinator advises that at the completion of a unit statements of Academic Records are issued and Certificates are presented at the conclusion of a course.
(iv) **Skills Development**

The development of self confidence through improved communication skills was seen by tutors to be a vital aspect of the GEC. It was also noted that other courses provide basic literacy skills and GEC should not get involved in this field.

However, tutors did comment that the vocabulary of GEC was sometimes too difficult and that the gap between the GEC and AEEC courses was not easy to bridge. The statements concerning the vocabulary came from remote areas where further educational opportunities were limited, and the difficulty may be related to limited access to stimulus material rather than the course itself.

**NOTE:**

Very few comments were made about the units at a detailed level. One comment was that for GEC students there should be a greater emphasis on life skills within units.

8. **CONCLUSIONS:**

8.1 **Why people enrol in AEEC**

It would appear that most students enrol in AEEC in order that they may equip themselves for tertiary studies, however, there appear to be a minority group that enrol for other reasons, e.g. improving employment and promotional opportunities.

It is also recognized that AEEC offers almost the only opportunity for further studies and intellectual challenge to Aboriginal people in isolated areas. In addition, it offers these opportunities to people in urban areas who are not able to undertake full time studies because of family or employment commitments.

8.2 **Why people enrol in GEC**

The most common reason for people enrolling in GEC is that they wanted to further their education for their own satisfaction.

Another reason for enrolling in the course is that students wanted to improve their employment potential.

A third reason is for preparation for acceptance into AEEC. It needs to be noted that unsuccessful AEEC applicants may, where appropriate, be directed to GEC.
9. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations that emerged from the Seminar were:

1. It is considered desirable to develop a locally based pool of tutors to cover contingencies.

   **ACTION:**
   
   The College will endeavour to identify potential tutors in any given community.

2. Tutors often need support in the counselling of students, especially in the area of interpersonal relationships and pressures.

3. Some tutors who have not had previous experience in this role may need assistance in the planning and structuring of their tutoring programmes.

4. Tutors who have not previously had experience of working with Aborigines may require some orientation to cultural differences, that is to family expectations and patterns of learning.

   **ACTION:**
   
   (i) The College will promote greater contact between tutors at a local level by distributing information on the location of tutors.

   (ii) Tutors will be encouraged to contribute to a tutor news sheet in which special skills and issues and solutions may be shared.

   Other avenues to provide forums for tutors and orientation to cultural differences are currently being explored.

5. There is a need for increased communication between course markers and tutors concerning assessment and unit content.

   **ACTION:**
   
   The College will encourage communication between tutors and course writers where appropriate.

6. There should be increased contact between College staff and tutors and students.

   **ACTION:**
   
   As travel funds are limited, it is hoped that the action to promote local support networks between tutors and communication between tutors and course writers, will go some way towards filling this recommendation.

7. To maintain satisfactory student progress and interest in the course it is wise that marked assignment material be returned as soon as possible.

   **ACTION:**
   
   The College will continue its efforts to have marked assignments returned as soon as possible. Recognition must be given to the fact that when a new unit is being marked, the return of assignments may be delayed so that comments and marking may be consistent among students.
8. That students submit a draft of their assignments to their tutor for comment before submitting finished work to the College.

ACTION:

That this recommendation be incorporated within the tutor handbook.

9. Reference materials and other resources needed for the course need to be readily available.

ACTION:

The College will need to ensure sufficient stocks of reference materials are held in the external library and that materials loaned to students are returned in a reasonable time.

10. Whilst cross referencing of supplementary materials with course notes is desirable, it is not possible given courses are written by different persons and taking into account varying student needs, it is recommended that the newscuttings service be continued and wherever possible they should incorporate local news.

11. It is recommended that the possibility be explored of providing synopsis of audio tape contents. Whilst the desirability of increasing the availability of video tapes is recognized, the difficulties related to copyright issues often preclude wider distribution.

12. That employers recognize the needs of their employees with relation to tutorials, workshops and other course activities.

ACTION:

Where students are employed, they are to be encouraged to consult with their local supervisor about their study needs. Tutors should be encouraged to liaise with students' employers with regard to general course matters.

13. To overcome the present difficult of assessing some students into either the GEC or AEEC course, a worksheet should be sent to these students upon their applying to the course.

ACTION:

That the AEEC and GEC unit writers prepare and distribute a worksheet, as outlined above.

14. It was suggested that the course be promoted among Aboriginal men.

ACTION:

The promotion of GEC and AEEC courses through employers, related tertiary institutions and Aboriginal groups be continued.
WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

NAME

Winnie McHENRY
Carmel CAPEWELL
Jeanette ISHIGUCHI
Kathy YARRAN
Lynette NELSON
Bill ARTHUR
Irene SORENSON
M Gerard BROTHERSTON (Sr)
John McPHEE
Margaret McGrath
Bernie MOORE
Yvonne SMITHSON
Patricia RHATIGAN (Sr)
John FLEMING
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Olive TAYLOR
Christina ROSS
Phil SCHWENKE
Peter de WITT
John SHERWOOD
Josie YAPPO
Doug HUBBLE
Vicki PHILLIPS
Elaine WALLAM
Marlene MURPHY
Mary PAUL
Jenny TRUSLOVE
Ed GARRISON
Iris McKINELY
Liz WILLIAMS

ORGANISATION

C & CHS Health Worker, Bently GEC students.
EDWA Teacher Aide, Carnarvon AEEC student
CECWA Teaching Assistant Derby AEEC student
EDWA Teaching Aide Langford GEC student
C & CHS Health Worker, Koondoola, GEC student
AEEC Tutor, Fremantle Prison
CECWA
AEEC Tutor Moora
Commonwealth Department of Education
" " "
GEC Tutor, Pallotine Centre, Rossmoyne.
Commonwealth Public Service Board
AEEC Tutor Broome
CECWA
MLCAE Assistant Director
AEEC Tutor Derby
EDWA, Early Childhood, AEEC student
EDWA, Aboriginal Access (TAFE) Shenton Park
EDWA, Aboriginal Access (TAFE) Shenton Park
Lecturer MLCAE
Lecturer MLCAE
MLACE AEEC and GEC Administration
" " " "
" " " "
AEEC student, Victoria Park
C & CHS Health Worker, Hedland AEEC student
EDWA Teacher Aide, Carnarvon, AEEC student
AEEC student, Perth
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Kevin DEAR
Rob WINROE
Harry PICKETT
Anthea TAYLOR
Clem WRIGHT
Tony KNIGHT
Christine MORRISON
Peter REYNOLDS
Shirley THORNE
Lyn CALLAGHAN
Sally HODSON
Norman WINDER
Pat GRIMOLDBY

Aboriginal Education Resources Unit
MLCAE Lecturer
""
EDWA Aboriginal Education
Department of Aboriginal Affairs
EDWA, Aboriginal Access (TAFE) Balga
Aboriginal Legal Service
EDWA Aboriginal Access (TAFE). Thornlie
GEC Unit Writer and Marker, Kalgoorlie
WA Museum
EDWA Aboriginal Access (TAFE) Midland
MLCAE Lecturer
Aboriginal Development Commission
WAIT, Counselling Services
AEEC Unit Writer and Marker
Department of Corrections, Fremantle Prison
External Studies MLCAE
""
""
Intercultural Studies MLCAE
AEEC student,Toodyay
AEEC Tutor, Toodyay
AEEC Tutor, Perth
AEEC & GEC Administrative Assistant MLCAE
Workshop Co-ordinator
Community Services Training Centre

ORGANISATIONS LISTED ABOVE

C & CHS Community and Child Health Services
ENA Education Department of Western Australia
CECWA Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia
MLCAE Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education (now Mount Lawley Campus of WA College)
WORKSHOP STRATEGIES

Friday 27 November, 1981

Introduce afternoon session - discussion groups.

Aim will be to develop operational tasks and themes that encompass these tasks relating to both the AECC and GEC courses. Will consider whether or not the present aims of these two courses are sufficient descriptions and what the expectations are of those of us involved with either of the two courses. Reason for going about the task in the planned way is that it allows all participants to have equal access to decision-making process. At the end of today's session it is hoped that we will have arrived at a position when the AIMS and OBJECTIVES and the TASKS for both of these courses can be articulated FROM THE POINTS OF VIEW OF THOSE ATTENDING THIS SEMINAR.

For instance it is hoped that we can develop an OBJECTIVE TREE that looks like this for each course or potential course:

```
  AIM
                         (BANNER: PURPOSE)
       OBJECTIVE 1         OBJECTIVE 2         OBJECTIVE 3         OBJECTIVE 4         OBJECTIVE 5 (THEMES: WHY)
       TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK
       TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK
       TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK
       TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK               TASK
```

GROUPING: You will notice that your name sticker has been marked with a colour; this indicates your group; the groups have been allocated to the following rooms - you will find a list at the door of this lecture theatre if you miss hearing the allocation now. Also a sheet indicating the tasks, and the times will be in each room for you. A facilitator will be coming round to see you in your groups while you are meeting. Please be back here by

GROUPS TASK: The members of the groups are being asked to develop ten word action type statements that state what the group participant expects of the GEC and AECC course - you will be advised which of these courses your group will be considering.
STEP 1: Action-type statements - these must begin with "To..........." and be NO LONGER than 10 words. 
In addition, each statement must be one action only - you should not use "and" and link up two statements. 
Any statement that is more than 10 words long, or includes "and" will be discarded.

STEP 2: Silently - develop your own three statements and then put them in heap UPSIDE DOWN.
PLEASE DO NOT DISCUSS OR TALK ABOUT THE STATEMENTS YOU ARE DEVELOPING.

SAMPLE OF AN ACTION TYPE STATEMENT: "To allow access to tertiary institutions by Aboriginal people"; "To provide education opportunities for mature Aboriginal people". "To initiate administrative skills in potential PSB employees" etc etc.

STEP 3: When everyone has completed their three ten-word statements (10 minutes) and placed them upside down in a heap in centre of group, then each group member takes it in turn to:
Pick up two statements, peruse them and decide whether they are the same or different; if different then place in two different clusters is same, then put together in same cluster.

Next person does not put down their two statements from the pile until previous person has completed his/her move.

If there are 15 people in the group, then there will be 45 statements. After the 15 have placed two statements each there will be 15 statements left. 
Each group member then picks up one statement and places it in the pile he/she considers most appropriate. 
THERE MUST BE NO DISCUSSION ABOUT THE STATEMENTS, WHERE YOU ARE PLACING THEM, AND HOW MANY THE SAME THERE ARE, OR HOW MANY ARE DIFFERENT.

(5 minutes)
At the end of this exercise you will have a number of piles looking like this:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
\text{mmm} & \text{ooo} & \text{ppp} & \text{yyyy} & \text{www} & \text{xxxx} & \text{zzzz} \\
\text{mmm} & \text{ooo} & \text{yyyy} & \text{www} & \text{xxxx} & \text{zzzz} \\
\text{mmm} & \text{yyyy} & \text{www} & \text{xxxx} & \text{zzzz} \\
\text{mmm} & \text{yyyy} & \text{www} & \text{zzzz} \\
\end{array}
\]

making up a total of 45 statements in about 7 clusters.

**STEP 4:**

Group members get into 3's - if there are 15 in the group there will be five groups of three.

Each triad takes a pile of ten word statements and develops an overall 10 word action statement that best covers all of that group.

Where there is only one statement, that too can be considered a triad as a second theme. In the example above the oooo's and the pppp clusters could each be considered by one group; or the mmmm's and the oooo's could be taken by one group and considered as two themes while the ppp's could be considered by one of the other triads.

Once a theme has been found it is then written up on butcher's paper by one member of triad, whilst the others are settling on three ten word statements from the remaining statements of the pile.

The result should be five or more themes - each with three ten-word action-type statements under it (the operational objectives or tasks).

**STEP 5:**

**BANNERING** - that is, developing a ten word action statement, beginning with "To......." that covers all the themes on the group's sheet. (AIM).
The fifteen group members then vote and put their vote against the banner of their choice – in descending order of 3, 2, 1.

The ten word banner with the most votes is the one that then goes over the themes.

The end result should then look like this.

**BANNER (AIM, PURPOSE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVE 1</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE 2</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE 3</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE 4</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE 5</th>
<th>(THEMES, WHY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>(OPERATIONAL,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>OBJECTIVES:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>HOW)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STEP 6:**

**Time**

Minutes 5

The group then takes its sheet to the main meeting room and "art galerie" it in the indicated place – this will be colour coded to match the group colour.