

## University Courses

### **PROJECT SCOPE**

This project has a strong focus on enhancing relationships between the water industry and tertiary institutions nationally to influence the technical content being delivered to ensure graduates meet industry expectations in terms of the breadth, depth and currency of knowledge. A major aim of the project is to establish a sustainable model for developing these relationships that is repeatable in all states/jurisdictions. This model may well lead to industry contributing to and influencing course content; initiating/ expanding capacity building programs (e.g. scholarships, graduate programs, internships, cadetships and work placements); facilitating work experience; subject matter expertise etc. in collaboration with the tertiary providers to address the subject matter expertise being demanded by industry, a Win Win approach.

It is recommended that the project is guided by a Steering Committee who will provide advice, information and support. This Steering Committee should be drawn from stakeholders from industry and representatives from tertiary institutions and national relevant organisations (e.g. Engineers Australia).

### **BACKGROUND**

Greater industry and higher education interaction and cooperation will significantly influence meeting the Australian water industry's professional skill requirements in this time of high demand and an increasingly complex political and social context. A great deal of the highest level of knowledge, expertise and current practices resides within the water industry which needs to be made available and tapped into by the universities. Currently, many aspects of water industry requirements are not adequately addressed by the higher education sector or alternatively, are encompassed in programs that do not necessarily reflect a water industry's particular needs. Whilst mapping existing university programs related to the water industry is a basis for industry liaison, there is also a key need to align course content with current and emerging water industry needs and develop new programs to meet current industry requirements.

Many companies have already established close links with universities (particularly local) including direct involvement in delivering courses, co-supervision of postgraduate students and collaborative research. Additionally, most large companies within in the industry currently have various capacity building initiatives in place e.g. undergraduate vacation employment, engineering associateships, apprenticeships, traineeships, indigenous cadetships, work experience placements etc. At present there are some examples of cooperative arrangements between industry and universities which can be used as a basis to build on (e.g. there is an industry / university consultative committee in South Australia to consider the content of the Master of Water Resources Program, facilitated through ICEWaRM). However the nature and extent to which these relationships exist nationally and how successful they are, needs to be assessed.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. Identify the nature and extent of industry input into University Courses.
2. Ensure the availability of a range of undergraduate and postgraduate pathways for entry into the water industry.
3. Create multi-disciplinary professional development opportunities for executive and technical professionals in the water industry.
4. Establish a framework/ model for engaging industry and tertiary institutions.
5. Facilitate articulation between vocational and higher education.

For more information on this project, please contact:

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