Introduction

VU's Access and Success project is a major University research and development initiative to work with schools in the west of Melbourne to improve young people’s access to, and successful participation in, post compulsory education and training. It is one part of Making VU, the university’s strategic plan which includes a commitment to enhancing educational opportunity and outcomes for young people in Melbourne’s west.

The project was informed from the outset by research identifying lower aspirations, attendance, academic achievement, and completion rates for students in Melbourne’s west, together with higher unemployment and crime rates, compared with other regions (Teese 2005, Wiseman 2006). It recognises the significance of school and of school achievement in developing connections between young people from the region (characteristically low SES, high NESB and without family history of higher education participation) and post compulsory pathways. The project builds on the outcomes of the Aspirations research which the University is doing with low SES school students in the region. It addresses itself to four key themes identified by research as informing sustained educational disadvantage and circumscribed educational opportunities in the West:

- Low academic attainment and lower than average school completions
- Low post school aspirations or poor alignments of aspirations and pathways
- Poor understandings of post compulsory options generally
- Need for support of a valued, committed and active teacher workforce in the region.
The Access and Success team

In 2006 Victoria University announced the establishment of a five year project which aimed to improve the access and successful participation of young people in post compulsory education and training through collaborative research and deliberate informed strategic action through partnerships with schools in the western region of Melbourne.

In 2008 Access and Success site-based projects are conducted in over 70 schools and other learning settings in Melbourne’s West.

At present the Access and Success team consists of two joint directors, three project managers, a research officer and an administrative officer. This team collectively facilitates the implementation, administration and evaluation of an interconnected set of projects aimed at improving educational outcomes for students in Melbourne’s west and better understanding the nature and purpose of VU’s partnerships with schools, their communities and the region.

In attempting to make a difference to educational disadvantage in its region this project has from the outset, sought to pursue innovative models that build on existing successes and strengths, and which can contribute to a re-envisioning of the role of universities in partnering with communities to address pressing social issues (ref, ref). A number of factors have therefore underpinned the methodological framework established for this work.

The project has emphasised in both its program development and research the significance of partnerships and locally appropriate responses and has developed a multi-pronged approach to the complex and diverse issues faced by the regions’ schools. Learning Enrichment partnerships seek to enrich the learning experiences of all students in our partner schools through locally developed projects. Youth Access initiatives aim to develop and expand students’ aspirations and knowledge in determining future education pathways. Schools Plus Provision recognises the role VU can and should play in connecting communities across the west, and the unique contribution a dual sector institution can make to partnerships to strengthen educational outcomes. Working with teachers in the west through a range of projects designed to enhance pedagogical and
leadership skills, Teacher Leadership partnerships connect with and complement broader Access and Success work.

Research Methodology

Access and Success initiatives seek to explore ways that universities can contribute positively, through resources and sustained collaborative work, to the educational capacity of a school, community and region as a whole. The emphasis is on relationship building, cultivating networks and making connections between partners that support sustainable models of resource sharing and collaborative research. This work makes an explicit and important connection between social and educational capital, regarding the empowerment and capacity building of all participants as a cumulative outcome as important as the positive outcomes of each teaching and learning project.

Access and Success partnerships reject a service provision or outreach model of relationship between university and community, instead seeking to develop models which redefine the nature of relationships between universities and schools through the development of collaborative professional research teams.

The project thus represents an innovative and multi-layered partnership between the university and schools in the region to address local educational disadvantage. The building of partnerships is in fact a significant feature in both the practice and research...
component of the work as the university, schools and other community partners work together to define research questions, plan locally based projects, commit resources to the work and interrogate locally generated data. This takes the partnership model beyond traditional university-community outreach relationships, moving more toward a model of committed engagement.

Specifically the research agenda works to:

- build on and develop the historic, successful model of school-university partnerships at VU

- develop case studies of practice to deepen understanding of strategies to enhance educational access and success in the region

- develop an evidence-based framework for research on participation and performance of equity groups in post compulsory education in regions of high educational disadvantage

- track school based data over 3-5 years for indicators of change: school retention, achievement, destination, attitude and pathway data

- investigate and theorise school-based practice in addressing needs of educationally disadvantaged students

- foster partnerships that support deepened relationships and generate new learning around the sustainability and effective outcomes of partnerships between schools and VU

- build knowledge around how universities can work effectively with communities, through an exploration of the practice of university-school partnerships as an aspect of community engagement

In evaluation of this work a range of success indicators aligned to immediate aims are considered important, and include:
• VU students’ professional learning
• Schools’ local outcomes
• Impact on teacher workforce
• Longer term indicators around VU/school partnerships: relationships, sustainability, new learning and development of educational capital

As a project using an innovative research approach, Access and Success is developing a model that will evolve and be evaluated throughout the project life cycle. The progressive learnings and outcomes of implementing the model will inform an ongoing sustainable approach. While confident of the benefits of the project’s use of school based partnerships in addressing educational disadvantage in the region the team are cautious about premature application of the partnership model on a large scale basis. Preliminary findings to this point affirm the importance of relationship building and affirmation of trust. These factors underpin sustainable partnerships whose benefits to all parties are evident in daily core activities – as such these relationships can be shown to function without large scale injections of external funds. The project group believe that this model if appropriately applied will allow potential take up across the University and conceivably elsewhere in Australia and internationally.

Access and Success Projects to Date

These individually negotiated projects aim to benefit young people in those school settings through enhanced learning outcomes and/or facilitated access to higher education pathways, and to conduct innovative collaborative research into addressing educational disadvantage in communities where educational outcomes are historically low.

The initiative acts in four major ways to do this:

1. Learning Enrichment

• Learning Enrichment partnerships address issues secondary schools in the region face in building skills in their students to support aspirations for higher education. In focussing on Year levels 7-10 the project team is responding to research (including its own research findings) which contends that effective university/schools projects aimed at promoting disadvantaged students’ participation in higher education should address needs of students in these years to build necessary engagement
and academic outcomes (CSHE, 2008). The bulk of these projects, which are conducted in around 15 schools across the region, are conducted through VU's School of Education. The Access and Success team together with School of Education staff and pre service teachers support schools in western Melbourne with long term projects to improve learning outcomes for students through tackling the literacy, numeracy and information skills needed for participation in vocational and higher education, strengthening their capacity to apply for university and vocational education without needing special access programs;

The following diagram presents a selection of our current Learning Enrichment partnerships, indicating Year levels involved and focus of these projects. As noted this work responds to research calling for the development of pedagogies and curricula which are locally appropriate to students in these school settings and which aim to promote educational capacity and engagement, thus enhancing students’ ability to undertake and success in learning at higher education levels.

2. **Youth Access**

The Youth Access initiative involves working with young people to support school students' understanding of what university has to offer and ways in which entry demands might be addressed. It addresses the aspirations and access aspects of the project. While work with the large Bayside College deals directly with immediate pathways interests and needs of senior secondary students -- young people on the brink of transitioning to higher education
and training -- other projects address school students in middle years. This allows the project team to develop insights into the placing and focus of careers and aspiration pilot programs in schools.

The following diagram presents a selection of our current key Youth Access partnerships.

![Diagram showing partnerships between Roxburgh College, Bayside Secondary College, Footscray City College, Years 9 & 10, Developing aspirations, Year 12, PPP application mentoring, Years 9 & 10, Curriculum enhancement.]

3. **Schools Plus Provision**

Schools Plus Provision trials a range of innovative pilot projects aimed at building academic outcomes across diverse school and community learning settings in the region.

Unlike the Learning Enrichment project, with its uniform research methodology and strong focus on the building of academic outcomes in secondary school settings these projects are more diverse in range and characterized by shared, cross and co-delivery of programs. Partners here can include early childhood learning centres, schools and community groups engaged in building opportunities for educational enhancement in the region. Around 65 specific sites are involved in Schools Plus with some projects, such as Bulldog Friendly Schools and Kinder Kinder, operating across multiple settings.

This model is premised on the significance of building strong partnerships between education providers and significant organizations and institutions within their community to build shared resource bases, energy, engagement and trust. In the cases of the Bulldogs schools and Kinder Kinder it has been demonstrated already that such partnerships stimulate further activity, involvement, research investment and outcomes, and that

Access and Success Overview, August 2008
success generates its own momentum for sustainability. These projects constitute one arm of the Access and Success project and will be evaluated for their contribution to the building of enduring educational capital in the region.

The following diagram presents a selection of our current Schools Plus Provision partnerships.

4. Teacher Leadership

- The Teacher Leadership initiative works with teachers from partner schools to enhance their ability to work with students from economically, and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. It involves the establishment of a pilot educational leadership program aimed at building professional effectiveness and reducing attrition among teachers in schools in the region. The project links teachers into higher degree programs, builds targeted research capacity at the individual and school levels, and promotes functional links between the regions schools and Victoria University. Defined study pathways, recognition of prior learning and delivery of flexible learning packages at times and locations which suit the needs of working teachers are features of this pilot program.

It has been demonstrated that young people in regions such as the west of Melbourne rely on their schools significantly more than young people whose homes and communities are better able to provide the social and cultural capital which allows individuals to experience conventional school success (and, hence, ability to transition successfully to higher education). Effective teachers within such schools are indeed well placed to "make a
difference". (Teese, 2005, Wiseman, 2006). The Teacher Leadership initiative involves the establishment of a pilot Leadership program focusing on 3-5 year initiatives aimed at developing the professional capacity of teachers in the west.

The program addresses several key factors associated with educational disadvantage, teacher capability and poor educational outcomes in the West and in comparable regions: the specific challenges associated with students demographic factors faced by teaching staff, the paucity of specific preparation for work in such schools in conventional pre service and professional teacher education, the high attrition of staff in local schools and in the region more generally, and the high proportion of recently graduated or contract staff.

Given the volume of recent educational research highlighting the strong contribution made by teaching quality to student outcomes there is a need to generate a strong body of educational leadership in the region whose understanding of students and their needs is both informed, practically focussed and proactive. This project aims to build effectiveness and longevity among teachers in the region through addressing leadership needs, building targeted research capacity at the individual and school level and promoting functional links between the University and regional schools. It features defined study pathways, recognition of [prior learning and the delivery of flexible learning packages at times and in locations which best suit the needs of working teachers.

An extension of the Leadership project has involved the development of leadership curriculum for VU Student undergraduates to address a highly regarded core graduate capability and build students' success within their undergraduate experience while connecting undergraduates with young people in school settings to serve as effective role models for higher education participation. This connection back into the community is an emerging feature of VU's focus on authentic learning experiences, strong community focus in course work and active engagement in learning (Commitment 3).

The following diagram presents a selection of our current projects in the Teacher Leadership initiative.
The role of universities in addressing both aspiration and achievement among school students, including successful strategies for doing so:

*What role can a university play in improving educational outcomes?*

Historically, universities' responses to educational disadvantage have by and large focused on initiatives such as scholarships and varied selection arrangements, inevitably resulting in successful outcomes for a small number of students, usually the top layer of high achievers. Access and Success partnerships by contrast, seek to explore ways that universities can contribute positively, through resources and sustained collaborative work, to the educational capacity of a school, community and region as a whole.

While large scale federal and state government initiatives currently being implemented are extremely welcomed, and also intended to have broad-reaching outcomes for students, the work of Access and Success takes place at a different level. The emphasis is on relationship building, cultivating networks and making connections between partners that support sustained models of resource sharing and collaborative research. In responding to the Social Inclusion agenda this work makes an explicit and important connection between social and educational capital, considering the empowerment and capacity building of all participants, as equally important as the positive outcomes of each teaching and learning project itself.
Access and Success partnerships reject a service provision model, which negates the possibility of mutual benefit, instead seeking to develop models which redefine the nature of relationships between universities and schools through the development of collaborative professional research teams.

VU has taken a specific approach to school students’ aspiration and achievement in focussing its mission specifically around the capabilities of individuals, enterprises and communities within the western Melbourne region. Its multi sector focus and emphasis on building sustainable futures for all stakeholders within the region mean not only that its regional identity is highly developed but that it accepts the importance of aspiring to broadly based “success” in education. Not all universities take this approach; some for example would regard their role as raising aspiration and success in a much more geographically dispersed but more homogeneous group of school students (such as lowers high achievers).

VU already plays a strong role in making higher educational accessible to young people within its region, serving as the most robust single provider to such students. Work undertaken in the Aspirations project however confirms understandings developed elsewhere in earlier work. Young people whose profile conforms to that of many students from the region – with no family history of university participation, often drawn from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and from families with limited access to social, educational and economic resources likely to underpin educational success – are quite justified in their fears that their unfocussed aspirations for higher education experiences are unlikely to translate into reality. The Access and Success project, as shown, has developed a multi-armed and project based approach to explore ways in which a university can connect with its region on raising aspirations and achievement among school students. Other programs within the university play similar practically grounded approaches – such as the PPP program which simultaneously works to boost school students’ aspiration for higher and vocational education participation and strengthen students’ opportunities to achieve their desired pathways.

Similarly universities such as VU are increasingly aware of the role played by senior secondary assessment and university selection strategies in depressing aspirations and mediating “achievement”. When school success is measured in terms of school completion and the relational status of the ENTER score where are access and success opportunities
for those who are not Year 12 completers or whose ENTERS have been negatively affected by a complex mesh of subject choice, poor schools and home resources, and limited understanding of curriculum and examination demands? Portfolio based applications break the nexus between the ENTER and selection into a higher education, requiring a more holistic view of the student that draws on perspectives of a range of guides and mentors who might be regarded as authoritative on students’ chances of achieving satisfactorily at a university level. ACU and RMIT are 2 universities looking at the practicability of this model in professional and/or vocationally focussed degrees where particular qualities (such as empathy, motivation, and clear values system) are regarded as essential to success in the field.

Response to Access and Success Project from students, schools and the community

At establishment stages take-up and interest was very positive and one challenge has been containing the number of projects to a manageable level.

The projects were first explored with WMR and principals at Western Region meetings in 2006 where the planned approach was outlined and principals offered the opportunity for involvement. The opt- in aspect of this approach meant that partners were highly motivated and already attuned to some of the key underpinning rationales for the program – the need to boost aspirations and participation in the West, the links to enhanced performance and study skills, the significance in developing a body of knowledge around disadvantaged students and their relationship to higher education that related to the experience and needs of the region. Schools and the community were interested in the possibilities of tapping into resources made available through partnerships with VU – knowledge, access to alternative pathways into higher study, access to higher education students as support in programs, opportunities to build skills in the community through the sharing of research projects and generation of new knowledge.

Where suggested projects have been outside our “core business”, as in the case of the successful Kinda Kinder project, we have often been able to “broker” partnerships, develop methodologies and funding opportunities and pass the projects on once established.
Evidence of response
First reporting day – Sunshine 2006
UTEP response

Research and evaluation of the Access and Success project, including any preliminary findings

Responding to a gap in the existing literature, Access and Success has from the outset, been framed by a strong and strategic commitment to researching the nature of, practices and outcomes of our partnership work. The project is driven and supported by a rigorous research framework. Successful partnership building requires a critical understanding of the causes and effects of the disadvantaged context within which VU is situated. The work of this project is based on a socio-cultural understanding of the educational disadvantage faced by communities in the west, and draws on a long line of research in the Australian context clearly linking social class as a determinant of educational participation and outcomes. The literature on university-community engagement initiatives reveals a limited amount of research into the actual practices of such programs and their outcomes. From the outset, a strong and strategic commitment to researching the nature of, practices and outcomes of our partnership work has framed the Access and Success project.

Research teams involving school colleagues, VU students and Access and Success staff have been established to collaboratively negotiate projects based on school needs, and develop a research process to support evaluation over a 2-5 year period. In this Access and Success aims at “longer, deeper, richer and sustainable partnerships”.

While the work builds on the historic, successful model of the School of Education at VU, it aims to investigate and theorise the practice, support deepened relationships and generate new learning around the sustainability and effective outcomes of partnerships between schools and VU. Of particular importance in the research and evaluation methodology is the collaborative research model which emphasises the research contributions of all partners – university staff, school personnel, university students and community members. This approach aims to consolidate a focussed, informed and proactive approach within the region to the question of educational disadvantage and
positions the university and schools together in the generating of new knowledge around this issue. Down the track, work will focus on transferring the model and drawing more diverse university personnel into a greater number of partnerships aimed at supporting student learning and enhancing student transitions.

Local and Project-wide evaluation

The research agenda of Access and Success utilises a multilayered approach. Data collection and analysis occurs at the regional (aggregated) level and continues right through to case studies involving the (local) micro-settings of individual schools. Research questions capture the details of each teaching and learning issue identified as a priority by each school, and contextualise these within the broader project goals. A further and critical layer is the investigation of the partnership processes themselves.

A range of success indicators are considered important, and are aligned to the projects immediate aims. They include:

- Schools’ local outcomes
- Enhanced transition rates to vocational and higher education
- VU students’ professional learning
- Longer term indicators around VU/school partnerships: relationships, sustainability, new learning, development of educational capital

Project outcomes to date and preliminary findings

Since the establishment of the project in mid-2006 some outcomes are already evident in this university-community partnerships

- Enhanced relationship between schools and VU, with the establishment of over 25 specifically focussed 3-5 year projects and many more under multiple site delivery.
- Successful piloting of locally appropriate teacher and student leadership programs
- Stronger engagement and richer experiences of VU students in partnership schools with the development of a significant research component in the project work
- Greater awareness of the developing role and capacity of A and S in the education community (making for increased take-up of projects and increased enthusiasm for
schools to align themselves more closely with the University and to make use of University facilities for the benefit of students)

- Enhanced understanding of role of respectful partnerships in developing sustainable models for university-school collaborations
- More teachers and preservice teachers working as researchers in schools
- Improved communication between DEECD and VU
- Increased school student and teacher awareness of education opportunities offered by VU
- Development of an Access and Success network within and beyond VU
- Collection and analysis of data relating to school student destinations and aspirations

**Barriers to achievements for school students in the west of Melbourne**

The project has elected to focus its work on a number of key factors associated with poor educational outcomes in the west. While general issues of school and community resourcing are beyond the control of this project some of the factors associated with poor outcomes for the region’s students include:

Student disengagement

Poor literacy and language skills (among NESB and Australian born students)

Poor understanding of post compulsory pathways

**Factors affecting the careers and education aspirations of young people in the west of Melbourne**

The Aspirations project has shown that young people in the region share high aspirations for their careers and higher education. They are unclear however how to achieve what they want from education and do not demonstrate confidence in their own abilities or their future. This level of disempowerment is serious and one which the Access and Success project aims to address. Assisting students and their families in understanding careers and educational pathways is an important strategy, especially important in a region where traditional employment opportunities are in decline and where more newly arrived families are unfamiliar pathways opportunities for education and training.
Work with schools suggests that young people benefit from examples of others like themselves who have successfully negotiated education and career pathways. When families and community connections are unable to provide positive examples schools play a powerful role in "backfilling" educational capital and bridging the span between students' desires and positive destination outcomes. Similarly successful young people (such as university students and early career professionals) who have achieved positive career and education pathways can provide inspiration and models for school students as yet unsure about their futures.

Positive role models can inform and raise careers and education aspirations. So can enhanced understanding of higher education and post compulsory environments generally. The University of Texas El Paso example has shown that when universities connect closely with their communities, encouraging school and community visits and hosting cultural events for example, post school pathways are demystified and school students and their families are able to envisage themselves in the context of the university and "place' themselves in such settings.

Nevertheless it must be acknowledged that careers and educational aspirations in the west have been depressed through the perceived role of the VCE as a "gatekeeper" for higher education and employment opportunities. Students who leave school before completing year 12, or who fail to perform well in the VCE, or who undertake a non-VCE Year 12 which does not provide access to VTAC entry courses find their careers and education opportunities significantly circumscribed. When the VCE is our primary agent for mediating and rationing educational opportunity such students are cast as failures. There are however alternative pathways and Victoria University has developed strong access pathways to address the needs of young people who have been unable to secure VCE entry. These include portfolio programs and the development of credible linkages between Vocational Education and Higher Education programs. Once again it is important that details of such programs be communicated effectively to young people through linkages between the university and schools.
Recommended changes that may assist universities and schools to boost aspiration, achievement and higher education participation in the west of Melbourne.

VU has potential to play a significant role in boosting aspirations and outcomes in the region given its status as prime provider of higher education and VET in the West, multiple – and accessible – campuses across the region and strong links into almost all primary and secondary schools through Project partnerships and Access and Success programs.

The university links to schools in clear and purposive ways through its pre service teacher programs and through its role in providing targeted and relevant professional development and higher degree programs for teachers in the region. Added to this now is the university’s broader teaching and learning strategies which emphasise learning in the workplace (thus enabling productive contributions of students from many other faculties and VET departments). The university has had a longstanding tradition of “access” in its approaches to student recruitment, selection, enrolment and program delivery, recognising the needs of people whose education backgrounds may diverge from standard VTAC applicants.

The A and S program pilots a range of initiatives -- on a small scale -- that demonstrate the positive ways a university can interact with its community to boost aspirations, outcomes and school effectiveness. What sorts of action could build on this program? One could be the more formalised and appropriately funded link between university and the region’s schools through the instigation of a more formal relationship between the DEECD Western Region and VU for the extension of some of these pilot programs such as Youth Access and Teacher Leadership.
Appendix 1

Learning enrichment: a case study

Raven Cluster – a research and action response to student engagement

The Raven Cluster project began with an initial conversation between Access and Success staff and the Principal of one of the cluster schools. He highlighted general frustration at his school’s lack of success in supporting what he referred to as “disengaged” students, an issue that was strongly echoed by the other principals. From that initial conversation a project developed involving VU Preservice teachers, a teaching colleague from one of the schools and an A&S colleague to investigate this issue and the possibilities for improving practice.

The project team initially discussed the possibilities for the project, asking:
- What do we want to change? And how?
- How can we construct a learning environment, which connects the value differences and enables parents, kids and teachers to work together for learning?
- How do we connect the “right” people to ensure the “right” support
- What are the schools values? Are they explicit?
- How can we develop explicit values

They then determined their project aim: To establish an action research project which examines critical student disengagement and results in school and network strategies enabling the needs of these students to be more effectively met.

In line with the project’s action research methodology and collaborative focus, flexible planning allowed participants to responsively shape the project over time. The team engaged with participating schools to define and quantify the problem and plan a broad
outline of activity for the project. The project was viewed as medium to long term, with returning and new VU students continuing to work in the project this year.

The research team was led by the school colleague, made possible through time release and project support via a successful grant application submitted by the cluster and A&S. Regular meetings involving all participants were held at the time of the weekly school visit by Preservice teachers, undertaken as part of their SoE practicum requirements.

The first year of the project involved an extensive review of the existing literature around student disengagement, and an investigation of the types of programs and placements available for “disengaged youth.” Profiles of students considered to be disengaged were gathered across 4 schools and aggregated to provide an overview of the issue in the cluster. The research team then analysed their data, developed a report to present their findings to the schools and the wider Cluster audience, and a research paper which was accepted at the American Educational Research Association’s annual conference.

This year the project has an emphasis on school-based initiatives aimed at encouraging disengaged students who are routinely “withdrawn” to alternative settings, to return to or instead remain in regular schooling and continue on positive pathways. The team is presently researching and evaluating existing approaches in the cluster schools and elsewhere to prepare a report for the cluster principals, as well as a checklist for effective student engagement strategies. There are also plans to expand to two of the cluster primary schools in recognition of the continuity of challenges faced by both primary and secondary schools in engaging students effectively.

The Raven Cluster offered the A&S project group a number of insights into the establishment of productive and enduring partnerships between the university and schools. It had been assumed by the project team that these schools, and indeed many of our partnership schools, whose literacy and numeracy scores were recognised to be low in comparison to State averages, would welcome assistance in academic support – a time honoured strategy in using university students and others in “helping” disadvantaged schools. The school however saw its own needs differently. The disengaged young people stood for a broad social and educational concern – what becomes of such young people if and when they are excluded from this and other schools? What do practices of exclusion...
do for school culture and for the attachment of other students to school? In effect, by addressing the needs of this group of young people could the school not build a more positive culture for its overall student body and for teachers and parents also?

This was a much more challenging and engaging project than a tutoring or other “helping” program ever could be. School and university participants (including teachers and preservice teachers) worked on the planning and delivery of the program as colleagues. They shared the strategising and the research. An indicator of the success of this project has been its development through to a further stage and in the extension of the program into other local settings.

- Issue identified by Cluster Principals Network
- Project led by teacher colleague
- $5K DEECD grant
- 15 VU students across 6 schools
- 3+ years project

- Investigating student disengagement: issues and perspectives
- Profile of cluster school experiences
- Researching exemplar practice in schools
- Local and international practice
- Reporting findings
- Participating in school response - action
- Pilot programs/initiatives and evaluation

- Locally appropriate project based on issue identified by partner schools
- Multi-pronged approach to inform whole-school change and piloted initiatives
- Flexibility and creativity in the support of schools’ needs
- Development of research skills for project team

- Enriched learning environments through improved student engagement across cluster schools
- School change based on new knowledge
- New learning for teachers and preservice teachers
Appendix 2

Youth Access: A Case Study

Bayside Secondary College

Intent

To assist Year 12 students to apply to a selected VU course of study via the Portfolio Partnership Program (PPP)

Action

Pre service teachers and Youth Studies students acted as mentors for the selected Year 12 students. They assisted each student in understanding and addressing each component of the application process.

Outcomes

VU students developed thorough insight into PPP and communicated significant insights into life at VU. Bayside students developed greater confidence in themselves and improved considerations of the respective courses they were applying for. Of the 25 Bayside students who applied to VU through PPP, 17 were made offers of a place in their course of choice.

Future Action

VU students to mentor school students re PPP
Needs confirmation of VU Faculties' and Schools' commitment to PPP
Evaluation of PPP students' progress at VU needed
Appendix 3

Schools Plus Provision: A Case Study

VU, Western Bulldogs, AFL, Primary Schools in the West

- Genuine Partnership
- Curriculum development for improved student engagement
- Powerful and authentic pedagogies for preservice teachers and Bulldogs players
- Development of an exemplar with national implications

Providing the foundations for positive learning

- Teamwork, Respect, Fairness, Harmony, Dealing with Adversity and Resilience
- Healthy eating and fitness
- Development of leadership skills, self esteem and connectiveness
Appendix 4

Teacher Leadership: A Case Study

Sydenham Hillside PS

- 2 Campuses
- 1500 students
- 20 teachers (including 2 assistant principals) enrolled in the following M Ed units for 2008: Educational Leadership, Coaching and Mentoring, Portfolio Development
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Praxis Inquiry (Practice described; Practice interpreted; Practice theorised; Practice changed)
Project Partners include:

- Schools in Melbourne’s west
- Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Western and Northern Metropolitan Regions
- Catholic Education Office
- VU faculties, staff and students
- Altona Bayside Educational Precinct
- Myer Foundation
- E Qubed
- Good Shepherd Foundation
- Stephanie Alexander’s Garden
- Gould Group
- Western Youth Futures, LLEN’s in region
- Western Bulldogs