The Virtual Conservatorium

Ian Bofinger
Greg Whateley

Professional Doctorate

Central Queensland University

January, 2004

Abstract

The problem for this project is the solution to the question, 'How can a conservatorium in a geographically isolated area with a relatively small catchment area survive and thrive in the 2000's?' This project chronicles the story of a three year strategic plan that has taken on this challenge.

In order to do this it has been appropriate to discuss global conditions that are the driving forces of economies and the education systems within them. In addition, we show how these 'macro-conditions' affect the Australian University system and especially conservatoria.

Having contextualized the project, we then move to an exploration of the main facilitating conditions that provided an opportunity to diversify the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music in ways that better fit the international and national pressures that beset university based conservatoria.

The Virtual Conservatorium, we then argue, provides a workable alternative to current conservatorium practice and at the same time provides a cost effective, contemporary, technology friendly paradigm that ensures ongoing quality and delivery effectiveness.

<u>Title Page</u>

The Virtual Conservatorium

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Illustrations

v

Acknowledgments

vi

Declaration

We declare that the material used in this document is original and our own work. During the period of writing this project we have published a number of papers and chapters that have related to our research and drawn upon the resources collected (see Appendix 2 for a comprehensive list of publications).

Ian Bofinger   **Greg Whateley**

1. THE PROBLEM

THE TECHNICAL AND BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES THAT PROMPTED THE SELECTION OF TOPIC

The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music is not unique in the fact that is has faced serious threats to its future existence. The larger university body, Central Queensland University employed an external consultant to assess the viability and anticipated ability to operate within an acceptable financial framework. The question was then raised - 'How can a conservatorium in a geographically isolated area with a relatively small catchment area survive and thrive in the 2000's?'

Before proceeding to the details of '*The Virtual Conservatorium*', the answer to the question, we need first to place the conservatorium into an international and national context. In order to do this, it is appropriate to discuss global conditions that are the driving forces of economies and the education systems within them. These 'macro-conditions' affect the Australian University system and inturn affect the focus of this project - conservatoria.

The following thesis documents the rationale and the product creation which gave the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music the opportunity to diversify in ways that better fitted the international and national pressures that beset university-based conservatoria.

Speed, Connectivity and Intangibles

Davis and Meyer (1998) provide inspiration for a new way of doing things with an emphasis on speed, connectivity and intangibles. Speed is the shrinking of time through near-instantaneous communication and computation; Connectivity is the shrinkage of space with the advent of the Web, e-mail, beepers, SMS, and other media of communication; and Intangibles are values without mass, most importantly knowledge and its mobility, made possible through speed and connectivity.

In examining the 'Blur' economy three parts emerge "the blur of desire, the blur of fulfilment, and the blur of resources." (Davis and Meyer, 1998: 14) In the 'old economy' model businesses sold either products or services. In the 'new economy' the blur is to do with the fact that businesses now sell product and service – often so enmeshed or intermingled that the distinction becomes very difficult.

This issue resonates when considering the changes needed to develop a new conservatorium in this new economy. Amongst the fifty ideas listed in Davis and Meyer (1998) to 'blur' businesses in the new economy, three emerged as fundamental to the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music challenge. They were virtual location; connect everything to everything; and anything at anytime. These three notions feature strongly in our project.

The concept of access is an international issue in university 'modus operandi'. The University of Phoenix on line advertises on its home page, 'In America one in four individuals obtain at least degree-level education, and continuing education after high

school is rapidly becoming the norm. There is every chance that employers will soon require a degree as a minimum prerequisite of employment. However, taking time out for a degree is expensive and diminishes the opportunity for valuable on the job experience. The answer to this conundrum is an On line Degree that allows you to earn, learn and work - all at the same time.'

Current Conservatoria Conditions

The current financial position of Australian Conservatoria is reportedly one of difficulty. Burt (1999) discusses this trend, '...it seems to be typical of many academic institutions in Australia at the moment. The closure of LaTrobe Music, the downgrading of computer music teaching positions in more than one institution to subjects taught by graduate students or even technicians...' Academic programs are being taught in a similar fashion and a similar content to those taught twenty years ago although federal funding levels have not changed for at least 12 years. For Conservatoria to gain financial viability then they will need to address the content and cost of delivery of current offerings.

The Music Department of the University of Sydney had a very public airing of its problems. An Australian film released in July 2001, *Facing the Music*, told the story of Professor Anne Boyd's fight to maintain academic standards while, as Boyd maintains, 'the economic-rationalist university hierarchy cries poor and starves arts of funding'. Howitt (2001) describes the scenario:

> For years Professor Anne Boyd has been teaching three to four
>
> times the recommended maximum academic teaching load in

order that music students in her department (she holds the Chair) not suffer. For years the Faculty of Arts has been prepared to admit far more music students than could reasonably be taught properly by the available staff.

In March 2002, an anonymous benefactor donated almost one million dollars over five years to the University of Sydney's music department. As Episale (2002) reports 'the donation was part of a negotiated agreement in which the university would match the contribution dollar for dollar. This agreement has rescued the department from almost certain decline and demise.'

An issue of critical mass is then apparent for sustained financial viability. Private enterprise business 'start-ups' consider any program with staffing costs above 60% to be non-viable, yet many conservatoria seem to operate with staffing costs at 90%-100% of the gross income. By increasing the variety of conservatoria offerings and the overall mass, in terms of student numbers, the percentile weighting of the operating costs are more easily absorbed with the larger critical mass.

Universities of this new millennium are concerned with the mind-set, mechanisms and practices that are necessary to re-invent and re-engineer themselves to become surplus making organisations. Central Queensland University is no exception. Given the context of current economic pressures, this surplus making exercise, is fundamental to future growth, quality provision and student/staff morale. It is necessary to explore important matters such as changing the mind-set from a 'scarcity' to 'abundance' mentality; the encouragement of new venture units ('skunk

works') whose role is to explore beyond the perceived boundaries of the organisation; changing management style at all levels to facilitate entrepreneurial activities; the effective use of outsourcing for teaching and administrative purposes; the development of strategic alliances and networks; and developing the notion of thinking globally even though working locally; need to be explored.

To operate within the above parameters requires a change in thinking and approach. There is a need for a 'new approach' – a 'new organisation'. Limerick et al (1998) speak of a new form of organisation that is required:

> A new form of organisation is set to take us into the twenty-first century. It will have strategies, structures and cultures which are quite different from those with which we have been experimenting for the past decade and which are dramatically different from those that served us so well during the previous 20 years or more. It will offer new opportunities as well as new problems for management, and it will demand new mindsets, skills and competencies from those within it. (p. 1)

This is hardly an easy task with academic elements often opposed to, or at least uncomfortable with, 'entrepreneurship' and with university bureaucrats experientially far removed from contemporary business practices. In the short term, it is necessary to empower university elements to develop entrepreneurial activities. Concurrently, the larger organisation needs to reinvent itself attitudinally to deal with flexibility, a broader range of initiatives, a focus on significant add-on value to its conventional operations and a mechanism for dealing with 'profit' from its initiatives.

A crucial part of this process is the need to re-engineer current operational principles and mind-sets. The development and proliferation of new fee paying courses (despite the fact that they appear to be fresh initiatives) will achieve very little if those courses end up competing with already existing markets. The power lies in developing new initiatives that bring in new monies – our analogy is fishing in new ponds.

There has been a number of reviews and investigations of music training in recent years, and recommendations to merge and amalgamate conservatoria and music departments in Australia. In Adelaide and Brisbane the debate has run for nearly a decade. This is a direct result of the competitive marketplace including the domestic private providers and international universities. There is a perceived overlap between these providers which means future viability will be the result of creative practices rather than duplication.

A merger between The Elder Conservatorium and the Flinders Street School of Music has been proposed on several occasions. The minutes from The University of Adelaide Academic Board 15 March 2000 state that 'The fact that previous recommendations for merger and/or co-location had produced no practical outcome left the original issues unresolved while creating a climate of uncertainty about the future.'

In Queensland similar debate has been entered into regarding the proposal to attach the Queensland Conservatorium to the University of Queensland. The University of Queensland has a Music Faculty which has been in financial difficulty. The

Queensland Conservatorium has a high performance profile but again running as a separate administrative entity within Griffith University has caused further financial deficiencies. The current proposal for location of the Queensland Conservatorium is to place it within Griffith University's Arts faculty structure.

The focus on student access – Anywhere, anytime, anyhow – is one of the foundation theories on which The Virtual Conservatorium is based. The buzzword "24/7" is commonly used in business marketing and operations but has never before been used in conjunction with a conservatorium of music. To achieve "24/7", a reinvention of the product delivery is essential for future feasibility. Many universities use this concept of on line delivery as a marketing tool, but on closer inspection, this is simply the use of on line notes and email. The University of the Sunshine Coast boasts that 'USC's On line MBA gives students two options in how they can choose to study. The first is to work on line. The second is the flexibility to download a PDF file of the whole course content so that you can print it out and take it with you for those odd study moments you have while travelling etc'. The concept of virtual delivery proposes to eclipse these simple methodologies to truly gain access to students anywhere, anytime, anyhow with technologies such as *bluetooth* mobile communications, software training packages, specifically designed CD-Rom, DVD, VCD as well as more traditional on line methodologies. Associated with the creation of such diverse resources are potentially available efficiencies in utilization for both the virtual and on-campus student body.

A matter of location

In 1988, Griffith University initiated a feasibility study to set up a regional campus of the Queensland Conservatorium Music. A shortlist of four possible centres was proposed and included Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton. After much community consultation Mackay was chosen as the regional centre most suitable for such an artistic endeavour.

The Campus quickly outgrew its status as a feeder for the Brisbane based Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and evolved into a 'stand-alone' entity known as Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Central Queensland University. The student population also grew from 23 to 90 and the initial geographic catchment area of Central Queensland grew to include the whole of Australia and beyond (*Graph 1*). With this came the difficulty of survival associated with being located in the most northern campus of the university, almost 1000 kilometres north of Brisbane, 2250 kilometres north of Sydney and 3000 kilometres from Melbourne.

When the statistics for audition applications for the Mackay location students are reviewed, the greatest numbers are from the South-East Queensland district, whilst the smallest percentages are from the North and Central Queensland regions. For the Conservatorium to survive and thrive through the next ten years and beyond it is essential that the organisation continue to attract students from all over Australia. This will require ongoing commitment, resources and focus.

Graph 1: CQCM Student Source 2000

Wider University Support of Business Activity and National Contexts

The University's 'Statement of Strategic Intent 2001 – 2005' makes it clear that flexible delivery and multiple site operation is appropriate and encouraged. One such key statement reads 'Produce learning resource materials of the highest quality and integrate the course offerings for distance and on-campus students through flexible learning strategies.' (http://www.cqu.edu.au/strategic2001.htm)

The conditions were right for an initiative such as an off-campus, on line conservatorium. Encouragement of entrepreneurial activities (such as profit raising activities; multi site operation; cross arts platform design; and the like) by Central Queensland University senior management and internally by the Director of CQCM lead to the concept and initial delivery trials of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'*.

The pressure for change within Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music

Given the nature of the operating environment, change was inevitable and mandatory from the outset of the appointment of the new Director at the commencement of 2000. The Dean of the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts and the Vice Chancellor also supported this need for change. By the end of 1999, the Conservatorium had accumulated a $1m deficit with little hope of recovery given an annual gross income of just $1.2m. In real terms, recovery appeared impossible, or seemingly so. The larger University required a change in operational model. What was certainly unacceptable was to maintain the existing model of operation. The conservatorium, in simple terms, spent considerably more than it earned. The task called for a radical rethink of direction and operation. The issue of sustainability required immediate and focused consideration.

The notion of sustainability meant a degree of diversity unfamiliar to CQCM prior to 2000. The notion is best captured by Willcocks and Sauer (2000) as they suggest 'sustainability is not achieved through any one thing. It requires the combination of a range of resources and services that together are hard to imitate.' (p. 9) To date this sustainability has been made possible with the expansion of undergraduate offerings, growth of full fee paying postgraduate initiatives, development of performance and media profile; and the incorporation of the University's Language Centre into the CQCM 'holdings'. The following table (*Table 1*) provides an interesting comparison of operation design between the period 1999 and 2003. The developments are deemed sustainable for the next five years.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Student Numbers	86	210	290	365	435
Post graduate	0	50	90	115	130
International	0	15%	30%	40%	35%
Performances	*	108	178	344	450
Media Hits	*	103	238	469	670
External Publications	*	6	9	10	32
Internal Publications	*	13	42	43	50
Grants/Consultancies	*	0	72,500	77,400	230,000
Delivery Sites	1	5	7	8	10
Gross Income	1m	2.3m	4m	3.6m	4.2m
Accumulated	(1m)	300,000	950,000	1.2m	1.7m
Net Profit/Loss	(350,000)	327,000	590,000	296,000	500,000
Auditions	56	88	92	149	^
QTAC 1st preferences	63	78	86	91	^
QTAC total	137	168	211	197	^

* no records available
^ figures not available until November/December 2003

Table 1: an overview of finances 1999-2003

Using the 15 metrics in table 1, it is evident that revitalization growth has been significant during the first four year period (2000-2003) of the revitalization process (equivalent full time student growth from 86 to 435; post graduate growth from 0-130; international student growth from 0% to 35% of total population; delivery site proliferation from 1 to 10; gross income rose from $1m to $4.2m; and an accumulated deficit of $1m changed to a projected accumulated surplus of $1.7m. It is anticipated that the Conservatorium will undergo further growth during 2004 followed by a plateau in 2005 (maintaining a $5m gross income) and beyond. In order to encourage this growth (2000 and beyond) and ensure that the achievements were sustainable beyond it was necessary to ensure that the diverse activities were effectively combined and efficiently managed and that the contributing components were complimentary, supportive and integrated.

A new structure within the Conservatorium assisted the management of the individual parts allowing for useful synergies between these segments. The following table (*Table 2)* gives an indication of the projected overall income from the five elements (in gross income terms) within the larger design:

Revised Component	End of 2001 income	End of 2003 income (projected)
Undergraduate Courses	$1.5m	$1.8m
Postgraduate Courses	$.8m	$1.5m
Virtual Conservatorium	nil	$.3
The Language Centre	$1.2m	$1.2m
Profile and Performances	$.3m	$.2m

Table 2: A comparison of the actual 2001 income source compared to the 2003 sources

The projected surplus for 2003 is $500,000, this an achievement for any conservatorium, but clearly possible in the new economy. The diversity achieved within the Central Queensland University context is difficult (if not impossible) for other competitors around the country to imitate give the usual singular music focus and application. The diversity has much to do with multiple locations, a broad range of programme offerings, and the ability to procure elements within the larger university such as The Language Centre. Conservatoria, throughout the country have a primarily music performance and practice focus and would consider a break even scenario the best score possible – in most cases unlikely - as their concentration is on the maintenance of a high cost student staffing ratio.

THE PROBLEMS BEING SOLVED

Why there was a need for 'The Virtual Conservatorium'

The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Mackay opened its doors in 1989 as a regional campus of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music (now QCGU). The Mackay campus was initially a feeder for the larger Queensland Conservatorium, offering the first year of a Diploma of Music, with the two subsequent years to be completed in Brisbane at QCGU. Further developments in the next few years saw the two year Associate Diploma (which was completely offered in Mackay, but assumed that students would further their studies in Brisbane), with the first year of the Bachelor of Music being approved to be offered in Mackay. In 1996, after recommendations initiated between 1987 and 1994 by John Dawkins, Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Central Queensland University assumed control of the Mackay Campus of the Conservatorium. Griffith University, concerned about the rising costs of running a regional outpost, had no objection to this arrangement. The June 1999 Central Queensland University Council minutes note:

> Council endorsed the recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor of the Planning and Development Committee that from 1 January 2000 the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM), while retaining its name, integrity and distinctive roles and responsibilities as a conservatorium of music, become an academic entity within the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts, with the Director of the CQCM having the responsibilities and accountabilities of a Head of School within the Faculty, as well as any responsibilities and

accountabilities relating distinctively to the Conservatorium. It was agreed that these new structural arrangements will be reviewed at the end of two operational years. (p. 12)

As a result the newly named Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music progressively relinquished academic pathways with QCGU and existed as a separate entity to the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University (QCGU). Karmel (1997) explains the rationale behind the amalgamation: ' In the middle of 1987 John Dawkins became Minister for Employment, Education and Training and proceeded to institute a number of revolutionary changes in higher education … the binary system of universities and colleges of advanced education was eliminated and replaced by the Unified National System. This resulted in a broadening of what was understood by the term 'university'. The creation of the Unified National System involved the merging of many institutions in order to reduce their number and increase their size.' (p. 12)

During the next few years, CQCM continued to mirror the operational and academic processes of QCGU, despite its independence. By 1999, CQCM was in the unfortunate position of not being able to fill its full time student quota, operating in an ever increasing deficit budget scenario (see *Table 3*) and threatened closure.

	1997		1998	
	Projected	**Actual**	**Projected**	**Actual**
Income	$ 980,588	$ 978,282	$1,055,200	$ 887,906
Expenditure	$ 978,984	$1,356,542	$1,073,750	$1,260,110
Balance	$ 1,604	**-($ 377,260)**	**-($ 18,550)**	**-($ 372,204)**

Table 3: Summary of 1997 and 1998 income and expenditure projected and actual figures

The Shepherd Report in 1999 (*See Appendix 1*) incorporated further recommendations including the reintroduction of a 'Classical/ Contemporary' course that eventuated in late 1999 as the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts, which is now at the core of the undergraduate offerings of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. A second recommendation was the development of a Master programme which also eventuated in 2000 in the form of the Master of Arts Administration which has become the core of the post graduate offerings of *The Virtual Conservatorium*.

To further develop these ideas and in an effort to keep the Conservatorium as a viable entity maintaining student numbers and balancing/creating a modest surplus budget, major restructuring was required. The two most obvious areas to restructure were the full time staffing and the concerts' budget. The concert programme was rationalised and conducted on a more effective income/cost basis. More efficient and effective ways to deliver CQCM coursework had to be implemented in order to reduce staffing costs. In 2000 these objectives were essentially achieved but a major change in pedagogical design and thinking was required for further impact – the concept of *The Virtual Conservatorium* was one such opportunity.

In 2000, with the appointment of a new Director, CQCM underwent a dramatic turnaround, in a very short period of time. At the completion of the first year (2000) the conservatorium not only balanced its budget but also achieved a modest operational surplus. The year 2000 also saw CQCM achieving student quota within the undergraduate programmes for the first time in a number of years; expanding the operation to include delivery of product to five sites (Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Gladstone and Sydney); and an evident University commitment to the

future of CQCM with the construction of a new building in Mackay to serve as the Head Office. During this same year staffing positions were ratified and course offerings also examined.

The operating context was perfect for developing new teaching methodologies and creating a new conservatorium with a business rationale unlike any other in Australia – the concept of *The Virtual Conservatorium* was born, a new conservatorium for the new economy. Kelly (1998) reinforces the notion of developing networks, locations and the distribution of programming/offering, 'The great benefits reaped by the new economy in the coming decades will be due in large part to exploring and exploiting the power of decentralised and autonomous networks'. (p. 19) CQCM was in a position to explore new opportunities and designs.

CQCM Conservatorium offerings prior to 2000

According to the 1998 electives handbook CQCM offered 98 elective courses to an internal student body on the Mackay campus of approximately 80 full time students. A further twelve 'practical' courses were also available, bringing the total offerings to 110 courses. Given the size of the campus and student numbers this was excessive. Each course available was taught in a face to face (F2F) mode on a regular weekly basis. This teaching requirement utilised 17 full time staff, together with a number of casual staff. With a gross income in 1998 of $887, 906 and a staffing cost alone of $962,493 (108% of total gross income) - a continuing deficit situation in this type of operating environment was inevitable. This area needed immediate addressing.

As a result, in 1999 and 2000 course offerings were reduced and vacated staff positions made redundant, resulting in a minor operational deficit in 1999 of approximately $100,000. This rationalisation limited the educational opportunities of CQCM undergraduate students to a specific set of taught classes in a single mode (F2F). This reorganization of subject offerings represented the beginning of what was to be a more major change process.

Staffing

Significant staff changes in Mackay reducing full time lecturing staff from 17 to 7 occurred during the period 1999 and 2002. Of the remaining Mackay campus staff, three coordinate degrees and one is the Director (who also coordinates the post graduate program). Rockhampton site experienced a similar change from five to three full time academic staff during this same period.

The Virtual Conservatorium' relies on an innovative model of staffing that utilises a range of people in a range of locations who are prepared to be flexible in terms of availability and product delivery. It calls for a new kind of staff member who is prepared to work inside a new paradigm rather than just fulfill contractual lecturing requirements. A new breed of staff is required to support this initiative and at the same time be innovative and creative. This notion of innovation is concisely defined by MacKenzie (2001) as '… positive change resulting in new products, services or processes. It is well understood that to successfully implement positive change, staff must accept ownership of the change.' (p. 20) It was important, from the outset, that staff involved in the new model had a strong sense of ownership and felt that their

contribution was important and valuable even though they were predominantly part-time/sessional staff members.

A change in focus

The growth and diversity of the business achieved at Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music is a result of the current management mindset that has the view that a conservatorium must be multi-faceted and incorporate a broad cross - arts platform. The proposed *new conservatorium* model is an assertive (possibly even aggressive) business that maintains high levels of accountability and reporting and at the same time pursues 'out of the square' opportunities to enhance its portfolio. This *new conservatorium* has the flexibility to respond to the new economy environment through modeling itself on corporate exemplars to maximize the economic benefits.

The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music responded to its near demise (threat of closure in 1999 as raised in the commissioned Shepherd Report) by reinventing itself and repositioning itself in a larger and more responsive market, including seven additional sites of operation. It could be argued that the 'inventiveness' of the current management that has been responsible for the growth and renewal provides the current sense of optimism in the tertiary music environment – not apparent when compared with competitors across Australia. Herceg and Flattery (2000) agree with the basic proposition in stating that 'Ideas and the ability to constantly come up with them will be one of the most highly prized skills in the new century.' (p. 18)

The maintenance of this creative and innovative environment ensures that creative thinking is uppermost from a planning perspective in ensuring the future success of the conservatorium in the years to come. With this in mind, we have attempted to put in place a number of new mechanisms that will ensure better communication between the sub - elements and thereby developing effective and efficient strategies for further development.

In order to achieve the targeted 400% percent gross income growth 1999 to 2003, it was necessary to ensure that the contributing elements worked and grew co-operatively. In order to achieve the projected $500,000 surplus in 2003 maximum synergy and co-operation between elements was essential, not to mention a sustained commitment to innovation and creativity. In March 2001, within the context of this changing model of *the new conservatorium*, the concept of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'* existing within the main entity of the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM) was raised as a potential way of maximizing its positioning and effective operation.

The business opportunities for Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music

Prior to 1999, the financial 'ceiling' of CQCM was capped at a maximum of 90 EFTSU with the possibility of only a few international students. This equated to an annual income of approximately $900,000 with little prospect of future growth. *The Virtual Conservatorium* allows for increased numbers in undergraduate and postgraduate programs and effectively removing the limitations of a 'capped' annual income.

By developing programs that can be delivered 'anywhere, anyhow, anytime', students from within the faculty in which the conservatorium resides (Faculty of Education and Creative Arts) and from other faculties of the university, can now manage to enrol in courses offered by CQCM without conflict. This concept of "intra' and 'inter' faculty offerings increases the total possible enrolment population base and ultimately class sizes. With greater class sizes, improvements in economies in courses delivery are the result.

The creation of materials suitable for delivery via The Virtual Conservatorium will have to go beyond traditional distance education packages and current on line materials. Simply creating '.pdf' files of written material from existing class material or just video-taping on-campus lectures (as in VAL-video aided learning) is only duplicating the process other Australian universities are badging as on line. Specifically designed and delivered DVD/VCD to be clear and precise, on line material that has a viable web navigation process and Software Based Learning packages are just a few of the new delivery methodologies that are being implemented. The specificity of this course delivery ensures that the quality will improve from traditional distance analogue learning pedagogies. This will directly have an effect on the quality of the on-campus delivery as these students will have access to these materials.

The CQCM's academic existence for the first 10 years was limited solely to Mackay. A Bachelor of Education (music) was operating in Rockhampton up until 2000 but it was limited to Rockhampton and found its demise in the fact that it could not attract

suitable applicants from the narrow catchment area. With the development of The Virtual Conservatorium it is predicted that the footprint of CQCM will grow beyond the Capricornia region to become a truly state wide (undergraduate) and national (post graduate) conservatorium entity.

Opportunities

A number of opportunities present themselves to an organization that is capable of re-inventing itself. In the first instance access to a greater market place and population is readily available if the organization is prepared to establish a network of delivery sites. In 1999 CQCM delivered product to Mackay – in 2003 CQCM delivered product to ten sites throughout Queensland and Australia. Secondly, the establishment of a partnership with Learning Network Queensland, with its forty-one centres throughout Queensland, has meant that CQCM product can be further delivered at any of these sites. This kind of extension is only possible through a strategic alliance of this kind. A third opportunity is the 'niche' market that is attracted to a project like The Virtual Conservatorium which does not duplicate the standard offerings of most other conservatoria throughout Australia.

Technical Problems

There were a number of technical difficulties to overcome from the outset. The nature of the original conservatorium site in Mackay was technically inadequate in so many ways. Staffing technical expertise was low in 1999 and considerable cost, time and effort has been put into 'up skilling' staff in a range of areas including multimedia design and development and use of the internet. The bandwidth and subsequent speed

of the technology available was inadequate along with the backup and technical infrastructure.

A move to new premises

By 1999 Central Queensland University and the Queensland State Government had committed to the construction on the new purpose built CQCM building. Koch (1999) records conservatorium history when she writes 'At present the CQC(M) is housed in rented premises, but Professor Chipman said that the aim was for the new campus building to be in operation by the year 2000.' (p. 29). The facility was delayed, for a number of reasons, but was accessible from June 2001 and formally opened in November of the same year by the Queensland Premier.

Growth in technology interest and hi tech teaching spaces across the university

The University had, over a period of ten years, encouraged developments in remote learning techniques. On the one hand, VAL (video aided learning) tapes that were videotaped copies of lectures given at one campus and forwarded onto students in other campuses, to technologically advanced ISL (Integrated System-wide Learning) lecture theatres that could send or receive real-time lectures from other campuses within the University. The level of sophistication is impressive with excellent flexible delivery options well suited to *The Virtual Conservatorium*. This platform was fortuitously available for the start of 2001 and allowed the opportunity for the creation and expansion of *The Virtual Conservatorium.*

A dedicated ISL Laboratory was a feature of the new conservatorium complex located in the common teaching spaces within the third building. Access was now available to all CQCM teaching staff via a central booking system mechanism.

In order to facilitate the technology base for the initiative the CQCM Project Manager appointed (at the commencement of 2001) to manage the new building precinct ensured the ethernet access within the building would sustain the intended electronic based objectives of www delivery of product. This required a deal of consultation and co-operation between the architects, the University's Information technicians, electrical consultants and technical advisers. CQCM was required to update internal hardware and software to maximize the opportunities available.

eRolment as university standard

The larger university (Central Queensland University) had made significant changes to its operational procedures as outlined in a review of (amongst other things) the student management system. Under the title of 'Project Renaissance' (established in 1999) the University invested in a new student system that allowed for electronic access for all users via the central portal 'eRolment' located on university website. The following extract from the University's Statement of Strategic Intent 2001-2005 (http://www.cqu.edu.au/strategic2001.htm) highlights the climate:

> 'Central Queensland University's rapid growth and expansion of commercial activities have highlighted the need to improve its information systems, administrative processes, and underlying planning, management and quality assurance structures. Responding to this

imperative, the University has invested major resources ($20M) to implement new PeopleSoft administrative systems.'

New Director – New Vision

A strategic plan presented to the interview panel by the subsequent appointee demonstrated a strategy for a structured process of change to the budgetary situation from the deficit scenario being experienced to delivering a modest profit margin from the first year of appointment onwards. One of the strengths demonstrated by the Director is his evident support of staff ideas and opinions. Herceg and Flattery (2000) note that '…ideas are now much more than child's play. Ideas and the ability to constantly come up with them will be one of the most highly prized skills of the new century' (p. 18)

In addition to recognising and encouraging staff involvement, it was important to act upon ideas and initiatives quickly and efficiently whilst they still have currency in the market place and are relevant and pressing. Jennings and Haughton (2000) recognise this need for action and speed, 'Fast thinking won't get you very far unless you're able to quickly process your thoughts and make a decision. Nothing slows down an organisation more than paralysis by analysis – the inability to make even the smallest decisions quickly' (p. 69)

To be a successful business venture *The Virtual Conservatorium'* needed to be able to anticipate and react quickly to the customer's wants. Contemporary business practice in the global market requires speed and dynamism. This is a

distant call from the traditional operation of conservatoria in Australia given the bureaucracy and conservatism evident.

The appointment of a new Director at the commencement of 2000; the proposed move to a purpose built multi million dollar site; the proposed notion of extending the conservatorium offerings to multiple sites; the relocation of the conservatorium, mid 1999, into the larger Faculty of Education and Creative Arts identity; the poor financial performance of the Mackay site between 1996 and 1999; and an impending sense of re-invention all contributed to the possibility of developing a new and improved organization. In addition the conservatorium staff (in both Mackay and Rockhampton) were ready for change and subsequently were responsive (or at least not opposed to) some rethinking and redevelopment.

Management Support

The driving force behind the project was key senior staff. The Dean of the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts (EDCA), the Director of CQCM and designer of the Master of Arts Administration (MAA), and the Coordinator of the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (BMPA), have worked well together to ensure progress of the initiative. One of the key elements in establishing *The Virtual Conservatorium* project has been the speed of development. The innovation was tabled at the beginning of 2001 and commenced operation at the postgraduate level in mid 2001 and undergraduate operation at the commencement of 2003. LeBoeuf (1993) reinforces the need to move quickly, ' … today's rapidly changing business world requires moving quickly … it does mean taking a whole new focus and approach to working,

selling, managing and leading to speed up the business.' (p. 13) This has meant that the initiative moved quickly beyond the discussion phase and avoided unnecessary, but often inevitable, roadblocks and diversions.

The restructure of undergraduate degrees

A new degree, the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (BM/PA) was designed and implemented to replace the out - dated Associate Diploma with greater flexibility and cross enrolment options. A restructure of Bachelor of Jazz Studies degree involved removing some of the more expensive and non-vital aspects, such as second instrumental studies, was instigated in the 1999 and 2000 time frame. Rationalisation and reduction of superfluous courses across the conservatorium witnessed the total number of subjects offered decrease from 97 to 46.

The course structure for the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (BM/PA) was revamped with a view to a range of flexible delivery mechanisms (such as on line; CD Rom and multi-locational F2F). This new and revised model works well for both on-campus and off-campus opportunities. (see *Table 5*, Appendix 4 for further detail).

A change in mind set

In order to facilitate these kinds of paradigm shifts a change in mind-set is required. We begin this examination with the view of the world from within a university element. Covey (1992, p.60) highlights what he calls a '**scarcity mentality**' that myopically focuses on students as a single finite pond that has given characteristics

and is subject to relentless internecine competition so that it is always over-extended. Covey further (1992, p.40) contrasts this with an **abundance mentality'** that centres on an infinite number of possibilities, each representing 'new' opportunities and new models for astute and well-focused interests. Our view is that in many ways a change of mind-set by academics and administrators from conventional teaching and research or bureaucratic practices respectively is undoubtedly the most painful part of the re-engineering process. It challenges almost all the deeply held 'scarcity' convictions including management hierarchies; ranked seniority; centralised staffing policy which is frequently shown to be inflexible and inefficient; large group decision-making which while being nominally 'democratic', spreads the fear of blame to a larger forum and delays decision-making; and a 'core business' mentality that restricts elements to the borders of artificially defined administrative fiefdoms on the grounds of 'credibility' and 'quality' but that condemn universities to draw only 'inside the lines'.

Some organisations have the 'scarcity mentality' so deeply entrenched that part of the core business is actually about maintaining the mission of 'scarcity'. Brodsky (1998) states it well. ' Some companies, in fact, have developed a core competency in the area of squashing visionaries. They have developed an institutional immune system that systematically attacks and destroys visionary thinking, like white cells attacking an infection' (p. 10)

The change in mind-set from a belief in only one 'pond' to an acceptance of the conviction that it is worth the trouble to deal with many 'ponds' is the most difficult aspect of the organisational changes necessary to re-orient the world-view of

universities and of course, their financial operations. Central Queensland University has adopted the multiple site context evidenced in the current 14 sites available for product delivery. Given the University's long term commitment to external studies and flexible delivery it comes as no surprise that the notion of *The Virtual Conservatorium* was well received from the outset.

Changes to management style

To facilitate the establishment and effectiveness of a new venture unit (such as The Virtual Conservatorium management unit) changes to management style were necessary at the macro, meta and micro levels of the organisation. At the larger university level (macro), there needed to be support for the unit's existence and a capacity to deal with proposals that are outside or challenge conventional ways of doing things. At the element/faculty/school level (meta) there needed to be a supportive environment that enables rather than punishes the unit in such areas, for example, as space allocation. At the level of the unit (micro) styles of self-management that facilitate flexibility and autonomy are required. Limerick, Cunnington and Crowther (1998) capture what we mean here.' Collaborative individualism is the dominant culture of network organisations: it stresses the need for individuals to work together with others towards a common vision and mission. But it also stresses their emancipation, their freedom to reject hierarchical organisation and bureaucratic rules.' (p. 102)

This style of operation is excessively problematic for organisations that have a 'scarcity mentality' coupled with traditional hierarchical, bureaucratic structures and

processes. Such an organisational and management environment depends on restricted communication and group-oriented process concepts that stifle individual initiative or so modify ideas and plans that they cease to be interesting for their developers. Levinson (1996) describes the nature of this style of environment. 'The forces changing the world in which we work and live have also changed the relationship between the employer and the employee. A psychological and practical result of these changes is that we are now living in a new age of self-reliance. On a personal level, we must get feedback, advice, and moral support from family and friends. On a professional level, we each need to develop fallback positions. By fallback, I mean an alternative course of action if the current job fails us. In today's world, we need to worry less about the next rung up the ladder and more about the variety of opportunities available to us should the ladder disappear and we find ourselves thrown back on our own resources.' (p. 162)

In our view, a shift to management styles such as 'collaborative individualism' and the priority of concepts such as 'intangibles' in university life will undermine the value of committees, working parties, task forces, programme management teams and the like. Rather, the approach will require a collaborative group of individuals who contribute to the success of the agreed mission and/or task at hand. They will be committed to the given mission but work to a large extent individually from a nominated site (like 'work') but increasingly elsewhere (like 'home'). Sinclair (1995) states, 'Teams are seductive because they promise inclusion, comfort and belonging. Defined as task-oriented, and united around a common goal, teams promise to remove from organisational life intractable conflict and divisiveness. Reinforced by pictorial images and case anecdotes of jolly workers sharing the load, these tales of 'teamness'

portray groups which have overcome, one is asked to believe, frustration, boredom, jealousy, resentment, and prejudice.' (p. 58)

It is not difficult to imagine the new roles and capacities that will emerge from and be necessary for new work styles. If a new kind of creative individual, the 'gold collar' worker (Kelley, 1985), is to strengthen the university, each of the levels we have indicated need to accommodate these new workers who ' ... hold the key to the future ... perhaps the most significant difference (between them and white collar and blue collar workers) pertains to the nature of their work and the freedom and flexibility with which they conduct it. They engage in complex problem solving, not bureaucratic drudgery or mechanical routine. They are imaginative and original, not docile and obedient. Their work is challenging, not repetitious, and occurs in an uncertain environment in which results are rarely predictable or quantifiable. Many gold collar workers don't know what they will do next, when they will do it, or sometimes even where.' (p.8)

The idea of a 'skunk work' (autonomous venture unit) appears to be the kind of activity that would attract these so called 'gold collar workers'. In order to bring about the full potential and financial benefits of projects and initiatives that lie 'outside the square' the type of person needed would be highly motivated from the outset; self directing and highly enthusiastic – often difficult to find in the traditional conservatorium environment.

Academic Year

As part of an ongoing commitment to innovation and flexible design, Central Queensland University introduced a model for a four term year (Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring) in place of the more traditional two semester model (Autumn and Winter). The two new terms (Spring and Summer) are offered over the traditional summer vacation period, which allows students access to *The Virtual Conservatorium* all year round. This means that The Virtual Conservatorium is able to offer product in multiple locations during an eleven and a half month period each year allowing students ongoing access to courses and the opportunity to 'fast track' their awards if they wish.

Industry mentors

An important aspect of the *new conservatorium* is the involvement of industry practitioners. As an integral part of iCon key industry professionals were approached to act as mentors. All approached accepted the opportunity to be involved. Most viewed the concept of working with conservatorium students and staff sharing insight into the nature of the music industry as attractive and personally rewarding. The payment scheme for services has been generous making the task financially worthwhile. The list of mentors has grown over the period 2000-2003 and will continue to grow and diversify over the next few years. *Table 4* provides an insight into the caliber of the industry mentors currently involved with the Conservatorium :

Industry Mentor	Location	Area of Expertise
Don Burrows	Sydney	Jazz Icon
Don Rader	Sydney	Australian jazz profile
Kevin Hunt	Sydney	Australian jazz profile
Graeme Connors	Mackay	Australian singer/songwriter
Art Phillips	Sydney	President – Australian Guild of Screen Composers
Nancye Hayes	Sydney	Australian Music Theatre Icon
James Morrison	Sydney	Jazz Icon
John Curro MBE	Brisbane	Notable Australian Conductor
Professor Simone de Haan	Brisbane	Director – Canberra School of Music
Professor Phil Hayward	Sydney	Head of Music School – Macquarie University
Brian Cadd	Melbourne	Australian singer/songwriter
Peta Doodson	Melbourne	Australian Acting Identity
Michael Turkic	Sydney	Australian Directing Identity

Table 4 –CQCM Industry Mentor List as of December 2002

Work locally – think globally

From the outset we believe it is useful to think globally even though you may only work locally. All products and services should be internationalised for domestic and possible foreign use. In order to ensure and profess international quality 'global competence' is essential. Benchmarking is a useful tool in this instance. Kanter (1995) and Hodgetts (1995) both assert that globalisation and internationalisation are at the core of any multinational or even local success. The notion is best summed up by Hodgetts (1995) '... in order to fully understand multinational businesses, one also has to look at the places in which they operate, the countries from which they emanate, and the interactions they have with suppliers, customers, venture partners, and a work force, which is usually inherently local.' (p. 57)

Universities, and most elements within them, typically make claims of national and international status and reputation in mission and other statements that have a telling sameness about them. In many instances it is difficult to ascertain how these reputations or claims can actually be validated at the level of teaching and industry exposure. We propose a simple rule of thumb. To be a truly national program a given course must have current national staff; current national students; and, it follows, the course should be available nationally in a variety of locations. In turn, to claim international status a course must have current international staff; current international students; and be available internationally in a number of locations. *The Virtual Conservatorium* aspires to such a benchmark. Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music, in 2003, offers product in ten locations including three states.

Governance

Effective governance is based on the development of clearly articulated and appropriate sets of goals. Clear mission statements and/or objectives require careful consideration and articulation. The exercise of then developing access depends greatly on how the mission statement is reworked to cater for 'new' students and in turn can be examined in the light of the experiences of students who have attempted to work within the parameters. The clear detailing of objectives that reflect providing greater access for students will need to be constantly evaluated in the light of practices.

Bowman (1990) states that a good mission statement might include a statement of beliefs and values; a statement of the needs that the firm will satisfy; a statement of the markets within which the firm will trade; a statement of how these markets will be

reached; a statement of the technologies that the firm will use; and a statement on attitudes to growth and financing. He further adds ' Good mission statements or 'visions' are inspiring and exciting. They need to be specific enough to act as a 'tie breaker' (eg, when it comes to the crunch quality is more important than meeting delivery targets), whilst at the same time it should be general enough to leave room for people to exercise initiative.' (p. 36)

Clearly, effective mission statements must be well thought through, articulated in achievable terms, and provide some scope for individual and/or group initiative. In this way governance issues reflect a clear direction, but also incorporate a level of flexibility that makes it possible for providers to respond appropriately to the changing needs of clients.

Further, Beare, Caldwell, and Millikan (1989) in a school management context, highlight a number of key principles that are fundamental to mission statements when used in education settings. Statements should define 'what we want to become, rather than what we are doing'; statements should use appropriate criterion for defining the business'; statements should be well balanced in terms of neither being too narrow or too broad; Statements should not be filled with empty phrases and terms; statements should provide those effected by them with a clear understanding of their implications; and statements should be concise, short and fewer than 25 words. In addition, David (1986) in the context of strategic planning concludes that mission statements are about customers, products, markets, technology, survival, growth, profitability, philosophy, self concept, concern for public image, effectiveness, and inspiring quality. Peeke (1994) considering the three previous suggestions concludes

that a mission statement should have certain characteristics including a clear specification of the nature of the enterprise; a reflection of the organisation members; specification of markets and customers; specification of beliefs and values prized by the organisation; specification of the technology in use; specification of the organisation's growth policy; and stated in general terms to allow flexibility but specific enough to assist with the establishment of priorities.

Each of the views reinforces the notion of clear articulation of goals and objectives, often in market terms, with scope for adjustment and reworking if and when the context demands it. In turn clients will become increasingly willing to evaluate and comment on the way in which the provider caters for their specific and general needs. Students will be asked to reflect on how the institution actually fulfils its obligations. 'Perhaps the most important single issue to emerge from the discussions of governance is that of accountability' (Schuller, 1991, p.8).

Quality

Schuller's (1991) fourth point is that of 'quality' while acknowledging that '... not all institutions should aspire to qualities of the same kind' (p.10). The very process of determining the needs of clients for particular initiatives will in turn produce the types of qualities that need to be demonstrated. If, for example, a particular client group within a particular initiative clearly requires the emphasis to be placed on technical know how, the institution requires a shift in emphasis to the provision of quality technical expertise. This in turn may require additional funding and responsibility on the part of the institution. It may also mean that an institution incapable of providing

technical expertise or the funding necessary to procure it may need to reconsider offering the initiative in the first place. Universities are often in need, however, of extending themselves into unfamiliar areas. This may require the retraining of staff or the development of financially rewarding initiatives that provide appropriate resources to move into distinct and appropriate demand areas. In this scenario, the future of quality performance rests largely on self funding programmes that are capable of supporting themselves in terms of resources and personnel.

Given the case presented so far, we now isolate three issues identified by Schuller (1991), namely a different time structure: shorter cycles and an end to full-time versus part-time enrolment status; human resources and managing change; and continuing education. These are central to the definition of flexible delivery provided earlier. We briefly outline these issues before using them to structure a literature review.

Concluding remarks

'The Virtual Conservatorium' best thrives in an environment that does not mean isolated, individual, personal computer - centred education. The mass media portrays this negative image that virtual and innovative technologies are synonymous with exclusive interaction with a computer. This image suits the Hollywood stereo-typecast scenario, but on the whole, bears little resemblance to the impact of the overall possibilities of the virtual landscape.

'The Virtual Conservatorium' instead is an innovative mix of traditional and new pedagogical approaches to the process of Arts education with a modern and structured

entrepreneurial business strategy. By combining various disparate disciplines, a virtual network can be established. Not all the elements that combine to create this network need to be groundbreaking inventions. Traditional methodologies do not have to be discarded but rather redesigned and approached with an open and creative mind. These issues and conditions presented provided the opportunity and the premise on which *'The Virtual Conservatorium'* was initiated.

2. SCOPE AND GOALS

In this chapter we focus on the scope and goals of the project. Fundamental to our design and progress is the need to extend our catchment area in terms of student numbers and locations. Our notion is that student numbers, achieved partly through multiple sites, is closely linked with gross income and subsequently organizational wealth and prosperity. This expansion, though, requires a rethink in terms of practices and programming.

In Chapter 1 we discussed how a conservatorium in a geographically isolated area with a relatively small catchment area could survive and thrive in the 2000s. Global conditions were discussed along with 'macro-conditions' that affect the Australian University system and conservatoria in particular.

We now move forward in our discussion of developing new designs and strategies for the new environment.

THE GOALS THIS PROJECT ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE BOTH TECHNICALLY AND FROM A BUSINESS POINT OF VIEW

In order for Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM) to maintain an innovative momentum there was a necessity to create a product that could transcend the limitations of *on-campus* tertiary music delivery. *The Virtual Conservatorium* project has as one of its foci the creation of a level of financial viability for CQCM that can only be achieved by metamorphosing into an entity that has a larger potential student catchment than the current on-campus arrangements. To achieve this *The*

Virtual Conservatorium also needed technical, curricular and delivery development beyond that of traditional on-campus university environments. Nelson (2002) provides a valuable overview :

'Developments in communication and technology have transcended traditional boundaries, creating the possibility of worldwide communities. The demand for the services of universities is no longer restricted to the surrounding area but is coming from a much more extended constituency. The demands of these new constituencies will require universities to develop new service delivery systems and create virtual places in which they can operate and compete on a global scale.' (p. 20)

The delivery mechanisms and virtual environments referred to above are the basis of the technical scope of this project. In more global terms the trends are similar. Universities in the United Kingdom and the United States of America are experiencing the same conclusions. Universities that fail to make this transition and continue to rely on single campus classroom mode of operation will struggle to compete and adapt to change. As The University of Exeter's Academic Affairs Committee (2000) reports :

'The committee was concerned with the fate of the Music Department. The current situation is very fluid. The department has lost its best researcher to Manchester and is not financially viable as a department. It requires too much money to bring its facilities up to scratch. The

department has been asked to prepare its own proposals to save itself from the axe ...' (p. 1)

In direct contrast with this, universities that have been able to adapt to these changes have demonstrated substantial growth and viability. On the 'Phoenix On line University's homepage' (2003) it is underlined that the model "provides students with the same quality education, curriculum, faculty and resources offered to over 140,000 University of Phoenix students at over 125 campuses and learning centers across the U.S."

As can be seen in *Table 5* there is a direct correlation between student numbers and financial viability. In 1999 CQCM was servicing a single site in Mackay with only on-campus students. In 2003 CQCM is operating as a multi-campus multi-modal operation, and the results are evident.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	@ July 2003
Student Numbers	86	210	290	365	432
Post graduate	0	50	90	115	130
International	0	15%	30%	40%	32%
Delivery Sites	1	5	7	8	10
Gross Income	1m	2.3m	4m	3.6m	3.8m
Non Government funding	*	36%	69%	64%	48%

- no records available

Table 5: 1999-July 2003 growth issues

To achieve these gains the traditional model of single campus, classroom based teaching needed a considerable make over and manipulation to suit a wider range of student learning requirements. To facilitate this, CQCM had to first identify the target consumer market group(s) and then create materials that suited the emerging

demographics. In the Central Queensland University Undergraduate Prospectus 2002 and the Central Queensland University Undergraduate Handbook 2002 the University's Vice Chancellor makes a clear statement of intent in her Welcome to CQU:

> 'Central Queensland University enjoys a reputation as one of Australia's most progressive and innovative universities. In both teaching and research, our highly qualified and internationally recruited staff place emphasis on finding new and challenging new frontiers in our specialist areas of the arts and music.'

This statement was in part the impetus for the creation of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. The notion of moving beyond the existing frontiers into more challenging environments was irresistible.

The goals

To achieve financial independence and viability CQCM needed to establish an increased gross income that in turn ultimately would lead to a positive net outcome. This could be achieved in two ways: first, improve delivery efficiency; and second, reach a greater student population base. Ideally a combination of both could be achieved.

The Virtual Conservatorium was initially designed to provide students with the opportunity to complete an undergraduate *Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts* and/or a *Master of Arts Administration* in a multi-modal, virtual environment. With the

creation of materials for these student markets there were a number of further potential student market places that could utilise, either completely or partially, the materials created. The underlying ethos of the project was to deliver music education to a wide range of students 'anywhere, anytime and anyhow'. The current student demographic includes :

- Virtual postgraduate

- Virtual undergraduate

- Mackay on-campus undergraduate

- Rockhampton on-campus undergraduate

- Central Queensland University students (faculty transfer)

- General population for award (full fee)

- General population for interest (no fee)

Virtual postgraduate offerings

The Virtual Conservatorium has an unlimited number of places available for students wishing to study in the *Master of Arts Administration* program. All courses within the *MAA on line* are offered in a variety of multi-modal delivery designs. The students currently come from both domestic (4 States and 2 Territories) and international (3 countries) sources.

Virtual undergraduate offerings

'The Virtual Conservatorium' has seventy five funded places for Queensland based full-time students over the first three year period (twenty five each year) available in

the undergraduate *Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts* in virtual mode. The first intake of students in 2003 is scattered along the Queensland East Coast with hubs in Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Brisbane.

Mackay on-campus undergraduate offerings

In 2002, the conservatorium site in Mackay was at full capacity with 112 full-time on-campus students. All of these students, in fact, were involved indirectly in the offerings of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'* through the Bachelor of Jazz Studies, Bachelor of Music Theatre and Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts undergraduate degrees. The necessity for forward planning and embedding new delivery methodologies within the traditional model is supported by Baghai, Coley and White (1999):

> 'As a company's business and revenue streams mature, it must have others ready to take their place. If continual growth is the goal, the pace of replenishment must be faster than the pace of decline. To sustain growth there must be a continuous pipeline of new business that represents new sources of profit.' (p.153)

To meet the changing demands of on-campus students, we had predicted that the flexibility of study modes would require the implementation of virtual methodologies to be utilised in areas of *on-campus* academic and practical courses. This prediction was realized in 2003, when the on-campus students requested access to the electronic and virtual materials in preference to the print materials that were previously provided.

Rockhampton on-campus undergraduate offerings

63 full time on-campus students in Rockhampton were involved indirectly in 2002 and 2003 in the offerings of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'* through the *Bachelor of Performing Arts* undergraduate degree. A number of the courses are available on line and in intensive mode supported by *The Virtual Conservatorium* management team.

Central Queensland University students (faculty transfer)

The undergraduate student base within the conservatorium is limited to a population of approximately 230 students. Central Queensland University has an overall student undergraduate population of approximately 10,000 students. As students from all programs are able to access to courses taught via *'The Virtual Conservatorium'*, this has the potential to expand CQCM's student access by almost 4,000%. Central Queensland University has the policy of faculty funding transfer that allows students to take courses from a faculty other than their own with the associated funding attached to that course being transferred to the faculty delivering the course. On Line and SBL courses can easily be accessed at the student's discretion, although timing and location of courses taught in an intensive mode will depend on geographical location and timetable to a larger extent. Students are encouraged to take as many or as few courses as suits their needs. Coordinators of various degrees across the University are already inquiring about 'sets' of courses that could be 'bundled' for other degree programs from other faculties at Central Queensland University. *The Virtual Conservatorium* is enthusiastic about these developments.

General population for award (full fee)

Central Queensland University has a successful distance education profile that allows the general public to enrol in programs studying as a full time or part time student. This distinction would no longer be made for this category of student, as they would enrol in the same manner and mode as any other *Virtual student.*

General population for interest (no fee)

The on line course materials from *The Virtual Conservatorium* would be made freely available to any interested patron. There would be no tutorial assistance provided nor would the conservatorium supply assessment for the audit of the course. It is hoped that this opportunity will lead to these students considering studying for the appropriate award in the future. *Diagram 1* provides an overview of the target groups being considering as current and potential students for *The Virtual Conservatorium.*

Diagram 1: Targeted Student Demographic

THE TECHNICAL ELEMENTS

In order to serve the aforementioned, proposed student demographic certain technical changes to the delivery methods needed to be made. The traditional classroom-based lecture/tutorial mode of music education is only available to a limited number of on-campus students. In order to provide access to the wider population new delivery technologies needed to be explored on an ongoing basis. In addition to Face-to-Face (F2F) delivery other synchronous and asynchronous delivery services needed to be explored and developed. These services included methodologies such as Computer Aided Learning, Intensive Delivery, On line Delivery, PDF, VCD to name a few.

To accommodate these changes in delivery, and simultaneously improve the financial efficiency of the on-campus and virtual environment, the undergraduate programs needed to be marginally modified. This process meant rationalizing the number of courses offered into a manageable number - raising, and subsequently introducing, the concepts of tri-annual and bi-annual offerings to the conservatorium stakeholders.

As well as the technical development of curriculum required, the rationalization of human resource strategies for the operation and management of *The Virtual Conservatorium* were, and remain, significant. This included the creation of a management and communication structure that was organic, rather than hierarchical, as well as a redesign of the approaches to academic and support staff that incorporates managing the learning process of the conservatorium students overall.

Delivery Styles and Formats

A range of delivery styles and mechanisms is ultilised in the initiative. It is our belief that the variety of styles is fundamental to the support systems created. Students have ample opportunity to select from a range of modes in an effort to match their needs and preferences as learners. We consider a number of styles and formats incorporated

-

Asynchronous delivery

By Asynchronous communications we mean the use of such things as E-mail and On line hosting. On line courses give students the option to study when, and for as long as they choose. As the demographic profile demonstrates there are currently two distinct markets for undergraduate aspect of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'*. The first market is the school leaver who chooses this model of study given the flexibility of study options; the second market, older students who have not been successful in gaining entry into the major conservatoria in metropolitan areas and do not wish to relocate to Regional Centres such as Mackay and/or Rockhampton. Halsne and Gatta (2002: 1) highlight this change in profile when they write:

> 'Today's college students are older, more diverse and display varying
>
> degrees of academic readiness. Many are well above traditional college
>
> age and due to various commitments, cannot relinquish their current jobs
>
> for the sake of education. Further some people are disadvantaged due to
>
> geographical remoteness or restricted by work schedule and need distance

learning methods. Overall, distance learning provides learners a more flexible way to further their education.'

Tertiary study is now not purely the domain of post - secondary students. This second market group indicated includes 'mature age students' who generally are employed on a full time basis and/or have family commitments precluding them from the conventional methods of conservatorium study, particularly if the option is not close to their current residence. This is a more diverse cohort and further increases the population base for which *The Virtual Conservatorium'* is able to cater.

Synchronous delivery

The computer is also utilized in *The Virtual Conservatorium* as a synchronous delivery tool. By 'synchronous' we mean real-time contact between parties, such as Video Conferencing, ISL (Integrated System-Wide Learning) and Chat programs such as 'IRC'.

Computer aided learning

CAL (Computer Aided Learning) involves the use of either commercially available software, or alternatively internally created software applications. CQCM uses the term SBL (Software Based Learning). These programs contain all of the instructional material required as well as drill exercises and, in some cases, examinations. Commercially available programs such as 'Auralia', developed and distributed by Rising Software, have been customised for CQCM in order to meet the course outline and profile requirements.

Intensive delivery

CQCM courses are based on credit point values that are multiples of three. Each three credit point value equates to 12 hours of contact lectures/workshops and subsequently a six credit point course would consist of 24 contact hours. Traditionally this coverage has been achieved by means of weekly lectures of one/two hours per week over a 12 week semester. For some courses this weekly model was preferred, especially in relation to the development of skills in areas such as Chief Practical Study. For courses such as electives this delivery method has proven impractical and even inappropriate. Rather than maintaining the one hour, 12-week semester delivery model a number of courses using an intensive weekend design were piloted. A weekend model (Saturday and Sunday 10am to1pm and 2pm to 5pm) was utilised. This delivery mode provided industry current professionals with the opportunity to contract for these intensive two-day courses and students were therefore able to access quality professional staff from international and domestic music industry and related professional spheres. This contact with quality industry leaders has benefit for both students *and* staff. The mentor relationship with selected industry based specialists is of enormous value for students because these personal encounters are often with those who will most likely be influential in them gaining future employment. The involvement of high calibre, short term staffing enhances the depth of staff quality and in turn provides professional development opportunities for current full time staff. This change in mindset has also facilitated the timely and necessary rationalization of full time staff located in Mackay and Rockhampton.

DOC, PPT and XLS - Microsoft Office Document file extensions

This is an elementary form of on line text, data and electronic presentation delivery formats. It is only accessible by computers equipped with *Microsoft Office*. DOC is

the extension placed after any *Microsoft Word* file when the file is created or saved to disc. Similarly PPT is the document extension placed after a *Microsoft PowerPoint* file and XLS is the extension for *Microsoft Excel* documents. Each of these *Microsoft* programs has an important specialization. *Microsoft Word* is primarily for the creation of text-based data; *Microsoft Excel* is most often used in the creation and manipulation of numerical and textual data in table format; *Microsoft PowerPoint* is a powerful presentation tool with the ability to link text and graphics in an animated format. The limitation of these file formats for use in virtual delivery is that although the files are dual platform (ie supported by both PC and Macintosh computers) they necessitate the prescriptive software of *Microsoft Office* to read the files. *The Virtual Conservatorium* has utilised .doc formats for the electronic lodging of university documents such as course profiles, examination deferment and the like. The .xls has only been used for the electronic posting of statistical tables and .ppt for presentations that have been made on-campus that the virtual students have requested. In most cases we have replaced, and are in the process of replacing, these files with the more generically accessible PDF and MOV file formats.

.HTM (or HTML) files

In 1994 the World Wide Web (www) was commercially introduced. It should be noted that the development of the www was, as stated by Inglis, Ling and Joosten (1999) 'was in effect years earlier as the US Department of Defence set up ARPANet in 1969 to connect the military departments' (p. 64). With a standard for communication, http (HyperText Transfer Protocol) and a common standard language, html (HyperText Mark-up Language) all manufactured computers could communicate over great distances.

HTM is the appended file extension attached to internet-based graphical interfaces. Whilst programming with this is used on every website it is generally a programming skill that not all academics possess. Due to this the files created for internet browsers such as *Internet Explorer* and *Netscape Navigator* are on the whole managed by web trained technicians not academic staff. Most academics are computer literate and well-versed in word-processing style skills and can therefore create and maintain materials in these *Microsoft Office* formats but not in HTML. For *The Virtual Conservatorium* we have decided to create the web portal and interface using .htm code but then linking to formats such as PDF, PPT, for example, so that the individual academic staff members can easily maintain and modify their projects. To activate changes they email the amended file to the 'webmaster', who in turn uploads the link in a matter of seconds.

PDF - Portable Document Format

Adobe Acrobat Reader allows students the ability to view, navigate, and print documents in the Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). These files contain text and images and due to the file compression available allow for complex backgrounds and page-layouts to be downloaded economically. Although the creator of these files needs to access specific software to convert other file formats to PDF, such as 'Print to PDF' or the full version of Adobe Acrobat, the end user only needs the Acrobat Reader software, which can be freely downloaded from the Adobe Web site at http://www.adobe.com in Windows, Linux and Macintosh formats. In contrast with the *Microsoft Office* files which can only be read by the student if they have paid for the *Microsoft Office* software, PDF files can be accessed with the freeware '*Adobe*

Acrobat Reader. We have chosen this format for the majority of the text files within the lecture information for both the undergraduate and postgraduate students in *The Virtual Conservatorium,* as the file compression ratios allow large amounts of stylized text and graphics in a relatively small file size and the freely available software for the students to access the data. Students have also commented that when they are using internet kiosks and cafes that don't have *Microsoft Office* loaded that they are not able to access The Virtual Conservatorium material *unless* it is in PDF format.

VAL - Video Aided Learning

VAL is a video based distance education tool. On-campus lectures are recorded, duplicated and then made available to off-campus students. The video footage is generally unedited as it is a replication of a given lecture. There is no scope for the distance viewer to actively partake in class discussion or questioning. Student feedback indicates that whilst the relatively slow pace of a classroom based lecture is tolerated when present in the room, it is frustrating viewing the jokes, late starts and idiotic questions that exist in a classroom environment. On a positive note the VAL system has three advantages. Firstly, as it is asynchronous in nature the students can view it within their own timeframe. It may be started and stopped and easily repeated. Secondly, the class material/lecture may be reviewed as an examination preparation tool some months after the initial lecture has been given. And thirdly, as the VAL tapes are accumulated in a library location it is possible to view previous year's delivery of that subject matter and enable the student to possibly get another lecturer's viewpoint. *The Virtual Conservatorium* has adopted the VAL system purely as a backup of the delivery of intensive classes. In the case of a student missing the scheduled dates we have a backup video copy of the lecture available. This

audiovisual material is also beneficial, in edited segments, for the development of future virtual course materials.

ISL - Integrated System-wide Learning

Real time, on line delivery can be treated in two formats – real time data and real time videoconferencing. Real time data transfer consists of two-way typing communication protocols such as IRC and electronic Data boards. Type applications have an active window that the tutor and/or students key in. This information instantly appears on the interface of all linked users. Similarly Data boards have the capacity to show type and simultaneous secondary applications such as "PowerPoint" presentations. Videoconferencing is the simultaneous transmission of audio and video data. This can be from a desktop with a web cam, from a small ISDN device such as a "Swift Site" or from a large format IP/ISDN system such as ISL labs within CQU. All of these elements are used within the project.

SMS

The Short Message Service (SMS) is the ability to send and receive text messages to and from mobile telephones. The text can be a combination of words or numbers or an alphanumeric combination. SMS was incorporated into the Global System for Mobiles (GSM) as a digital mobile phone standard. A single short message can be up to 160 characters of text in length using default GSM alphabet coding.

CQCM has adopted this as one of the contemporary communication protocols between staff and students. From a desktop computer we are able to contact any GSM mobile phone and leave a short message. One of the requirements for admission into

The Virtual Conservatorium is that the student has access to a mobile phone. Messages such as a bulk 'SMS-out' to all students enrolled in a particular course, advising them of a class cancellation due or assessment due dates, is common practice and works effectively and efficiently.

Virtual Course Design and Applications

The restructuring of undergraduate course offerings

The undergraduate components of *'The Virtual Conservatorium'* initiative required a restructure of the on-campus offerings in an effort to ensure the project was viable from the outset. The Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts needed to be offered in the dual modes of on-campus internal and 'virtual'. Changes needed to be put in place whereby the identical program could be delivered in these two modes simultaneously. In the first instance this required a major rearrangement and reduction of course offerings to reduce the number of courses and increase overall class sizes. The creation of a 'foundation year' in which the academic courses are common between all three Mackay based courses – the Bachelor of Jazz Studies (Year 1), Bachelor of Music Theatre (Year 1), Bachelor of Music / Performing Arts (Year 1) was viewed as useful. Courses such as 'Studies in Form', for example, are currently offered bi-annually, with second and third year students attending the same class. Given they are non-sequential and only require first year courses as a prerequisite this does not create any problems or issues. The further impact of these changes provided considerable financial savings for the delivery of on-campus offerings as a by-product.

The restructuring of undergraduate course offerings

The Master of Arts Administration had been available in intensive delivery face to face mode in Sydney, Rockhampton and Melbourne for several years. The *MAA on line* option meant that a fourth alternative would become available whereby five of the seven courses within the award would be available on line. The conversion process had been taking place over a two year period and the materials were ready for the formal launch of the project in July 2002. The essential ingredients of the initiative are the eAdministrator, eTutor and eCarer with a twelve hour turnaround response time in all cases.

On line Application Lodgment

In the initial application for an audition to the undergraduate offering within *The Virtual Conservatorium* there is an electronically lodged form for students to complete located on the conservatorium's website front page (see http://www.cqu.edu.au/cqcm). This was trialed at the end of 2002 with enormous success and acceptance. A new version of this electronic form, specifically for *The Virtual Conservatorium,* is currently being designed for implementation in 2003 for the 2004 intake. This on line form has replaced the existing paper application that has traditionally been used for CQCM programme applications. An Adobe Acrobat PDF file is also linked as a companion guide to the on line form.

Electives

Each year level of the undergraduate programme – the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts - has four electives that the students must undertake. In 1999 there were almost 100 courses available as electives with class sizes as small as one and two. This

resulted in poor economies of scale and graduates from the programme lacking scope from a musical viewpoint. It was decided that the function of the electives, within the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts, should fulfill the function of adding a broad perspective to the student's musical perspective. Six subject areas were chosen, MIDI Applications; Studio Teaching; Arts Administration; Studio Recording Techniques; Composition; and Conducting. Each of these strands was considered with two courses associated. The notion of offering electives on a triennial rotation model has also been instigated. Only four electives are offered to Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts students each year over the three year duration of the degree design. These electives are chosen to effectively and efficiently cover twelve varied extra curricular music items deemed essential. *The Virtual Conservatorium* does not completely dismiss the traditional teaching paradigm, but instead offers either further developments in course delivery or at the very least viable alternatives to the standard structure. The business strategies utilised are similar to those being incorporated into the current e-Commerce sector.

Communication and management structure of The Virtual Conservatorium

In contrast to the traditionally hierarchical structure of management that exists in tertiary environments, *The Virtual Conservatorium* is designed to operate in a more organic manner.

Diagram 2 provides a visual impression of this notion.

Diagram 2: Organic Management Approach

The Virtual Conservatorium has a commitment to care for both its students and staff.

To achieve this an 'eCarer' is assigned to offer pastoral care to enrolled students and

off-campus staff. The contact from the eCarer will usually be of a supportive nature

offering general news, gifts, merchandise, updates and the like as well as

simultaneously enquiring about the student's academic progress and general well

being. This involvement may be a simple reminder that an assignment is due or a

question about the student's/staff's academic well being. The role of the eCarer is

critical to the success and sustainability of *The Virtual Conservatorium* because it is

the most tangible link to the non - academic university environment that a virtual

student will make. Contact with the Conservatorium on a personal level will be

particularly important when the challenges and pressures of University life become overwhelming or when personal anxieties arise about academic work, relationships, self worth or identity. Confidentiality is always respected.

eAdministrator

One of the responsibilities of the eAdministrator is to ensure that the students are correctly enrolled and to give appropriate advice on related matters when needed. There is a 1 800 number to the 'Help Desk' which is recommended for student use. The on line reporting system 'PeopleSoft' contains all data pertaining to all Central Queensland University students. In the student interface 'eRolment' which can be accessed at http://www.e-rolment.cqu.edu.au all Central Queensland University students are able to enter course enrolments, view academic history and the like within this electronic environment.

Responsibilities of the eManager

The role of the eManager within *The Virtual Conservatorium* includes ensuring that the correct academic processes are maintained by staff and students; contracting staff; and auditioning and allocating student places. This position is similar to the programme co-ordinator role for on-campus programmes.

eBachelor of Music/Performing Arts

Of the six programs offered by CQCM, two were identified as part of the pilot study (2002-2003) for delivery within *The Virtual Conservatorium*. They were -

- Undergraduate – the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (*eBM/PA*)

- Postgraduate – the Master of Arts Administration (*MAA on line*)

The *Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts* (as stated in the Central Queensland University handbook and website) covers a wide gamut of musical genres and has an inbuilt flexibility for development - 'The Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts is designed to provide specialist training in all aspects of classical, and/or contemporary performance, studio teaching and composition. The title of the program is an indication of its versatility. Students are able to specialise in music whilst having the advantage of access to other art forms available on-campus. The resultant opportunity for creating individual combinations of these various art forms is a particular feature of the program.' (http://cqu.edu.au/cqcm)

In comparison to the two other programs offered at CQCM Mackay site (the Bachelor of Jazz Studies and the Bachelor of Music Theatre) the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts provides greater versatility, for this virtual mode of operation, providing options for students to study either classical, contemporary, country and audio technology, or a mix of all four. This has made it the obvious undergraduate choice for the pilot program of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. The specificity of the Bachelor of Jazz Studies (Mackay), and extensive dance and acting components of the Bachelor of Music Theatre (Mackay) and the Bachelor of Performing Arts (Rockhampton) make them a difficult option for inclusion in the initial run of *The Virtual Conservatorium* initiative. These challenges will be considered in the future if the pilot program (eBM/PA) is successful and those other departments become willing to further participate in *The Virtual Conservatorium* given the anticipated demand on greater flexibility and design by future students.

Creating the eBachelor of Music/Performing Arts was merely an adaptation of the existing degree placing the emphasis on the opportunity for students to access the programme without having to reside full time on location in Mackay.

Master of Arts Administration on line

The Master of Arts Administration (*MAA on line*) is a seven part programme, with the seventh course weighted as a double course (12CP). Five of the seven courses are available on line with an eTutor associated with each. All courses have supporting text material, which is sent to students at the commencement of each course. Most courses now also have an accompanying CD ROM, which provides an alternative to the written/printed resources.

A feature of the process is an interactive tutor that ensures a twelve hour response to any and every question or query from students. This feature adds to the interactivity of the site and is highly appreciated by graduate students. The two remaining components are delivered in intensive face to face weekend mode – and currently available in Rockhampton, Sydney and Melbourne. The multiplicity of sites for these components has been noted as an appealing option given the students enrolled currently live in three states and two territories.

Conclusion

The Virtual Conservatorium initiative arose from the need to extend the catchment area of the existing CQCM operation. Until mid 2002 students would travel to the various sites of delivery to complete both the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts

(Mackay) and the Master of Arts Administration (Rockhampton, Sydney and Melbourne). The development of the *eBachelor of Music/Performing Arts* and the *MAA on line* has facilitated an enlargement of the catchment area for the awards and provided students with the opportunity of not having to relocate to a specific site for completion of the awards.

A range of new and innovative technologies are integrated into the delivery mechanisms of the awards, and the response to date from current students is positive. The MAA on line commenced in July 2002 and the eBachelor of Music/performing Arts commenced in February 2003. There has been zero attrition to date.

In the next chapter we focus on the processes and procedures involved in the creation and delivery of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. We consider the design, choices made, and difficulties encountered in the process.

3. SOLUTION

This chapter is concerned with the processes and procedures involved in the creation and delivery of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. We describe how and why we chose the actual design of the initiative; how these choices compare to other approaches; the specific tasks, both technically and pedagogically, involved; the difficulties encountered as well as the unexpected positive and negative outcomes that arose as a result of this process.

THE APPROACH SELECTED AND THE REASONS WHY

The idea of *The Virtual Conservatorium* arose in early 2000 as the institution (Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music) pondered its long term future. It quickly became apparent that we needed to expand the catchment area of the operation by establishing multiple sites (in 1999 CQCM operated only in Mackay) and provide options for students who, for one reason or another, were unable to attend on-site options.

The virtual initiative began its formal life as *'Project iCon'* (as reported in *The Australian* on March 12, 2001: 43). It was noted that our intention was to 'use a mix of electronic and intensive mode delivery methods, with software-based learning activities to meet the needs of students in multiple locations.' The project changed its name to *The Virtual Conservatorium* shortly afterwards and CQCM subsequently now owns the business name and the website address:

www.thevirtualconservatorium.com

Willcocks and Sauer (2000, pp.101-102) proved a useful inspiration with their vision of the new organization in the new economy. They presented six conditions that needed to be embraced if we were to successfully reinvent ourselves and enhance our appeal and mode of operation. These conditions include high speed; responsiveness; reaching out globally and virtually; adopting new technology; internal collaboration; and integrating with partners.

Using these proposed conditions as a springboard it was our intention to establish an electronic based, multi-modal operation that would allow students at both undergraduate and post-graduate level to access our resources and programmes anytime, anywhere, and anyhow. Our project is about manipulating these key ingredients. We deal with each in turn.

The importance of a high speed operation

We recognized from the outset that speed was of prime importance. Gates (1999, p.xiv) reinforced the idea and gave it momentum when he wrote 'If the 1980s were about quality and the 1990s were about reengineering, then the 2000s will be about velocity'. Our operation needed to be efficient, largely web based and quick. To this end we utilized a range of delivery styles and formats including asynchronous delivery; synchronous delivery; computer aided learning; intensive delivery; DOC; PPT; XLS; HTM; PDF; Video Aided Learning; ISL (integrated System Wide Learning); and SMS. We instinctively recognized that a mix of current applications was essential in order to meet the varied and diverse needs of the students enrolled.

Our current undergraduate students are involved in a weekly face to face lesson with a chief practical study instructor at a location close to them. This allows us to access industry professionals from all over Queensland who may not usually teach tertiary music due to professional commitments but have space in their schedules to teach one or two tertiary students only. It has become obvious that in some instances intensive two or three hour sessions better suit students who have to travel distances.

Our current postgraduate students complete five of the seven components of the programme on line with the assistance of an eAdministrator, an eTutor, and an eCarer. They are required to complete the remaining two components in intensive weekend mode at a choice of three locations Rockhampton, Sydney and/or Melbourne.

Students have access to materials on a 24/7 basis making acceleration through the programme feasible. Our sites are fast and not weighed down with too much in the way of graphics and photographs so that students accessing via home modems are not disadvantaged.

Developing a high level of responsiveness

We recognized from the outset that it would be essential to have a high level of responsiveness not only in terms of access to resources but also in our responses to queries and questions from students spread across significant areas. Currently we have some twenty five undergraduate students spread across Queensland, with a further fifty places available over the next two years. In addition we have post

graduate students spread across three states, two territories and three countries. The post graduate programme has no limit on numbers and we expect this to grow exponentially.

At the post graduate level we have attempted to ensure a short response to queries and concerns. The eTutor makes a commitment to a 12 hour turnaround period with the eAdministrator and eCarer committed to a 24 hour turn around each weekday. The feedback from students to date has been positive and we appear to be achieving our goals and at the same time satisfying their needs.

Reaching out globally and virtually

We believed that we needed to think globally, though working locally. Every aspect of the development has national and international application in terms of the technology, resources, delivery mechanisms and applications. Our resources could be readily transferred to off-campus and off shore sites. The programme at both undergraduate and post graduate level is well suited to students with differing needs. Our catch cry of anytime, anywhere, and anyhow seems realistic and to date appears to be working.

Adopting new technology

Growth in technological interest and computer literacy levels have evolved over the past twenty years to a point where most people now have some level of computer literacy and confidence. Whateley and Jankoff (2001,p.40) note ' Generation X and

younger students have grown up using the Internet: they may desire a different level of development. This issue needs to be carefully researched as the proportion of this group is increasing over time.' With this development of skills in mind it is also necessary to make allowances for the mature members of the student body without these developed skills.

Highlighting internal collaboration

A number of high calibre staff (eTutors) have been appointed to manage the delivery and assessment of each of the on line and software based courses. The staff for *The Virtual Conservatorium* has been drawn from the pool of full-time staff at CQCM and from industry specialists (mentors) outside the Conservatorium. The mentors are involved in a mix of delivery methods. These mentors, in a weekend/after hours 'intensive' mode, teach some courses, while other mentors also deliver practical (CPS) lessons weekly in 'Face to Face' (F2F) mode. With the addition of on line courses offered by *The Virtual Conservatorium* some of these courses are also delivered and maintained by mentors.

An on line administrator (eAdministrator) has been appointed internally to facilitate all aspects of enrolment, progress and result documentation. Central Queensland University installed an electronic enrolment university wide system (PeopleSoft) on line during 2001 to replace the outmoded 'Jet' based system. This has lead to a more viable electronic administration of student data is useful for the initiative in question.

The third ingredient in the process is the appointment of an electronic pastoral carer

(eCarer) who takes responsibility for welfare and pastoral issues associated with the on line student and/or off-campus. The role, an internal appointment, incorporates weekly contact regarding progress, assistance required, and any other pressing issues that need to be dealt with to enable the student to progress efficiently and with minimum stress. This is a key ingredient in the success formula.

Integrating with partners

There is evidence of useful outcomes supporting the notion of developing strategic alliances with like organizations locally, regionally, statewide, nationally and internationally. Alliances provide a range of opportunities and advantages including benchmarking. There is certainly nothing new about the notion of establishing alliances and networks. Powell (1990, p.298) provides an historical overview when he considers 'A long view of business history would suggest that firms with strictly defined boundaries and highly centralized operations are quite atypical. The history of modern commerce, whether told by Braudel, Polanyi, Pollard or Wallerestein, is a story of family businesses, guilds, cartels, and extended trading companies – all enterprises with loose and highly permeable boundaries.' Kanter (1994, p.99) aptly describes the dynamics of these alliances as 'like romances, alliances are built on hopes and dreams - what might happen if certain opportunities are pursued' and further 'perhaps the flexibility with the highest potential payoff involves the ability to combine a company's various resources in collaborative efforts: joint marketing between divisions, for example, or a product linking components from units that traditionally sold their wares separately, or the procurement staff for one business unit helping another find a supply source for a new venture.' (Kanter, 1989, p. 84) It

certainly makes sense to develop co-operative ventures that achieve outcomes that would otherwise be extremely difficult to achieve individually.

Alliances and networks also provide a new enthusiasm for creating initiatives. Charan (1991, p.106) describes it well:

> 'Unlike most teams and task forces, networks do not merely solve problems that have been defined for them. Networks are dynamic; they take initiative. They become the vehicle to redirect the flows of information and decisions, the uses of power, and the sources of feedback within the hierarchy. They become a new way of doing business and a new operating mechanism for individual managers to make their presences felt.'

The energy and excitement that often results from co-operative ventures can play an important role in rejuvenating alliance members individually and collectively. Limerick, Cunnington and Crowther (1998) provide valuable insight into a platform for the development of strategic alliances:

> 'Some contemporary organizations already take very seriously the battle cry of ''fewer structural relationships' within their organization, and have been moving towards broader networks of activity between units within their organizations. Significantly, they have also looked for synergies through loose coupling with units outside their organization. Some of them have deliberately franchised off parts of their businesses, or use

subcontractors or strategic alliances with other organizations to gain a competitive edge.' (p. 55)

The Virtual Conservatorium initiative involves a number of key partners including Learning Network Queensland; The Australian Institute of Music; Cannon Hill Anglican College (Brisbane); Hamilton Island Enterprises; and Queensland Rail.

The meaning of 'virtual'

There have been numerous debates on the merits and appropriateness of the virtual teaching environment. It seems, from the negative responses from those opposed to this methodology, that the debate has often begun before a thorough study of the possibilities of the virtual environment has even begun. We believe much of this negativity as a result of fear of new and confronting initiatives.

The word virtual does not preclude media other than the World Wide Web (www). In fact the word virtual is synonymous with 'practical, essential, implicit, substantial, effective, implied and pragmatic.' (Microsoft Word Thesaurus, Soft-Art inc.) The virtual mode utilises a wide range of teaching procedures that disseminate subject information and enable effective communication with the student. The context of virtual delivery is therefore practical (Face to Face, 'real world' based problem solving); essential (only the courses needed are taught rather than ensuring students are active in classes all day/all week); implicit; implied (eTutor contact 6 days/week, group discussion boards); substantial (academically rigorous and quality assured); effective (measured by course indicators and evaluations); and pragmatic (ensuring graduates are multi-skilled eMusicians).

According to Yeung (2001,p.1) Distance Education is the fastest growing sector of tertiary education in Australia today, ' Indeed, in the last five years, the number of students choosing to study by distance education in Australia has grown almost three times faster than the number choosing traditional full-time on-campus studies.'

These statistics quoted by Yeung (2001) have an inbuilt bias, as the number of full-time, on-campus places has a capped quota, while distance education has a greater flexibility in the number of students in the intake. The multi-modal presentation format allows the student the greatest access and choice as to the environment that most suits their lifestyle and learning style. Smith (2000,p.7) makes the point ' to retain customers, it is vital to focus on what people want and need rather than on what we want to sell to them.' Students who need greater time to process information are ideally suited to Computer Assisted Learning (CAL) and on line delivery as they can spend as much time directly interfacing with the tutoring media as they require. Similarly a student who needs less time on a particular course can choose to complete the coursework at a faster pace and employ their time elsewhere in their studies.

One of the most attractive aspects of this third level is that student from interstate or overseas will be able to complete entire awards without having to leave home. McCormack (1994,p.126) alludes to the possibility that success overseas brings success locally. ' Remember, no top executive is ever happy with his company's international operations. Do something for his company internationally and it will open the door for domestic opportunities as well.' This has certain financial and career implications for a range of potential students who may now be able to remain

in their current work situation, and at the same time, become involved in undergraduate and/or post-graduate studies off-campus or off-shore. In terms of benefits to the provider, the perception from the immediate local market will be one of higher standing and esteem.

The Virtual Conservatorium provides students with the opportunity to complete an undergraduate Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts and/or a Master of Arts Administration in a multi-modal, virtual environment utilizing all of the afore-mentioned virtual modes. Most courses offered within *The Virtual Conservatorium* are delivered in a variety of modes to suit the students' learning requirements. Collis (1998,p.9) observes customer satisfaction is directly related to business success. He notes 'Customers are driven by their wants and needs. If your business has what they want, at the right time and price, they will usually do business with you.' It is our contention that we have developed a product that will suit an existing market.

Precursors to virtual studies at CQCM

In early 2001, *Project iCon* was devised to address the issues noted and other contentions by creating greater options and flexibility for study. In many ways this was The Virtual Conservatorium platform not yet fully developed or fully thought through. At the time, four key environments were identified to assist the rethink of undergraduate offerings and delivery, including the use of the **internet** as a delivery and information source; the use of **intensive** delivery mechanisms; the incorporation of **industry** mentors and on going **innovation** and design;

Although each of these elements may not be 'revolutionary breakthroughs' in terms of educational strategy, in the Australian context, placing them simultaneously in a conservatorium environment was unique to CQCM and a radical move in the traditional conservatorium environment.

Each of the four categories noted utilize some or all of the following pedagogies - innovative and interactive on line delivery; intense periods of study; industry recognised lecturers; synchronous communication; asynchronous communication; stylised print material of commercial quality; CD ROM and VCD self contained learning packages; and Computer Aided Learning (CAL) / Software Based Learning (SBL).

Innovative and Interactive On line delivery

The uses of the Internet in the 'iCon' project (the precursor of *The Virtual Conservatorium*) were threefold: first, as an asynchronous device; second as a synchronous delivery medium; and third incorporating the use of 'software-controlled' training packages. On line studies are commonly of an asynchronous nature. The delivery and feedback is not given in real time, but rather in a non-time specific format. The lecture is generally located on a server and accessed by the student to study at a convenient time. Questions (and other feedback relating to the course material) are lodged by sending e-mail to the eTutor.

Synchronous lectures within Central Queensland University are mostly given using ISL (Integrated System-wide Learning) technology. This is only possible if both the lecturer and the students have access to an ISL theatre. Having a staff member

teaching remotely from a desktop computer to a class has proven to be a little more difficult. A number of software applications were trialed (CUSeeMe, White Pine, and iVisit) until a suitable H323 video protocol application was found (*VideoLink Pro* – Smith Micro). This software has created three possible teaching mode opportunities. As the protocol is the same as the ISL standard, a remotely located staff member can create a real-time audiovisual link with an ISL laboratory; communication can be made from desktop to desktop; and a lecturer can make real time audiovisual contact with a single student or group of students from an ISL equipped room.

With this technology in place the practical component of a cohort of composition major students has been maintained at CQCM. With access to a specialist lecturer located in Brisbane, the composition students have benefited from this technology. CQCM refers to this as ' Composition On line'. A mix of methodologies is used to enhance the effectiveness of the video streaming such as scanning and emailing handwritten documents into PDF format, electronic software applications to notate and create MIDI data files, and short term intensive face -to - face (F2F) contact.

A new term SBL (Software Based Learning) refers to the use of commercial software teaching packages for initial training and testing. The term CAL (Computer Aided Learning) generally refers to education dissemination only. This mechanism allows for different rates of learning amongst students and creates greater access time for students to pose questions and enter into informed academic debate with the appointed lecturer. The adaptation of Rising Software's 'Auralia' has been used for the effective offering of Musicianship 1 – 8 at CQCM.

New models in distance education, and in particular on line course work, are becoming a common practice in the university environment. As it becomes a more integral part of tertiary education the question has to be constantly asked 'is it in fact better, worse or as good as traditional education?' There have been countless debates about the two distinct trends currently highlighted in the contemporary literature for higher education in music education - Face to face (F2F) / Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning Networks (ALN).

The Virtual Conservatorium combines the elements of F2F/sychronous learning such as the tactile nature of F2F and the real-time personal mentor relationship that can be developed, and the anywhere, anytime and anyone elements of ALN in a manner unique to CQCM. The delivery of the undergraduate degree falls into two distinct categorical models. For the bulk of the academic delivery the on-campus Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts uses standard lecture/tutorial techniques whilst the practical courses are delivered F2F in either individual or ensemble sessions.

It was proposed that the academic courses associated with the BM/PA be translated into *The Virtual Conservatorium* mode of delivery as primarily ALN methodologies for courses taught by off-campus staff with regular email contact and group, on line chat (eg. IRC) when required. The BM/PA on-campus students in turn had the same courses delivered by synchronous F2F tutorials working in conjunction with the on line material when being taught by full-time CQCM staff.

The practical component of The Virtual Conservatorium model as an off-campus activity utilizes the same principles as the on-campus model but with the physical location being elsewhere and the relevant staff member being employed on a casual/part-time basis. Preliminary approaches to possible staffing candidates have been met favourably. Many industry professionals who are not willing to commit to a full time teaching appointment seem prepared to commit to a 1- or 2- hour weekly arrangement. This translates into the real possibility of enriching the quality of CQCM's teaching pool with the addition of these non full-time, high end, employees.

With regard to the financial issues Inglis, Ling and Joosten (2000) postulate that digital education (ALNs, eLearning environments) is heavy on the development costs, but lighter in delivery costs. On the other hand traditional F2F is light on development cost and heavy on delivery costs. These factors need to be calculated in determining the financial viability of either method in the long term.

Face to Face as a delivery mechanism

Face to face (F2F) represents the traditional approach to subject delivery. This usually involves a regular weekly lecture and tutorials with staff and students present in the same physical location. With the ever-increasing amount of information that students are required to process, the shift from a lecture mode of dispensing knowledge to that of knowledge creation is logical and appropriate. Ocker and Yaverbaum (1999, p.428) make comment on traditional delivery models ' with the traditional lecture model of instruction, instructors dominate classroom activity and only a small portion of classes elicit student interaction.'

The requirements for the student as a 'life long learner' are the skills of synthesising, analysing and integrating material rather than to reciting the material. In the nineteenth century European university environment this was achieved by a focus on the 'tutorial' process with an academic mentor in an informal manner. The 'lecture' was achieved by these students accessing set research readings or sessions given by one of the postgraduate students. The dissemination of the information was a secondary priority to that of the rationalisation, synthesis and reasoning of the information. The current trend of lecture and tutorial roles in Australian Universities mimics that of the American tradition of the tutorial being a secondary lecture and assessment instrument for the earlier lecture. In many arts degrees this aspect of learning is achieved in the assessment of a research project or essay, with this assignment done outside the face to face delivery timeslot and usually in a separate physical location.

' Learning by being told ', ' learning by doing', ' learning by reading and searching the literature', ' learning by discussion and debate' are pedagogical constructs used in tertiary degrees and in different ways in different disciplines and to varying degrees. Bourne, McMaster, Rieger, and Campbell (1997, p.4) note:

> ' It is common practice in undergraduate education to have lectures two or three times a week and a laboratory or discussion period only once per week. In a typical lecture given in engineering education, there is little discussion. In the laboratory, students learn by doing experiments. Engineering students will almost always express the sentiment that they learn much more in laboratories than in lectures.'

The Virtual Conservatorium aims to identify and act upon this discrepancy by increasing the focus on communication and debate whilst reducing the intellectual capital tied up in the delivery of the information. As lecture class sizes have now increased significantly in key areas (up to 500+ students) universities are utilizing the skills of their most senior academics to deliver the information in lectures, with junior academics instructing the tutorials. This has meant a dilution of face to face delivery benefits and quality.

Synchronous non F2F lectures within Central Queensland University are mostly given using ISL (Integrated System-wide Learning) technology. This is only possible if both the lecturer and the students have access to an ISL theatre. Having a staff member teaching remotely from a desktop computer to a class is possible. The ISL system works in three possible teaching modes. As the protocol is the same as the ISL standard, a remotely located staff member could create a real-time audio - visual link with an ISL laboratory; communication can be made from desktop to desktop; and a lecturer can make real time audio - visual contact with a single or group of students from an ISL equipped room.

Tucker (2001) notes that the ardent advocates of on line education are critical of their traditional counterparts viewing the F2F delivery as 'unchangeable, inflexible, teacher-centred and static'. (p.1) In their comparison of F2F versus ALN student satisfaction outcomes the survey results provided by Ocker and Yaverbaum (1999, p. 436) are informative. In the areas of 'learning quality' and student 'content satisfaction' F2F surveyed equal to ALN. In the criteria 'process satisfaction' and 'perceived discussion quality' F2F rated higher than ALN. Only in 'solution satisfaction' did ALN rate more

highly than F2F. The implications of these findings for *The Virtual Conservatorium* are that there will need to be some reconsideration of the processes used and discussion methodologies incorporated.

Fallah and Ubell (2000) provide a 'blind' comparative study of the effectiveness of on line delivery when compared with on-campus study. Their findings confirmed results from previous research demonstrating that there is little or no difference in student outcomes when on line learning is compared with on-campus classroom experiences. An important observation was that it appears to take a certain level of maturity to sustain a commitment to self-motivated study in an on line environment as compared to F2F delivery models.

Tucker (2001) indicates that students learn far too little when the teacher's personal presence is not available. This narrow viewpoint questions whether the subject material, if not taught F2F, is of sufficient quality to merit a university degree. Tucker then questions whether studying, using any other teaching methodology apart from F2F, is better than receiving no education at all.

The Virtual Conservatorium incorporates F2F in the delivery of Chief Practical Study (practical lessons), ensemble courses and in intensive delivery courses in an effort to ensure that students do receive quality support. *The Virtual Conservatorium* maintains F2F as a key component of its operation.

The creation of asynchronous on line materials

We considered courses that require complete restructure or initial creation should generally be out-sourced. The courses that are to be taught by on-campus staff or those that require little modification could be done 'in-house'. The asynchronous materials needed a sound educational basis. *The Virtual Conservatorium* materials are beta tested (secondary form of public appraisal) on on-campus as well as virtual students to evaluate their relative merits and it is considered essential that regular updating becomes part of the on going process.

The material required for the on line course was and continues to be created by staff within the conservatorium environment. This material creation was done by full time on-campus staff or out-sourced to selected eTutors. Welch (2001) supports the notion of out sourcing to ensure quality outcomes when he states:

> 'Back rooms by definition will never be able to attract *your best*. We converted ours into someone else's front room and insisted on getting *their best*. That worked for us so many times. This is what out-sourcing is all about. It's also what many lay-offs were about in the early 1980s as these jobs migrated elsewhere.' (p. 397)

Delivery using Synchronous on line formats

Real time on line delivery can be treated in two formats – real time data and real time videoconferencing. Real time data transfer consists of two-way typing communication protocols such as IRC and electronic Data boards. Type applications have an active window that the tutor and/or students type using a keyboard. This information instantly appears on the interface of all linked users. Similarly Data boards have the

capacity to show type but also, by utilising a drawing tablet, can transmit handwritten diagrams and simultaneous secondary applications such as 'PowerPoint' presentations. Videoconferencing is the simultaneous transmission of audio and video data. This can be from a desktop with a web cam, from a small ISDN device such as a 'Swift Site' or from a large format IP/ISDN system such as ISL labs within Central Queensland University.

SMS (Short Message Service) is also used to communicate with students who own mobile telephones. This further enhances the efficiency of information communication and information dissemination. Mickelthwait and Wooldridge (2000) have highlighted ' A decade ago there were only around 10 million mobile phones. By 2004, there should be a billion of them, exceeding the number of wired phones. The next few years will see the matings (sic) of three devices – mobile telephones, computers and personal organizers.' (p. 40) There is clear evidence of this in 2003.

Software based learning centres

The use of computers as teaching aides has been gaining acceptance within teaching institutions over the past twenty years. In the early 1980's there was a considerable amount of software written for the Apple 2e and the 2GS, especially for education studies. At the same time Queensland tertiary institutions, such as Queensland University of Technology, were using computer-modeling technologies to train students in areas such as Chemistry and Engineering. These applications simulated environments that students would not normally experience. Simulations included scenarios of a dangerous nature too hazardous to actually complete in laboratory

conditions. In this context, software applications were used to enhance the academic delivery of a standard lecture mode course.

During the1990's, as internet speeds increased and broadband networks became available, on line subjects gained popularity. These courses have provided an alternative to print material as a distance education tool. The multimedia aspect of the Internet not only allows the delivery of text and pictures but also video footage, audio and embedded application support. Hong, Lai and Holton (2001,p.1) comment on the emergence of web based learning basics:

> 'Schools from elementary levels to universities are using the Web and Internet to supplement classroom instruction, to give learners the ability to connect to information (instructional and other resources) and to deliver learning experiences. The Internet is recognising our approaches to education and altering communications in society, affecting our educational system.'

Complete replacement of the standard lecture by this method has generally been limited to postgraduate offerings but as undergraduate computer literacy skills develop, this method is becoming a viable option.

Software Based Learning (SBL) uses specifically designed applications to deliver the course material. As with on line delivery this mode allows the student to work at their own pace and timeframe and utilizes staff time for debate/questions with the student body rather than just the dissemination of information. These programs differ slightly from the current standard on line delivery in that the software is developed to not only

train but also drill and test. The Australian program '*Auralia*' has been slightly modified to fit within the current Musicianship 1-8 courses. All indications to date suggest that it works effectively. The SBL laboratories also contain other software used for intensive course offering. Although the laboratories are connected to the university's ethernet system, it was decided to keep the SBL computers as stand-alone. This disables the computer's personal student email and 'net surfing' capacities.

There is a generous amount of software specifically created for music education. Sites such as CTI Music (http://www.lanes.ac.uk/users/music/research/sware.html) list 33 applications for Aural Training alone. When evaluating software considerations were made with regard to platforms; level and clarity of training; demonstration copy availability; price; and country of origin. Preference has been given to software that is dual Mac/PC platform; fits our course requirements; offers a site licence; and is Australian made. To suit the needs of Musicianship 1 – 8 the program '*Auralia*' by 'RisingSoft' was specifically chosen to achieve the greatest integration and equity for students. The CAL materials are also the primary delivery modes for on-campus students as well as virtual students.

THE APPROACH COMPARED WITH OTHER APPROACHES

Making comparisons between the proposed *Virtual Conservatorium* and other existing systems of on-campus and distance education has allowed us to identify areas of innovation rather than duplication. We address the issues and notion of access versus quality. We consider whether the advantages of off-campus virtual study

outweigh the benefits of on-campus traditional delivery pedagogies. We also consider how they truly differ. We further identify and compare the program to other distance education systems, on line courses and ALNs. To assist with this comparison we also deal with student learning styles and a comparison between the 1999 and 2003 on-campus delivery of the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts program as a basis for the discussion.

The notion of access versus quality

' Our tertiary institutions are paralysed by a state of churlish inertia' according to Sheehan (2001. p.6). Further, Australia is ' dumbing down' or losing ground to other economies moving more aggressively into the Information Age. Sheehan (2001) questions whether the 'Australian tertiary education revolution of the past decade, which saw an explosion in the number of universities and university graduates, has also been accompanied by an explosion of mediocrity.' (p. 6)

Killian (1997. p.3) argues that if on line teaching isn't better than F2F then there is little justification in going on line at all. The paper further questions whether on line delivery is just giving the homebound student, the rural student and the workplace student a 'pallid imitation of a real education'. Allport (2001. p. 21), however, raises the access issues of 'e-education' commenting that it enhances the participation of disadvantaged groups. His debate identifies future implications for the wider university environment in relation to the balance between scholarly education and research, the latter having implications on the knowledge base that is created and nurtured within the universities. Killian (1997) comments on the concern that ill-

prepared entry into the on line market could be disastrous for the future of e-education. ' Serves us right if our offline colleagues begin to think that on line learning is really glamorous and jump off into the deep end only to get into trouble. We owe them better council: the ultimate payoff is too big to risk' (p.4)

Hiltz, Zhang and Turoff (2001) claim that ALN tends to be 'as effective, or more effective, than traditional modes of course delivery' but further argue that studies regarding the quality of the distance model are superfluous and the research on ALN should be focused on how to make it more effective especially as technologies advance. In contrast Fitzpatrick (2001) highlights his concern regarding the efficacy of on line education being inconclusive. He further reports that enthusiasm for the new paradigm of shifting focus to the learner, rather than the teacher, is seen as one of the perceived advantages and in turn, making learning a goal rather than a by-product of education. The statistics forwarded by the National Centre for Educational Statistics, US Department for Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement support the view distance education is just as effective as traditional education in regard to learner outcome. Killian (1999) points out the shift to on line was driven by the novelty factor and the extension of classroom teaching motivated by other issues. As with the comments made by Fitzpatrick (2001), Killian (1999,p.2) notes that the role of the educator is changing, comparing the challenges facing on line tutors as 'almost like going through adolescence again: the changes are exhilarating but frightening, and we feel torn between the desire to try out new powers and the fear that we'll foolishly waste or misuse them...or find out we don't really have them after all.'

Goodwin, Graham and Scarborough (2001,p.12) note that 'student learning outcomes can be enhanced by eLearning if there is a pedagogical strategy that incorporates 'collaborative learning, adequately rewards effort and is appropriately resourced.' Any successful implementation will need to embrace considerable commitment by both the institution and the staff involved.

Quality can be measured in terms of the credibility of the university; specific program; faculty profile; process development; platform design; and leadership mechanisms. Rahmann (2001, p.8) argues that these five areas constitute the fundamental design on which credibility must be established. This level of credibility will influence the quality of both staff and students attracted by a given University. The improvement in the standard of student intake and faculty will ultimately influence the quality of the program. This constitutes the cycle of continuous improvement.

Rahmann (2001) also suggests that for successful on line delivery quality can be maintained by regular course audits and evaluations; sharing of best practices; seeking criticism and feedback; and remaining informed of new initiatives. Yeung (2002) reports that quality is the key to all education whether it is traditional F2F or more open and distance learning designs. To ensure quality in an on line program, therefore, an 'integrated, systematic and holistic approach' (p.1) must be introduced and integrated. Observable examples of quality provision would be the inclusion of support and library services; on line resources for inquiry; suitable counseling; registration, payment and assessment; and the availability of on line learning resources. Yeung (2002) also notes that issues such as Quality Assurance and Performance Standards must also be addressed and are fundamental to long term success.

Hong, Lai and Holton (2001) discuss the positive developments of eLearning. From the instructor's perspective, Hong et al indicate that the process enriches their own learning experience as the constraints of time and space are removed to allow for deeper and more diverse discussions than those raised in a traditional F2F classroom model.

Rahmann (2001) identifies concerns expressed by staff about on line education. These concerns include philosophical objections such as 'on line quality is not satisfactory'. (p.5) The blanket statement of unsatisfactory quality can be only justified when examining on line projects that have not been exhaustively planned and developed. If virtual learning is correctly adopted into a learning environment then it is our view that the quality can only be enhanced and defended.

Distance education as a delivery mechanism

The most common external studies system of distance education involves the university sending a package of physical data to the student. Course materials such as study notes, textbooks, audiocassettes and videotapes take the place of on-campus lectures. Study notes are either a compilation of selected readings, subject outline, study guide or laboratory manuals depending on the nature and design of the course. A more recent development is the addition of CD-ROMs and computer disks. Support and communication is maintained between lecturers and students by telephone tutorials.

In 1994 the World Wide Web (www) was commercially introduced. It should be noted that the concept of the www was, as stated by Inglis, Ling and Joosten (2000) introduced years earlier by the US Department of Defence set up ARPANet in 1969 to connect the military departments. With a standard for communication http (HyperText Transfer Protocol) and a common standard language html (HyperText Mark-up Language) all manufactured computers were able to communicate over great distances. Levine, Locke, Searls and Weinberger (2000) summarise well in saying:

> 'The Internet became a place where people could talk to other people without constraint. Without filters or censors or official sanction – and perhaps most significantly without advertising. Another non-commercial culture began forming across this out-of-way collection of computer networks. Long before graphical user interfaces made the scene, the scene was populated by plain old boring ASCII: green phosphor text scrolling up screens at the glacial pace offered by early modems.' (p.4)

Certainly times have changed and the technology has improved considerably, but the essential premise of communication remains at the core of the development.

Developing On Line Courses

Our on line courses are created and located on servers within the university's domain. Students receive an email notifying them of the www location. Students register on site and gain electronic access to all of the material that would have been previously mailed to them. Communication can be then made with the lecturer (eTutor) and other students, for that matter, using email. This method of delivery allows more flexibility

for students because it enables them to also access the administrative and support services of the University, such as the Library, Bookshop, Student Services and student records now available electronically.

As computational powers improved and data storage increased this mode has facilitated teaching in a more interactive manner accompanied by developments such as embedded audio, MPEG video and multiple site links. The developments in technology make this delivery method even more exciting and enjoyable 'Our eyes are being opened to extraordinary possibilities in the provision of education through the ever expanding technological advance...New learning technologies must be eagerly embraced to cater for a far more diverse and discriminating student body. ' (Higher Education Review, 1997. p. vii)

The creation of an ALN based system for *The Virtual Conservatorium*

Asynchronous Learning Networks (ALNs) are often promoted as being for anyone, anytime and anywhere. ALN combines self-study with substantial, prompt, asynchronous interactivity with others. In an ALN environment learners use computer and communications technologies to work with remote learning resources including coaches and other learners in a non real-time manner. The most common ALN communication tool is the World Wide Web, using on line materials and email text communication.

Using this definition, distance education based primarily on a synchronous audio or video presentation or conference is not ALN because these constantly require learners

and instructors to be available at the same time. A videotaped course or mail based correspondence course or computer-based training does not qualify as ALN because these do not include substantial and rapid interactivity with others, even though the learner might mail in a paper or test and receive a reply days later. The primary use of computers for ALN involves the use of computer conferencing for the submission of coursework, discussion of issues between students, and for technical and academic help.

Catering for differing Learning Styles

Tucker (2001) conducted some initial field tests to determine the comparative efficiencies of both F2F and ALN teaching. With the same tutor delivering the same course to both groups, he found no appreciable differences between pre-test scores, homework grades, research paper results and final course marks. There were however differences in ages, post-test scores and final exam results. The on line students were generally older and scored higher in each of the latter categories. Tucker (2001) further notes that these results are inconclusive in proving the superiority of on line over F2F as other factors may have contributed to the studies results.

In an attempt to summarise learner styles Tucker (2001) noted that distance students preferred working with people with 'direct experience' (such as our notion of Industry Mentors) whereby they have direct contact with materials, topics or situations. They responded poorly to authority and listening to tapes, lectures or speeches. The traditional student responded best to inanimate and iconic stimuli and preferred such things as interpreting movies, slides and images. They responded poorly to independence and reading. Tucker (2001) concluded that distance education suits

certain learning styles ' they preferred Direct Experience, and the structure of the course allowed for considerable hands-on experience in learning course content. They least preferred authority, and the structure of the course allowed them the freedom to work independently on course material.' (p. 7)

A Comparison between the 1999 and 2003 delivery statistics on the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts program

The comparative delivery contact hours between 1999 and 2003 have been almost halved (756 hours down to 348 hours) due to the restructure of course offerings. This has had a financial impact. As class sizes have increased the delivery cost per student has become more cost effective. Class sizes of 2 and 3 were common in 1999, this is not the case in 2003.

THE SPECIFIC TASKS INCLUDED IN THE APPROACH

In this section we identify the areas and approaches taken to make the transition from a traditional classroom teaching system to a virtual learning environment. These changes include the redesign of the tools and methodologies used; design and delivery of *The Virtual Conservatorium*; the new teaching, evaluation and assessment considerations; communication and monitoring of students progress; and financial and administrative management of the process.

The Operating Environment

As a development and extension of traditional tertiary music delivery *The Virtual Conservatorium* has designed and created learning paradigms for the courses that are offered using some or all of the following:

- Innovative and Interactive On line delivery;

- Intense periods of study (weekends, after hours);

- Industry recognized lecturers;

- Synchronous communication (video conferencing);

- Asynchronous communication (video, email);

- Stylised Print material (commercial quality);

- CD self contained learning packages (similar to on line course material for students not on line);

- CAL ('Computer Aided Learning' where the software teaches, trains and also examines the students as required. Staff can then be accessed via e-mail tutorials/video conferencing);

- SMS (Short Message Service) using text messages for student contact.

Intensive

In examining the face to face offerings made at CQCM it was noted that most three credit point courses (3CP) had a contact time of one hour per week and that those with a six credit point (6CP) weighting were usually taught for two hours per week. With Autumn and Winter semesters being twelve weeks long it equates to each 3CP

course having a contact time of 12 hours and each 6CP courses having a contact time of 24 hours.

By utilizing Saturday and Sunday (10am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm) options a complete three unit point subject can be delivered on one single weekend. This design makes it viable to engage a specialist lecturer if there is no suitable full time staff member available to teach the course. This inclusion of celebrity status lecturers ultimately enhances the profile of CQCM. Similarly, over a four day week teaching (10am – 1pm) the contact time requirement is suitably satisfied giving the intensive delivery shape some added flexibility. This allows students, particularly regional university centres, access to a range of quality industry professionals that they might not otherwise encounter. It is important to note that delivering twelve hours of lectures in two days requires a high level of preparation and time management. It has been observed, at CQCM, that staff teaching in this intensive format tend to have better structured A/V material, study guides and associated resources. They also appear to disseminate more information to the students.

A sample student timetable highlights that many hours appear to be wasted in the standard model of delivery as a result of non sequential timetabling of courses. There are often gaps of 2 or 3 hours between course offerings on a given day. By simply offering one or two courses in an intense block period, rather than as a weekly commitment, the practice can free up profitable time for the student to allocate considerable time to other areas of focus.

Time management has become very important and time wastage has become less acceptable in today's marketplace. Helgensen (2001, p.28) argues the case well:

> 'Today priority is given in every possible setting to people who are working. Hotels advertise the number of ports and phone links available in each room, the personal fax machines, the broadband lines that will connect us to the internet. Vacation retreats draw us because of their remote location and promise of privacy nevertheless offer business centres and conference rooms so we can keep working while getting away from it all. Planes and trains provide in-seat phones and plugs for our PCs, so we don't need to waste a single moment.'

The expectation of staff is that students would dedicate at least three hours daily to the development of their chosen practical major. By reducing the regular contact load per week for non practical units and courses this provides the student with the opportunity to focus on their chosen major field of study.

Industry

The Virtual Conservatorium requires fewer full time staff than other traditional conservatoria models. CQCM Mackay, for example, changed the 1989 ratio of full time staff to students from16 fulltime staff and 23 students (1:1.4) to 10 fulltime staff and 108 students (1:10.8) in 2002. The Rockhampton figures are currently 3 full time staff and 63 full time students (1:21). These figures relate only to the undergraduate performing arts degrees at Mackay and Rockhampton sites.

Full time staff have the primary function of managing the instructional process and a secondary focus of being directly involved in its delivery. The shortfall created by the reduced number of fulltime staff is addressed by utilising the expertise of industry relevant sessional staff to deliver the majority of the course material. Sessional staff act as *Industry Mentors* and are located throughout Australia and access students in a variety of ways including intensive face-to-face, video conferencing, teleconferencing and email. The emphasis has been placed on employing high profile industry mentors who enhance the profile and reputation of CQCM. Jennings and Haughton (2000) remind us that if the managers of CQCM only employ staff of lesser stature than themselves then future growth is limited 'If we hire people smaller than ourselves, we'll become a company of midgets, but if we hire people bigger than we are we'll become a company of giants. ' (p. 180)

The further potential of this interaction between students and industry is post graduation when students are seeking employment within the music industry. It has already been demonstrated by students auditioning for employment that this contact is invaluable and gives CQCM graduates an edge when applying for these positions.

Innovation

The utilisation of a three semester (term) model each consisting of 12 weeks allows for a second 'mid year' intake into the first year of the course. For some students the ability to fast track their degrees has become available by using the third semester as a repeat semester to rectify their course program due to absence or failure. Turoff (1997, p.21) supports the conservatorium's decision –

'Ultimately a three semester system for Institutions of higher learning would be an extremely desirable situation for distance courses...On the other hand the four quarter system probably leads to a too compressed time scale for asynchronous communication oriented courses.'

This set-up also makes possible the delivery of other institutional products on a subcontract basis. Students may cross-enrol from other universities or from faculties within the university, for credit against their nominated program.

The limitation of the number of subjects offered every year has been achieved by selecting 12 'electives' on a triennial rotation (4 offerings each year); the design of 'foundation' courses for all first year students; and the biannual rotation of second and third year musicology subjects. This has increased class sizes across the operation making the design financially viable.

Project Uptech

In our earliest deliberations about *The Virtual Conservatorium* it was felt that the medium into which this concept should be primarily imbedded should be the Internet with a particular focus on On line offerings. As *The Virtual Conservatorium* concept evolved to include other pedagogical methodologies the technological requirements remained of the highest priority.

This early technology development phase was succinctly titled *'Project Uptech'* and involved an initial investment of approximately $65 000. Further versions of 'Uptech' continued to develop the physical framework upon which to springboard *The Virtual*

Conservatorium. The initial outlay centred on the areas of staff resources; the establishment of a software based learning centre; a multimedia studio; a recording studio; and an internal communication system.

Computer Upgrades

For staff to keep abreast of the changing technological demands of the emerging teaching environment two important needs had to be satisfied. First, there needed to be a standard operating environment across the conservatorium. Second, computers had to be industry current and able to remain viable for at least a two year period. As Moore predicted, the processing power (of computers) doubles every two years and the economic lifespan of a computer must fall within this timeframe. Bostrom (2000, p.11) summaries the notion well:

> 'Moore's law states that processor speed doubles every eighteen months. The doubling time used to be two years, but that changed about fifteen years ago. The recent most data points indicate a doubling time as short as twelve months. This would mean that there will be a thousand-fold increase in computational power in ten years'

Macintosh has been, and remains, an industry standard in musical education because the *'wyswyg'* operating platform ideally suits desktop applications. The iMac was chosen to remain as the standard hardware device for the conservatorium. This decision was influenced by statements made on the URL hhtp://www.apple.com.au, such as:

'If you're an accountant, you're most likely surrounded by beige Wintel

boxes. But if you work in nearly every creative field, you most likely use a

Mac. Like in graphic arts, advertising and publishing. Or in Hollywood.

Or in Australian education, where Apple is the number 1 brand. Or if you

are President of the United States (the two most recent presidents both use

Macs.) In all, over 25 million people in the world use Macs in their homes,

offices and schools everyday.'

In 1991 CQCM had three computers. Two of these were Macintosh and one was a

DOS based PC. Communication between these was virtually nonexistent. Throughout

the following years, computers were passed on to staff as the Director and

administration staff upgraded. Although some of the computers were nearly ten years

old the original Macintosh computers were still functional, though they executed the

applications very slowly. The windows based PCs, on the other hand, were no longer

able to execute the software. In 1999, for the first time, the staff at CQCM each were

allocated a computer on their own desk. These were Macintosh PowerPCs of varying

degrees of computational power surplus to the larger Faculty's requirements. Hamel

and Prahalad (1996, p.66) argue that revising both financial and intellectual capital is

necessary to forge a meaningful future:

'To get to the future, a company must be willing to jettison, at least in

part, its past. Someone once remarked that 'God created the world in

six days, but He didn't have an installed base.' But what prevents most

companies from creating the future is not an installed base of obsolete

capital … but an installed base of thinking.'

During 2000 iMacs were purchased for all staff raising the stakes a second time. Changing structures of thinking, planning and development were already in place. The purchase of the iMacs now meant that every staff member had an up-to-date desktop computer that was linked into a faculty wide standard operating system. The notion of dual computer platform operation and only one computer to share for the majority of academic staff could be relegated to history.

The new role of the teacher

In the traditional model the professor professes. In the new model the eTutor is expected to be a content expert, learning process designer, and implementation manager. This premise was echoed in the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts' motive to rethink and rewrite of the Bachelor of Education resulted in the creation of the new program Bachelor of Learning Management. Yeung (2001, p.9) extends our thinking a little further 'Faculty will also be motivators and mentors, interpreters (especially of non-codified knowledge), and 'expert learners' – people who lead the learning process by blazing the trail and setting the right personal example.'

It is becoming obvious that the notion of senior staff as 'information dissemination' vehicles supported by postgraduate students delivering a 'Q&A' tutorial model may have reached its expiry date.

Examination moderation and *The Virtual Conservatorium*

One of the most subjective assessment items within *The Virtual Conservatorium* is that of the Chief Practical Study end of course Performance Examination. With the integration of the standard assessment calculation excel document developed by CQCM much of the variance and deviation in assessor's grading is no longer an issue. The difficulty lies in setting the benchmarks for the grading levels across the larger conservatorium. In the on-campus examinations model the performance exams are video taped for possible result disputes and the Program Co-coordinators are physically present to moderate all exams within their program.

To achieve this in the new context all undergraduate performance exams are moderated by the Manager of *The Virtual Conservatorium* with the CPS staff member/mentor also present. This examination is executed in the student's home base location, either in one of the Learning Network Queensland's studios or a venue agreed upon by the Manager of *The Virtual Conservatorium* and the student.

During this examination a digital audio recording is made and within thirty minutes of the completion of the examination two CDs are produced. One is presented to the student and the other is filed for future reference. This process is unique to *The Virtual Conservatorium* and receiving positive review from students and staff alike. The assessment forms are completed but not given to the student until all CPS examinations are complete and the manager of *The Virtual Conservatorium* approves the outcomes.

The essential role of eCommunication

The Virtual Conservatorium has identified a number of communication vehicles for student/staff interaction. These are written letters (snail mail); email; telephone; notices on television monitors and notice boards; IRC (on line chat); videoconferencing; and mobile telephone SMS.

Many of these formats are standard communication protocols for universities. IRC differs from email in that it is synchronous in nature whereas emails are specifically asynchronous. One of the modes of 'eCommunication' utilized by *The Virtual Conservatorium* is SMS. Short Message Service (SMS) or as it is commonly referred to as 'text messaging' is an asynchronous form of communication between mobile telephones or between a computer and mobile telephones. Once the message is sent the recipient's telephone will signal the user until the message is read. Such issues as reminders of assignment due dates and class changes are efficiently and effectively distributed to the virtual student body. Increasing use of this medium is expanding as noted by DeBrito (2002, p.30) ' Telstra's mobile network handles more than 80 million text messages a month, and has experienced a growth rate of 1000 percent in SMS (short message service) traffic in the past two years.'

In a survey of on-campus CQCM students made in May 2002, 97 of the 106 students owned or had regular access to a mobile phone. All of these students claimed to use SMS on a regular basis and generally in preference to making a personal telephone call.

The role of the Electronic Administration

In addition to eRolment CQCM has appointed an electronic administrator (eAdministrator) to facilitate all aspects of enrolment, progress and result documentation. This adds a further personal dimension to the project. According to Honeywell and Blythe (2001, p.30) we are now dealing with a market segment best described as iCons or iConsumers 'These third wave iCons characteristics and beliefs are specifically - individuality is power; personalization outranks customization; the edge is the place to be; and change is evolution.' (p. 30) This describes our current undergraduate virtual cohort surprisingly well.

Financial management of the initiative

The conservatorium has set up a comprehensive financial reporting system for *The Virtual Conservatorium* initiative managed by a full time member of the administration staff. The domestic, government funded, undergraduate program within *The Virtual Conservatorium* operates within a 'break even' scenario. The postgraduate, full fee paying element operates as a profit centre.

Virtual 'pastoral care'

A vital ingredient in the process is the appointment of an electronic carer (eCarer) who takes responsibility for welfare and pastoral issues associated with the on line student. This eCarer is responsible for ensuring that *The Virtual Conservatorium* student community does not feel alone or isolated. The intention is to make members welcome and feel valued. Regular phone calls, e-mails and mail gifts assist the

process. We found a summary by Dutka (1999, p.26) useful to our decisions on many of these matters:

- Three-quarters of companies give business gifts;

- More than eight out of ten executives think that gift giving is useful;

- Gifts create a sense of 'indebtedness' on the part of the recipient;

- The best gifts are universal, original or useful;

- The most frequently given gifts include foodstuffs (candy, nuts, fruits and meats), pen sets, clocks, watches, clothing, stationary, cash and gift certificates;

- Computer-related gifts (mouse pads, diskette boxes etc) are increasing in popularity;

- Gifts that are in some way personally significant make the greatest impression;

- Gift wrapping and handwritten cards make the most impact;

Enrolment Issues

Prior to 2001, successful applicants enrolling in Central Queensland University courses completed a computer data input form with a lead pencil and submitted this form to an administrative assistant to process. The system was cumbersome, troublesome and fraught with potential error. It became a matter of need to address this tired practice. 'Responding to this imperative, the University has invested major resources ($20M) to implement new PeopleSoft administrative systems, although problems in system conversion have impacted adversely on financial reporting capacity.' (Central Queensland University Handbook 2001) In 2001 *eRolment* became

a standard enrolment application for all continuing and new students. It is ideally matched to the needs of *The Virtual Conservatorium.*

THE DIFFICULTIES THAT WERE ENCOUNTERED AND HOW WERE THEY SOLVED

In this section we identify the hurdles that had to be overcome in relation to the creation and delivery of product within *The Virtual Conservatorium.* These hurdles included changes to the physical educational environment; the conversion of the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts, that had previously been delivered only F2F on-campus, into a workable virtual model; and the personal attitudes of many staff and students with certain established mindsets that had to be considered and dealt with in this process.

Physical Infrastructure - the on-site learning environment

In May 2001 the Mackay Conservatorium Centre took up residence in its new facility on the Mackay University campus in Planlands. This building was designed to service not only the needs of the on-campus CQCM students but also the needs of future distance education offerings. We had ensured this duplicity in the building and outfitting process. The building project, overseen by a Project Manager briefed on our needs, has in-built features such as wireless LAN and internal video communications. Most rooms within the conservatorium precinct serve multiple purposes such as 'The Green Room' is also a conference room; the foyer is also a dance rehearsal space / performance stage / function room. This multipurpose usage of rooms meant that the

building could be completed within the budget framework of $4.75 million dollars with little significant compromise.

The Virtual Conservatorium began accessing all of the building's spaces 18 hours a day, 7 days a week. This has now extended to a 24 / 7 model following current eBusiness trends. The audio and video components of the theatre are utilised to produce synchronous and asynchronous course materials.

The establishment of Computer labs

As well as the three on-campus computer labs in Mackay, CQCM has set up internal iMac Labs as well. Johnson (1997, p.47), supports the choice of Macintosh computers and argues:

> 'The costs are low, the risk is low, it's good for the future of our profession, and it seems to be a computer that my staff and I can use without it getting in our way. The difference is less than what it used to be, but it's still there. In short, the Mac does things which allow us to focus more of our energy on being designers and less on being computer-users.'

These computer labs can be divided into two distinct categories. CAL (Computer Aided Learning) labs currently housing 10 iMacs, each set up with the appropriate software and simple hardware additions such as Sennheiser S45 headphones. Composition Labs utilising more highly powered iMacs with upgraded RAM and hard disk space; Composition software – Logic Audio, Finale, Band in a Box; and appropriate hardware such as mixing consoles, sound modules, and audio monitors.

Multimedia Studio

The Multimedia Studio houses the equipment required by the composition department. Prior to 'Project Uptech' this equipment was either reclaimed from other department upgrades or was six to ten years old. The studio was in need of an update. This was facilitated in 2001.

It was decided that the latest iMac had specifications that easily met the software requirements. The iMac also has built on-board dual 'Firewire' and dual USB ports which met the hardware recommendations.

To create the multi-timbral sounds generated by the MIDI (Musical Instrument Device Interface) software three manufacturers were considered namely Roland, Korg and Yamaha. The most suitable sound module - the Yamaha MU-90 was selected. Two 'Evolution mk II' keyboards were also purchased as MIDI control keyboards.

The MIDI hardware also required an interface unit to connect to the iMac computer. This was an oversight in the initial 'Uptech' proposal and changed the budget allowance for the Multimedia Studio. The purchase of the other audio/visual equipment was then postponed and purchased in a later 'Uptech' proposal.

Recording Studio Development

The Recording Studio is indicated on the building plans as the 'Control Room'. In the original designs for the building there was to be a separate 'Bio Box', which housed

all the control equipment for the theatre's sound and lighting, and a distinct 'Recording Studio Control Room'. As an economic rationalisation in design these two rooms were combined and placed between the Auditorium and the Studio Recording Room. This meant that this room was not only a critical technical hub but also the most appropriate vantage point to view the inside of both of these prominent performance and recording spaces.

Control Rooms are normally only ever occupied by theatrical technicians and tend to be kept in an untidy manner. It was necessary then for us to emphasise both functionality as well as aesthetics – a difficult combination. In stark contrast, Recording Studio Control rooms are very public spaces and as such are normally maintained with a high degree of presentation. As a combined space, the room had to perform numerous functions but also act as a public observatory and commercial studio. Furnishings, including lounge chairs that match the décor and style of others in the building and office chairs give the space a commercial finish and appeal.

The Audio Console also needed upgrading. The Yamaha 16 channel was now considerably underpowered to cope with the new demands of the larger theatre. A near new Mackie 48 channel programmable console became available in Mackay. This audio console was being offered at approximately 30% off its current retail price but was still greater than the budgeted allowance. It was decided to sacrifice elements such as wall finishes, 12 volt lighting, and extra furnishings to purchase the large format console. This choice has proved to have been a wise one. The studio has been steadily increasing commercial business and is now being booked by national artists such as Graeme Connors and Art Phillips. The programmable aspect of the desk has

contributed to eliminating the need for hiring outside venues for theatrical performances within the conservatorium. Clients such as schools and dance academies now see the CQCM Theatre as a viable alternative to the larger and more expensive Mackay Entertainment Centre since the technical facilities are comparable and the price more competitive.

Internal Communications System

The 'Internal Communications System' provides a range of centrally controlled monitors capable of presenting essential information. The monitors also double as TV monitors onstage, backstage and in the foyer for cast and late patrons to view the performances within the theatre precinct, commonly known as 'show relay'. The monitors also provide the opportunity to present electronic notice board information.

A total of 8 televisions with wall mounting brackets were purchased from the 'Project Uptech' funds. One 80cm stereo for the Conference Room; two 51cm AV stereo TVs for the Foyer; two 48 cm for onstage; one 48 cm for the control Room; and two smaller 34cm units for the Directors office and backstage.

The final result is that the public areas of CQCM are free from the clutter of standard university notice boards; only accurate and appropriate information is displayed which is continuously updated; promotional material can be broadcast throughout the conservatorium precinct; the performances on stage can be monitored from most places within the building including dressing rooms and corridors; and computer

images can be projected to all televisions and standard television viewing is available as required in the 'Green Room' and dressing rooms.

Adapting the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts course structure to a virtual delivery based model

To begin the process of converting a completely F2F delivered program to a multi-modal delivery model that would be successful for both on and off-campus students, the program needed to be broken down to its component parts. Identification of the most appropriate delivery paradigm then had to be made for each of the courses.

The Virtual Conservatorium exists in a unique pedagogical space. It is neither a traditional F2F nor Synchronous design, nor does it fit within the Asynchronous Learning Network models. It is not a truly distance model, as regular F2F tuition is given locally. Although many on-campus students utilise *The Virtual Conservatorium's* courses it does not fit within the on-campus model. It is a complex response to a set of new, complex demands. *The Virtual Conservatorium* utilises a relatively traditional approach to the delivery of Chief Practical Study (CPS) and ensemble courses. In these courses the students and staff interact F2F in the same physical location. The on line delivery of some academic courses mimics the pedagogical concepts of ALNs. *The Virtual Conservatorium* uses forms of Asynchronous communication such as email, but further develops this to include synchronous communication such as ISL. Software based delivery (CAL or computer based learning) has similarities to distance education packages currently in use in other Australian universities. The use of CQCM generated study guides is also a

standard distance delivery tool. Given the nature of the overall learning environments, the title 'virtual' education, an amalgam of the four delivery models considered is the only suitable title for the delivery format of *The Virtual Conservatorium.*

The considerations of the 'human factor' in the conversion to virtual mode

One of the debates raised by Killian (1997, p.2) is that Technology can leverage time but not completely replace human contact without quality losses 'Compared to a normal 'chalk and talk' classroom, the computer monitor is an information desert. In the classroom, nonverbal communication never sinks below a roar; even the student who's totally clueless sends out an SOS with every 'glassy-eyed' blink.'

Illing (2002) highlights that arts faculties in Australian Universities are slow in taking up the on line option of teaching and learning. Charles Sturt University's Dean of Arts, Ross Chambers, however, believes on line delivery can enhance offerings and is committed to the development of a number of undergraduate offerings. There is still significant division of thought on the suitability of the mode and the actual subject selections to be made available by various arts faculties. Stuart Macintyre, Dean of Arts at Melbourne University believes that face to face contact is still highly desirable in a range of offerings which would lose out if delivered in an on line, no contact mode.

The elements that contribute to the notion of the 'human factor' should go beyond the idea of having a physical human being at the other end of a classroom and should include other 'human' issues as well. *The Virtual Conservatorium* considers other

issues such as lifestyle, customer satisfaction, learning style, the role of the teacher and fear. We deal with each in turn.

Lifestyle Issues

Broderick (1997) in preparation for his proposed 'spike' has managed to avoid the constraints of an office and time bound job. He comments that 'it isn't hard to find gratifying things to do to fill in the time, even when you are deprived the merriment of the office, farm or factory.' (p. 256) As a workforce, people have forgotten or postponed the human issues of lifestyle. People leave the family home at about 7am and return home at about 6pm. Travel time consumes up to 25% of this time. Breaks and meals equate to about 10% of the time away. It is possible to assert that The Virtual Conservatorium reconfigures the working day to that which is suitable to the staff and the student alike, allowing time for 'other things'.

Customer Satisfaction

In the business community customer satisfaction equals the difference between success and failure. Collis (1998) notes that it costs a company six times as much to attract a new customer in comparison to keeping an existing one. Customer grievances are commonplace and are vital feedback mechanisms in eCommerce. Collis provides the statistic that 7 out of 10 customers will do further repeat business if there is a satisfactory outcome to the complaint. *The Virtual Conservatorium* has implemented the staffing of an eCarer as the first port of call for student disputes. If resolution cannot

be reached the problem is forwarded on to the manager of *The Virtual Conservatorium* for resolution.

Dutka (1999, p.248) believes there are 11 principles to successful customer retention. In tertiary education they relate to virtual studies in the following manner:

1. Product guarantee – Quality Assurance ISO compliance.

2. High quality products - Course material quality, monitoring and updating.

3. Availability – Subjects available to suit the student's timeframe rather than the universities/lecturers.

4. Sales Representatives who are knowledgeable – Marketing brochures for *The Virtual Conservatorium* have a cut-out business card: 'Manager – Virtual Conservatorium'.

5. One convenient source – http://www.thevirtualconservatorium.com that is linked to http://www.edca.cqu.edu.au/cqcm. All material is available under the 'virtual' tab.

6. Wide range of products – pre-tertiary, undergraduate and postgraduate.

7. Fair price – there is no difference in costs to the student between virtual and on-campus study. The true cost savings are in the delivery costs of the virtual model.

8. Trustworthy advice – as per criteria 4 and 5

9. Information on how to use a product – each of the courses have differing technical and submission requirements. These will be clearly identified in the course profiles.

10. Meeting Government regulations – as per 1

11. Product samples – a CD ROM will be generated with demonstration versions of the software and URLs of on line material and requirements.

Until a formal arrangement is made with Rising Software, Binary designs will put a *Virtual Conservatorium* sticker on the external packaging of any software purchased by students of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. It is our intention to take the customizing and personalizing to a higher level.

Fear

One of the possible debilitating aspects involving the implementation of *The Virtual Conservatorium* is the fear of failure. For most businesses the 'fear of failure' issues are as common as the 'desire for success'. As McCormack (1994. p.246) points out 'if properly harnessed, it can be the energy that drives the wheel.' Learning, to *use* this fear rather than letting it use the institution is of primary concern for entrepreneurial enterprise.

Levine, Locke, Searls and Weinberger (2000) take a slightly different view. 'The web liberates business from the fear of being exposed as human, even against its will. It throws everyone into immediate connection with everyone else without the safety net of predefined roles and authorities, but it also sets the expectation that you'll make human-sized mistakes frequently.' (p.126) The often cited de-humanising web can therefore be viewed in an entirely new light - as a democratic environment rather than the stereotyped sterile, automated image that is often portrayed by the mass media.

THE UNEXPECTED THINGS THAT CROPPED UP AND MIGHT BE USED LATER

In this section we identify elements that have emerged unexpectedly or ahead of predictions while developing the pilot program of *The Virtual Conservatorium* at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level. In the undergraduate arena we were taken by surprise when the distinction between on-campus and virtual students has almost completely vanished within 6 months of the eBM/PA's creation; the on-campus students petitioned CQCM management to be given access to the virtual materials in place of the traditional classroom model that we were offering simultaneously; the courses in History, Writing Techniques and Musicianship had to be modified in terms of delivery model to suit the needs and requests of the student body; the communication protocols created for the off-campus students became a standard part of our on-campus communication protocols by demand; and the emerging importance of tutorials for congregated cohorts. Postgraduate virtual delivery trials have identified the unexpected issue of electronic data delivery (CD Rom) being preferred to print materials and web based materials.

The distinction between the distant and on-campus student

It was assumed that the distinction between on-campus and off-campus programs would diminish at CQCM as students enrolled in *The Virtual Conservatorium* and students enrolled in full time internal studies would be working in the same academic environment. We had predicted a period of two to three years before this distinction would become blurred. Instead it has only taken six months for the undergraduate

distinction to become difficult to determine. Inglis, Ling and Joosten (2000) discuss the American University structure which employs strategies for on-campus students that include, ' time and place flexibility such as syndicate work, use of distance education materials, use of television and video materials, world wide web (www, email) and of computer-mediated programs' (p.21) It is our view that this delineation of boundaries between internal and external students may lead to the re-evaluation of the definition of 'campus'.

Toroff (1997) discusses the statistical data gathered at New Jersey Institute of Technology, (which has been delivering course materials using ALNs since 1976) and highlights that about 80% of the students enrolled in ' distant credit courses' based on conferencing technology are full time on-campus, internal students. As the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music Annual Report 2001 (p.15) indicated 'Virtual' studies at the conservatorium accounted for 570 enrolments (or 71 full time students). These students were from a population base of internal full and part time CQCM students and internal full and part time CQU students from other faculties.

Turoff (1997) further recommends the importance of 'remote technologies' in 'regular courses' and the integration of distance students into 'regular courses.' The Integration of distance students into regular classes is also a way to support small class sizes. Turoff (1997, p. 20) in addition forwards the notion that 'there is little doubt at this point that technologies being employed for the distance students are or could be a boon to the improvement of the quality of education for the on-campus students.'

By combining the 'on-campus' and 'off-campus' student body into one class removes the contentious issues of parity raised by those opposed to off-campus education methods. Turoff (1997. p.13) warns of the fallacy of treating the two different student populations differently when it will be impossible to differentiate from one another. His article predicts that much of the future course work at universities will be done remotely, so the distinction will essentially disappear.

Tucker (2001) and Fitzpatrick (2001) both support the view that there is a public and political motive, especially in geographically remote areas, for the support of distance methodologies. They note that in some US states, policy leaders are recommending the use of distance education to replace traditional learning environments.

Krupitz (2002) argues that technology does not always make communication more efficient. This is especially evident in cross-cultural negotiations. As an example, an American firm installed video-conferencing hardware to reduce the need for unnecessary travel and speed up negotiations. They soon found out that although their local managers were conducting meetings electronically they were still travelling to meet with the second party afterwards. The reason given was that their Thai managers wanted to meet in person to gauge the reaction of others. Krupitz (2002, p. 3) concludes that 'Electronic delivery can approximate but not duplicate face to face interaction even when supported by two way audio and video'. We acknowledge the need for options.

Access to the virtual materials for both on-campus and virtual students

In Week 9 of Autumn Term, 2003 a petition was lodged with the convenors of the Bachelor of Music Theatre and Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts. This request was

signed by twenty-six first year Writing Techniques students who were at that time receiving their lectures via a traditional classroom based lecture scenario. After hearing about, and in some cases seeing, the VCDs created for the virtual delivery of this subject they requested this format in preference to the weekly lecture on-campus. Points raised by these students included the arguments that VCDs were concise and time effective; there were no late starts, silly jokes/questions and disorganisation; they could be reviewed easily for study purposes; and the VCDs could be accessed at a time that suited the student. We obliged.

Modification of predicted delivery models

In the courses Writing Techniques 1 and 2 we had assumed certain delivery methods would be suitable. Changes to these have had to be made during the semester to better meet the needs of the students. Writing Techniques 1 and 2 were originally planned to be delivered via ISL to all students based in Mackay, Rockhampton and virtually, simultaneously. This had implications of time limitations for the virtual students so we created specific VCD classes to accommodate these needs. The 60-minute lectures were created using a stage environment rather than a lecture room with overhead cameras, rear screen projectors, grand pianos and the like. The coursework content was divided into easily digestible modules.

Communication protocols

For the virtual students who are unable to access the internal communication system in Mackay, we found it necessary to set up a strategy of regular communication with

students in individual courses. To do this we were able to create email databases of addresses of students in each class in the virtual courses and regularly electronically contact the students with course details, reminders of submissions, and the like. Some courses offered in 2003 were for Mackay students only. For these students general communication is made via the academic noticeboard and the internal communication monitors. After notifying the students of a change of teaching date using these traditional methods, a number of the class missed the changed class. When quizzed about this a common reply of 'you didn't email me or SMS me of the change' indicated that the on-campus students were keen for the same individual communication attention received by the virtual students.

The importance of tutorials for congregated cohorts.

It has become apparent that the students on-campus are not requiring/utilising tutorial time evidenced by the fact that attendances to these tutorials has dropped to below 10% of enrolled numbers and quite often student attendance to these is nil. In contrast to this, the Brisbane cohort of nine undergraduate Bachelor of Music / Performing Arts students had requested a weekly tutorial during week one in Autumn semester. A two-hour session every Tuesday of term time was instigated and since then there has been a regular 90% attendance every week and those who miss generally phone to apologise. When asked about this the Brisbane cohort responded that it was during this tutorial time that the felt that they achieved a sense of 'campus life' and that the time together removed the feelings of individual isolation. This has raised the point that future cohorts need to be planned in the Bundaberg/Isis region to service the needs of students.

Electronic data delivery (CD Rom) in preference to print materials.

We have been teaching the Master of Arts Administration program using printed study guides with web based support materials since mid 2002. In the Autumn semester delivery of the Research Project F2F component in Sydney we developed a CD Rom to accompany the study guides. This CD was specifically created for the MAA Research Project. The package was set up to be navigated using a conventional web browser (such as 'Internet Explorer' or 'Netscape Navigator') and contained the teaching materials and associated readings for the course. The feedback indicated that the CD Rom style of delivery was significantly preferred to the paper format because it wasn't as bulky to transport; it was technically current with other market trends; and it did not consume time and expense having to constantly download information from the web. It has become easy for the students to carry a laptop and work wherever without the excess baggage of printed materials or the need for an internet connection. It was revealed that some students were able to continue studies in the train whilst commuting while others reported the advantage of being able to study in parks / outdoor during breaks instead of being forced to study indoors. We predict that part of the package fees for postgraduate studies will include a complimentary laptop and software before much longer. The 'look' needs to be maintained. These CD ROMs contained the thematic corporate development with the printing on the disc being consistent with the MAA design and the html format data contained within replicated that same image.

In this chapter we considered the model selected for the operation of the initiative; focused on the specific technical and pedagogic tasks associated with the design; and

highlighted a number of outcomes resulting from the first run of the project. In the next chapter we provide a range of results and outcomes that can be viewed and interpreted by non specialists. Our emphasis is placed on how accurate and complete these results are in relation to the underlying question of this project - 'How can a conservatorium in a geographically isolated area with a relatively small catchment area survive and thrive in the 2000's?'

4. RESULTS

THE RESULTS INTERPRETED FOR A NON-SPECIALIST READER

In this chapter we investigate the results associated with the process of design and piloting of *The Virtual Conservatorium* and in turn examine the outcomes that have been produced. There have been three predominant areas of change that have occurred as a result of the project. These are budget growth and stability; increased enrolment numbers; and the creation of new delivery paradigms that have pervaded the existing conservatorium framework.

The Conservatorium is experiencing significant patterns of growth reflected in the gross income patterns from 1999-2003 as shown in Table 6.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	SEPT 2003
Student Numbers	86	210	290	365	432
Post graduate	0	50	90	115	130
International	0	15%	30%	40%	34%
Performances	*	108	178	344	400
Media Hits	*	103	238	469	670
External Publications	*	6	9	10	31
Internal Publications	*	13	42	43	39
Grants/Consultancies	*	-	72,500	77,400	199,300
Delivery Sites	1	5	7	8	10
Gross Income	1m	2.3m	4m	3.4m	3.6m
Accumulated	(1m)	327,000	917,000	1.2m	1.5m
Net Profit/Loss	(350,000)	327,000	590,000	296,000	354,854
Auditions	56	88	92	149	114^
QTAC 1st preferences	50	68	86	78	#
QTAC total	91	159	211	168	#
Non Government funding	*	36%	69%	64%	42%

Table 6: Growth patterns 1999- 2003 according to 16 indicators as at September 2003

The projected gross income for 2003 is $3.6m given anticipated growth of programmes; additional initiatives extending CQCM operations to 10 locations; and the management of the Central Queensland University Language Centre. We anticipate a surplus of $350,000 for 2003 and in 2004 a $4m gross income with a surplus scenario of $700,000. Under new management from the start of 2000, the Conservatorium is experiencing significant growth patterns that will recur for five years and then most likely plateau out at approximately a $4.5m gross income in 2005. It is important to note that this type of growth has a finite life span of perhaps four to five years after which time it will flatten out and possibly decline. Baghai, Coley and White (1999, p.3) remind us that 'only an exceptional organisation manages to sustain growth when its core business matures. Just one out of ten companies that exceed the growth of their industry in any year is able to repeat that performance every year for a decade.'

It is our view that innovation requires a 'critical mass' of business activity to generate suitable financial surplus, which in turn facilitates new initiatives. Prior to 2000 innovation was difficult given an ongoing deficit scenario. *The Virtual Conservatorium* has already increased the gross income of the conservatorium budget. Given the new context and climate our attention has subsequently been drawn to developing other sustainable projects such as the on line aspects of *The Virtual Conservatorium* evidenced in the post graduate full fee paying project, the MAA on line.

Using the "10 Principles/Indicators of Good Practice for On line Delivery" to interpret the success of _The Virtual Conservatorium's_ results

We find the Inglis, Ling and Joosten (1999) indicators a useful framework on which to judge the progress and development of _The Virtual Conservatorium_ in non specialist terms. Inglis, Ling and Joosten (1999, p.161) further provide a quality assurance framework for best practice in the new learning environment. They comment, 'The primary purpose of the framework is to provide a set of principles and best practice indicators which address the essential areas in the quality provision of on line learning and new learning technologies and against which managers can assess the extent to which they have achieved "best practice".' We refer to each in turn, and consider briefly the development of the project under the 10 headings.

A number of considerations by Inglis, Ling and Joosten (1999, p.157) in regard to exemplary practice associated with on line teaching and learning activity raise the matter of best practice. They describe it appropriately 'In general, the features of best practice companies are those that simultaneously improve the quality, selection and delivery of their products or services, use technology to advantage and maintain close links with their customers and stakeholders.'

Given the fact this project is essentially being developed "from the ground up", we have had a wonderful opportunity to ensure quality mechanisms were put in place and best practice is embedded and followed carefully. Combined with this we have sensed

significant commitment on the part of the project team to create something new and exciting inside a traditionally conservative environment. We have a clear strategic intent and a doable timeframe that we are confident will be met. Prahalad (1998, p.69) encourages this when he argues 'companies need to have a strategic intent – to have an aspiration that is widely shared, to have a goal which is clear and to have an obsession with winning – that is the fuel that drives the engine.'

The current project team has this necessary obsession with winning and we have endeavoured to encourage the notion from the outset. We attempt to demonstrate productivity (income/expenditure) on a monthly basis to all participants in an effort to allow them to enjoy the 'game' and the journey as much as possible.

We instigated the first Conservatorium Leaders Of Business Activity Meeting (CLOBA) in February 2002. This represents an opportunity for various elements of the larger Conservatorium to come together and share their intent and achievements. The Virtual Conservatorium is given ample time to present its current state of play. It has already been flagged as an ongoing key initiative for the future and has been well received by the larger Faculty in which the Conservatorium is located.

Principle 1: 'Good practice for on line delivery involves informed planning and management of resources.' (p.175)

The first level of the undergraduate eBachelor of Music/Performing Arts was advertised in April 2002 with its first intake at the commencement of Autumn Term (March) in 2003. Negotiation with the larger Faculty resulted in additional EFTSU funding at the lower education rate of 25 students each year for 3 years creating a total of 75 extra funded places for CQCM making the eBMPA the largest of the five undergraduate offerings from 2005. Based on the first undergraduate intake demographics we have placed an initial group of 10 students in the southeast quadrant of Queensland based at a private school. This serves as a delivery site for four face to face intensive delivery courses (each of 3 unit points). An additional 17 students located at other sites spread along the east coast of Queensland have been established. A second cohort is based in Rockhampton with another rotation of four face to face 3 unit point intensive delivery courses available to virtual. A third set of intensive course deliveries is also available on the Mackay site accessible to virtual and on-campus students alike.

From the outset the project team developed good planning and management strategies. The move to a purpose built facility in Mackay in June 2001 meant that we had a unique opportunity at the Mackay environment to ensure that CQCM developed a facility suitably equipped to facilitate the growth and development of *The Virtual Conservatorium* alongside the key elements of the new and emerging eConservatorium.

It is important to note that full time, campus-bound domestic students may also access the electronic deliveries available. Having established a suitable and appropriate setting, the project team set about scheduling electronic offerings, trialling them with current undergraduate students throughout 2001, and generally 'talking up' the concept and securing support from the larger institution. In September 2003 we currently have available for our use an impressive range of products that can be incorporated into the undergraduate or post graduate offerings for 2003 and beyond.

Principle 2: ***'Good practice for on line delivery involves sustained, committed leadership'*** (p.177)

Post graduate students have been accessing the resources on and off line since 2001. The electronic programme, the MAA on line, formally became available for Winter Term (July) 2002. The programme has been very popular in the first twelve months with approximately 30 *on line* students currently enrolled in 2003. The programme operates (face to face intensive) in Sydney, Rockhampton and Melbourne. The face to face enrolment in these areas combined is 100 full time students in 2003. The inclusion of a further 30 on line students brings the total number of post graduate students in this award to 130 making it the largest post graduate conservatorium entity in Australia. With a gross income of approximately $1.2m this is an impressive outcome. Clearly, there is evidence of appropriate planning and development of both products and resources. This commitment is ongoing and will continue to be a feature of the eConservatorium operation. The MAA on line (*The Virtual Conservatorium*) students are able to access

F2F deliveries at three sites and in fact are required to complete two of the seven components of the award at any of the three sites.

Developing realistic time lines have been essential but we also realised early that there was a need for speed in these matters. Hamel and Prahalad (1996, p.135) reminded us that 'Every firm must proceed toward the future with all due haste. But the way to measure speed in the journey to the future is not how fast one is committing financial resources, but how fast one is gaining additional insight into the precise route that will get one to the future first ...' Accordingly, we have made gains in the operating and design context that places us well in relation to future initiatives and diversity of the project.

Our project team was ever conscious of the need to achieve our goals of on line delivery as quickly as possible, but we were also mindful that in order for our collective reputations to be enhanced we needed to not only offer this initiative but also ensure the quality of our delivery. Fortunately we have had significant opportunity to trial product in a range of locations and we felt we were able to 'provide the goods' so to speak from the outset. Contemporary management is not only about managing resources and product it is very much, in the new economy, about managing fast time lines as well. We adhered to the philosophy expressed by Jennings and Haughton (2000,p.2) 'whatever you do, you know the new truth, It's not the big that eat the small. It's the fast that eat the slow.'

Principle 3: 'Good practice for on line delivery involves improving access for all clients, incorporates equity and promotes cultural diversity.' (p.177)

Access to *The Virtual Conservatorium,* and in turn the on line resources, is a critical consideration in the entire process. Essential to the success of the programme is the maintaining of good quality access mechanisms for students.

The portal website (www.thevirtualconservatorium.com) must be easy to access and equally easy to navigate once inside the gateway. A second point of entry is the conservatorium's web address (www.cqu.edu.au/cqcm) that provides the opportunity for the virtual student to view other interesting information about a range of issues associated with the larger conservatorium. The feedback to date clearly indicates virtual students enjoy the access to the larger site and frequently visit and explore unlike full time on-campus students.

Access to the individual courses needed to be simple with immediate response mechanisms. After considerable discussion the project team felt whilst consistency in course front page design was desirable the actual format of each of the courses could vary depending on the nature and style of the course. Post graduate feedback to date actually negates the need for standardised course formatting. The majority of post graduate students interviewed felt that the variety of formats actually maintained a higher level of user interest. We have pursued this model.

The development of the eConservatorium to its full potential is an important priority within the conservatorium. Currently we are responsible for the delivery of product to ten locations including Mackay, Hamilton Island, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Pomona, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Cyberspace (the tenth location which is electronic in nature and utilises the world wide web) has as much of our attention as any of the other projects, perhaps more.

We are personally committed to the development of on line product. We have had considerable experience with the electronic medium over the last 5-6 years and we feel confident that the direction we are taking with resource development and delivery is appropriate and well timed. Timing is a fundamental ingredient of the success of these projects and the timing was right at this institution. The development of *The Virtual Conservatorium* is incorporated into the larger conservatorium's strategic intent and certainly will become an important feature of the institution in the years ahead.

In order to ensure that the eConservatorium momentum is sustained the development is broken into two distinct parts, the undergraduate award and the post graduate award. We have personally been directly involved in the development of product, the on line testing, and the actual electronic delivery for a number of years. We intend to maintain a significant role in the immediate future as programme co-ordinators. There is also evidence of strong support from senior management of the Faculty for the initiative. We believe this principle is well established and will remain a feature of the programme.

Leading the new conservatorium forward is about changing 'the game' and developing new initiatives on an ongoing basis. We concur with Gibson (1998, p.7) when he argues 'In the twenty first century, the winners will be those who stay ahead of the change curve, constantly redefining their industries, creating new markets, blazing new trails, reinventing the competitive rules, challenging the status quo.

Our leadership is about much of what Gibson projects and we believe we can sustain a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to the process. This has already been evidenced in the significant growth of the conservatorium business over the last four years and the nature and speed of current and projected initiatives.

Effective leadership of projects such as this one certainly requires the support of senior management but the success in terms of development and growth will centre on the fact that a number of people are involved in the design and direction and play significant leadership roles along the way. Kotter (1998, 177) explains this well: 'In the future, with a smaller mother ship and all these little satellites, one person isn't going to do it. Every one of those satellites is going to have to have somebody or some group of people in it that is sensitive to culture. So we're back to 'multiple leaders' again.'

From the outset we have attempted to provide opportunity for interested key players in the initiative to assume leadership and development roles. For reasons of sustainability it will be essential to encourage more and more potential leaders and contributors into the

operation of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. Too often, quality initiatives fade with the passing of a single champion.

Principle 4: 'Good practice on line delivery involves understanding the requirements of the learner and reflects stakeholder requirements.' (p.178)

Having been involved in the delivery of product on line for a number of years we believe we have suitable background in and understanding of design and delivery mechanisms. We established beta testing mechanisms and in the early stages invited students to meet and respond to design, colour, stimuli and access.

Over the past two years we have piloted a number of *The Virtual Conservatorium* initiatives including software based learning activities; on line learning; and ISL based delivery. We have constantly modified our designs based on the feedback we have received from students on-campus utilising the innovations developed and we feel confident that they are currently being well received and utilised by current distant/on line users.

A feature of the on line delivery is the use of an interactive eTutor who ensures that students have the opportunity to question, comment and respond to various resources in a way that cannot be achieved in the simple provision of on line resources alone.

In the new conservatorium we can already see a mix of provider and customer interaction. We envisage the boundaries between the two groups fading or blurring at

times as interaction increases and the notion of co-learning develops. Kelly (1998, p.256)

makes it clear that:

> 'In this new kind of organisation, there is an increased blurriness and an
>
> increased uncertainty about who is actually part of the corporation , and
>
> who is not. In other words, there are lots of consultants. Lots of
>
> subcontractors. Lots of part-time people. Even the customers may at times
>
> feel that they are part of the company. There is kind of a blurring between
>
> the customers and the employees.'

With the use of a range of eTutors (from a range of locations) and the incorporation of an

eAdministrator and an eCarer we believe the teaching and learning process will be

enhanced significantly. We also believe that the nature of the interaction between

students and these various employees will be significantly different from the traditional

teaching and learning paradigm within the face to face, on-campus operation.

Principle 5: 'Good practice in on line delivery involves the design, development and

implementation of programmes for effective and active learning' (p.179)

Active learning is a priority within *The Virtual Conservatorium*. The very nature of the

web-based resources implies that students need to be engaged in a different way to

traditional in-class teaching. Our research to date has reassured us that on line students

are particularly motivated (perhaps by the novelty of the delivery) and that their

interaction with the eTutor takes on a dynamic and interesting shape.

When designing and implementing curriculum we were conscious, from the start, of the fact that students need access to materials using either PC or Mac platforms. For obvious reasons it is a basic requirement that all students involved in *The Virtual Conservatorium* are required to have internet and email access. Every attempt has been made to internationalise the content of all the courses where appropriate. At the postgraduate level case studies are varied and internationalised in all instances.

Principle 6: 'Good practice in on line delivery involves creating confident and committed staff with new competencies.' (p.179)

The configuration of diverse workers, some part-time, some full time, some in a consulting capacity is the new face of the new conservatorium and manifested in this virtual initiative. This model also requires a shift in leadership mindset. Bennis (1998, p.149) provides us with a useful model: 'What leaders must learn to do is develop a social architecture that encourages incredibly bright people, most of whom have big egos, to work together successfully and to deploy their own creativity. '

We are committed to the involvement of quality staff in a range of designs. The involvement of 'industry mentors', people who have high levels of industry currency, are essential to the success of this project. The notion of incorporating the involvement of these contributors into the on line delivery and possible on line tutorials has been explored and has been a feature from the outset.

The use of the eCarer is also significant in so far as it provides the on line learner with a support mechanism designed to assist the student not so much in an academic sense but rather in terms of support. We envisage the eCarer profile developing within the next two to three years as a graduate of the programme; an experienced eLearner him/herself; and of a similar age to the students enrolling in the two awards.

Involvement of key staff is fundamental to the success of any on line activity. Hamel and Prahald (1996, p.139) make it clear when they write 'It is not cash that fuels the journey to the future, but the emotional and intellectual energy of every employee.' We concur.

We have several full time staff who are committed to the project and in possession of the necessary expertise and skill level to be valuable resources in the development of the project. There are a number of part – time staff who have been involved in the development of the resource base over the last few years who are also invaluable members of the virtual team.

Principle 7: "Good practice in on line delivery involves managing and maintaining the technical infrastructure." (p.180)

Of concern to us is the exclusive use of the University based servers for storage of all teaching and learning resources. Within the last six months alone the University server (operating through the Mackay campus) has been inoperable for up to 22 days within a 120 day time schedule. This spells disaster for an entire entity reliant on internet and

email access operating exclusively through the server. More recently the entire virtual resource was deleted from the site by error and took a week to restore after considerable effort on our part.

We are currently exploring a 'ghost site' option for the embedding of resources and eTutor, eAdministrator and eCarer electronic access that can be called upon when the University facility becomes inoperable. This back up scheme would enable an invisible detour that would ensure 24/7 operability. We believe this to be of significant concern. The notion of 'connectedness' implies that systems need to be put in place to ensure that all the elements of the larger organization have the necessary support and back up measures to ensure sustained achievement. Senge (1998, p.129) reinforces this notion of connectedness with the comment 'We have to develop a sense of connectedness, a sense of working together as part of a system, where each part of the system is affecting and being affected by the others, and where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.

This suggests, to us at least, the need to ensure that volatile or vulnerable aspects of the technical operation have the necessary fall back options and plans. We perceive the University server system to be a weak link in our system and we believe it necessary to develop other options as required.

Principle 8: 'Good practice for on line delivery involves evaluating for continuous improvement' (p.180)

End of course evaluations are informative. They provide the opportunity to modify practice or delivery the next time around. Weekly eCarer interaction gives us a heightened opportunity to respond much more immediately. This is viewed as a key aspect of our quality assurance at micro and macro levels. Inglis, Ling and Joosten (1999, p.141) reassure us with their comment 'Evaluation is an aspect of courseware development that needs to be conducted from the outset of a media project and undertaken during the course of a project to inform and modify development.'

Ongoing evaluation is an important feature of *The Virtual Conservatorium*. All course deliveries are evaluated on an ongoing basis in order to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction and continuous improvement of resource and delivery. A standard electronic survey device (similar to that that used by on-campus students) has been instituted and on line students are required to complete the survey on completion of each course access.

Given the electronic medium and its penchant for speed the notion of ongoing (quick response) moderation is invaluable. Changes to delivery are closely monitored by academic co-coordinators and facilitated by eTutors with the support of the eAdministrator and with the input and efforts of the eCarer on an ongoing basis.

Principle 9: 'Good practice for on line delivery involves the provision of effective and efficient administrative systems and services' (p.181)

The technical aspects of the initiative are demanding. What has become apparent is that the access to design tools and delivery mechanisms has to be user friendly and the eTutors are themselves competent web designers and technicians. This was not the case as little as three years ago.

The enormous advantage of this technical know-how is the immediacy of repair and reply. Student difficulties can be dealt with efficiently and effectively when the eTutor also has the technical know how to deal with the matter.

Further, a key role played by the eCarer is to monitor, on an ongoing basis, the needs and responses of students within the initiative. The eCarer is committed to weekly interaction with the student that gives the opportunity for quality assurance management and almost immediate response to difficulties encountered.

Principle 10: " *Good practice in on line delivery involves supporting the needs of learners" (p.181)*

We have been keen to ensure that the learner is well supported, resourced, involved and included. The mechanisms associated with the eAdministrator (from the outset), the eTutor (as associated with the actual delivery of the individual courses), the eCarer (providing support and interaction on an ongoing basis) are significant contributions to the process of ensuring learning support.

The Academic Co-ordinator has the ultimate responsibility for the design, development and evaluation of the courses and overall programme. Clearly the learner needs are foremost in every decision and any design alteration that is made. Senge (1998, p.137) provides a timely reminder 'Sharing knowledge occurs when people are genuinely interested in helping one another develop new capacities for action; it is about creating learning processes. '

The Virtual Conservatorium, possibly more so than any other programme within the Conservatorium, is keen to ensure that the learning processes adopted are 'student friendly' and transparent with the ambition of making the virtual experience a successful one and an enhanced learning opportunity.

We are confident that the administration systems and services put in place are both comprehensive and supportive. The incorporation of the role of the eAdministrator is seen as fundamental to the success of the project.

THE SCIENTIFIC VALIDITY AND COMPLETENESS OF THE RESULTS

In this section we provide quantitative evidence of developments on financial growth during the period 2000-2003; developments in student population and shape; comparative budget figures; building design; resource development on site to support virtual initiatives; virtual and traditional F2F comparisons; ALN and virtual studies development; delivery and time factor efficiencies achieved; and undergraduate course redesigns.

In financial terms the conservatorium has had a successful four years (2000 and 2003) following a number of years of financial difficulty. This newfound prosperity provided a canvas for innovation and invention that frequently has significant resource implications. From the beginning of 2000 the Conservatorium exhibited itself as a multiple location enterprise with a diversity of arts based product. The Conservatorium currently delivers product to Mackay, Hamilton Island, Rockhampton, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Pomona, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Cyberspace. Graph 1 gives a snapshot of the last six year period with an indication of gross and surplus/deficit generation.

Graph 2: comparative income and expenditure for the period 1998 – 2003

This previous deficit scenario in 1998 and 1999, we believe, restricted the move into the new economy. But it was not the only reason for hesitating.

Table 7 provides an interesting comparison of operation design between 1999 and 2003 in terms of student numbers, postgraduate numbers, international student numbers, grants and consultancies achieved, delivery sites, gross income and net profit/loss.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	SEPT 2003
Student Numbers	86	210	290	365	432
Post graduate	0	50	90	115	130
International	0	15%	30%	40%	34%
Grants/Consultancies	*	-	72,500	77,400	199,300
Delivery Sites	1	5	7	8	10
Gross Income	1m	2.3m	4m	3.4m	3.6m
Net Profit/Loss	(350,000)	327,000	590,000	296,000	354,854

* figures not available

Table 7: A comparison by 7 headings 1999 – 2003.

Using the seven measures it is evident that growth has been significant during the four year period. Gross income has developed considerably (peaking in 2001); full time equivalent students tripled; and there has been notable growth in the postgraduate market. This growth has been essential to the future and sustainability of the organization. The issue of sustainability requires immediate and focused consideration. Willcocks and Sauer (2000, p.9) emphasise the point in their comment: '... sustainability is not achieved through any one thing. It requires the combination of a range of resources and services that together are hard to imitate.'

In contrast with the figures of 1999 – 2003, we have included budget breakdowns for the years of 1997 and 1998 see Table 8. The accumulated deficit from these two years alone was almost $750,000. This change from the deficit scenarios of 1997 and 1998 to the surplus environment of 2000 –2003 is attributed largely to the rethink that occurred with the adoption of *The Virtual Conservatorium.* By addressing the delivery issues of the undergraduate and postgraduate courses within the conservatorium and increasing the critical mass of student enrolments we have been able to repay the deficit and create a surplus net income figure on an ongoing basis.

1997 AND 1998 BUDGET DETAILS					
		1997	1997	1998	1998
INCOME		PROJECTED	ACTUAL	PROJECTED	ACTUAL
UNIVERSITY		$ 700,000.00	$ 700,000.00	$ 747,000.00	$ 747,000.00
FULL FEE-PAYING		$ 24,550.00	$ 24,051.00	$ 12,000.00	$ 813.00
CONTED	Studio	$ 16,380.00	$ 49,810.00	$ 62,200.00	$ 41,113.00
	Early Childhood	$ 8,352.00	$ 6,500.00		
	Music School			$ 28,000.00	$ 17,000.00
BOXOFFICE	On-campus		$ 18,000.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 20,000.00
	Off-campus	$ 15,000.00	$ 17,000.00	$ 17,000.00	

	Productions	$ 25,000.00			
DONATIONS		$ 61,700.00	$ 64,406.00	$ 100,000.00	$ 62,877.00
INTERNAL TRANSFERS		$ 99,236.00	$ 28,621.00	$ 20,000.00	$ 1,063.00
GENERAL		$ 9,370.00	$ 51,894.00	$ 52,000.00	$ 35,040.00
TOTAL INCOME		**$ 980,588.00**	**$ 979,282.00**	**$ 1,055,200.00**	**$ 887,906.00**
EXPENDITURE					
SALARIES	Academic/FT	$ 393,262.00	$ 539,000.00	$ 525,000.00	$ 658,000.00
	Academic/PT		$ 90,000.00	$ 41,000.00	$ 64,500.00
	General/FT	$ 142,222.00	$ 130,000.00	$ 140,000.00	$ 192,493.00
	General/PT		$ 33,500.00	$ 13,500.00	$ 5,000.00
	On-costs		$ 127,723.00	$ 115,000.00	$ 112,000.00
	Concerts		$ 30,000.00	$ 74,347.00	$ 33,000.00
NON-SALARY					
	Property, Plant,	$ 20,000.00	$ 32,412.00	$	$
	Maint/services	$ 19,500.00	$ 26,000.00	$ 10,000.00	$ 24,989.00
	Repairs/alter	$ 15,000.00	$ 59,263.00	$ 5,000.00	$ 7,658.00
	Travel/accomm	$ 40,000.00	$ 86,200.00	$ 62,000.00	$ 65,555.00
	Buildings/Leases	$ 35,000.00	$ 50,827.00	$	$
	Power	$ 11,000.00	$ 11,000.00	$	$
	Other	$ 149,500.00	$ 158,030.00	$ 107,000.00	$ 180,217.00
	Internal transfers		$ 7,240.00	$ 7,250.00	$ 19,198.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**$ 978,984.00**	**$ 1,356,542.00**	**$ 1,073,750.00**	**$ 1,260,110.00**
BALANCE/(DEFICIT)		**$ 1,604.00**	**$ (377,260.00)**	**$ (18,550.00)**	**$ (372,204.00)**

Table 8: A comparison of financial scenarios 1997 and 1998

Building Design

In the design process of the new Mackay facility the original specifications had to be dramatically reduced to fit inside the allocated budget for the building programme. This meant that we had to reduce the number of dedicated spaces and create multifunctional spaces. The CQCM building has no defined lecture theatres within its roofline. The only provisions for teaching were practical performance studios and MIDI (computer) teaching laboratories. This design feature allowed the introduction of virtual studies to

occur simultaneously on and off-campus. Table 9 provides an overview of the design
issues:

SPACE	TOTAL DIMENSION	FINAL TOTAL (m²)	ORIGINAL ESTIMATE (m²)
Theatre/stage & auditorium	25m x 14m	350	362
Green room/Conference room	5m x 4m	20	20
Dressing rooms	1 x (6x3) 2 x (3x3)	36	44
Costume room/store	4m x 3m	12	15
Set workshop	10m x 5m	50	80
Control room/Recording suite	5m x 3m	15	18
Amenities (2)	3m x 2m	12	12
Bar/kitchen	4m x 3m	12	15
Foyer/(dedicated)	5m x 4m	20	50
Amenities (2)	2.5m x 5m	25	0
Recording Studio / Rehearsal Space 1	8m x 8m	64	144
Rehearsal Space 2/foyer	12m x 12m	144	144
Box Office/Reception/Admin offices	6m x 5m	30	30
Director's office	5m x 4m	20	20
Rehearsal Space 3	WITHDRAWN	0	81
MIDI Laboratory 1	3m x 3.3m	10	12
MIDI Laboratory 2	3m x 3.3m	10	12
General Teaching studios (2) 1-2	5m x 4m	40	60
General Teaching studios (2) 3-4	4m x 3m	24	40
Practice /dressing rooms (6)	3m x 2m	36	48
Storage (5)	4m x 2.5m	50	0
SUB-TOTAL		**980**	**1207**
Plus 15% circulation		147	181.05
TOTAL		**1127**	**1388.05**
COST based on $2600/ m²		**$2,930,200.00**	**$3,608,930.00**
Lecture 1	*10m x 8m*	*80*	*80*
Lecture 2	*8m x8m*	*64*	*60*
Teaching studios/staff offices (14)	*3.3m x 3m*	*140*	*150*
ACADEMIC SUBTOTAL		**284**	**290**
Plus 15% circulation		42.6	43.5
TOTAL		**326.6**	**333.5**
COST based on $2600 per sq m		**$ 849,160.00**	**$ 867,100.00**

Table 9: design issues associated with the development of the new premises at Mackay

Project Uptech – FECA allocation

A financial investment was made in CQCM by the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts upon completion of the new Mackay facility in mid 2001. This allowed us to progress 'Project Uptech' to not only include computer upgrades but also theatre upgrades. From this development we were able to use the theatre to produce various audiovisual teaching materials for *The Virtual Conservatorium*. These resources include the 15 VCDs created when using the theatre as a film studio. Complete with lighting and projection equipment through to the broadcast of concerts via web streaming and live ISDN radio links we are able to produce quality resource. Without the equipment listed in Table 10 we would not have been able to progress the project as quickly as we have done.

Auditoriu m	2	Side/OCG	Yamaha	Waveforce 200	-	-
Auditoriu m	1	250/250 Amp	Yamaha	Yamaha 2500	-	-
Auditoriu m	4	FOH	Mackie	SR1530	$1,910.81	**$7,643.24**
Auditoriu m	2	FB	Mackie	SRM450	$1,464.21	**$2,928.42**
Auditoriu m	1	OCC mixer	Mackie	CFX12	$1,209.01	**$1,209.01**
Auditoriu m	4	Dimmer	Jands	GP12/HP1 2	$ 2,000.00	**$8,000.00**
Auditoriu m	8	Profiles	Selecon	Selecon Pacifica	$ 700.00	**$5,600.00**
Auditoriu m	8	Profiles	Selecon	Selecon Pacifica	$ 800.00	**$6,400.00**
Auditoriu m	1 2	Fresnels	Selecon	Selecon Acclaim	$ 680.00	**$8,160.00**
Auditoriu m	1 0	CYC	Selecon	Selecon CYC	$ 600.00	**$6,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1 6	Par	Kup	Kup	$ 120.00	**$1,920.00**

Auditoriu m	4	Intelligent LX	Mackie	Mac	$ 2,500.00	**$10,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	Show Relay Camera			$ 3,000.00	**$3,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	Projector 2500 ASNI+			$ 15,000.00	**$15,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	Large Format Screen			$ 2,000.00	**$2,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	DVD player			$ 750.00	**$750.00**
Auditoriu m	5 0	Chairs	Proteus		$ 65.00	**$3,250.00**
Auditoriu m	5 0	Stands	Boomeran g		$ 60.00	**$3,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	Vision Mixer			$ 2,000.00	**$2,000.00**
Auditoriu m	2	Followspot	Prolite	MSR-FS/1.2/200	$ 2,600.00	**$5,200.00**
Auditoriu m	1	LX bars		Circuitube	$ 14,000.00	**$14,000.00**
Auditoriu m	1	Communicatio n	Jands	Ezicomm	$ 3,200.00	**$3,200.00**
Biobox	1	24 Track	Mackie	HDR24/96	$7,861.50	**$7,861.50**
Biobox	3	HD	Mackie	M90s	$490.90	**$1,472.70**
Biobox	3	I/O card	Mackie	AIO 8	$646.75	**$1,940.25**
Biobox	1	LX board	Mackie	Jands Event 48+	$7,000.00	**$7,000.00**
Biobox	6	Lapels	Shure	Shure UC 1	$ 2,500.00	**$15,000.00**
Biobox	4	Hand held	Shure	Shure UHF	$ 2,500.00	**$10,000.00**
Biobox	1	Monitor	Behringer	Truth B2031	$ 1,899.00	**$1,899.00**
Biobox	1	Feedback Destroyer	Behringer	DSP1100P	$499.00	**$499.00**
Biobox	1	Maximizer	Behringer	DSP1400P	$599.00	**$599.00**
Biobox	1	Compressor	Behringer	MDX2200	$499.00	**$499.00**
Biobox	1	Bass Expander	Behringer	EX1200	$499.00	**$499.00**
Biobox	1	Image extender	Behringer	EX1	$399.00	**$399.00**
Biobox	1	Denoiser	Behringer	SNR2000	$599.00	**$599.00**
Biobox	1	Tube Preamp	Behringer	MIC2200	$499.00	**$499.00**
Biobox	2	Reference Mic	Behringer	ECM8000	$199.00	**$398.00**
Biobox	2	DI Box	Behringer	DI 100	$119.00	**$238.00**
Biobox	3	Patchbay	Behringer	PX2000	$199.00	**$597.00**
Biobox	1	Reverb/delay	Yamaha	SPX990	$1,000.00	**$1,000.00**
Biobox	1	Dual Graphic EQ	Yamaha	Q2031B	$995.00	**$995.00**

Biobox	1	Digital Delay	Yamaha	D5000	$1,000.00	**$1,000.00**
Biobox	1	Nearfield Monitor	Yamaha	NS40M	$1,500.00	**$1,500.00**
Biobox	1	Computer	Apple	G4 Mac	$ 10,500.00	**$10,500.00**
Biobox	1	CD Printer	Epson	2 Up	$1,500.00	**$1,500.00**
Biobox	1	Reverb/Delay	Yamaha	Rev 100	$599.00	**$599.00**
Foyer	1	Piano	Kawaii	gs1	-	-
Foyer	2	FOH	Yamaha	MS400	$1,550.00	**$3,100.00**
Jazz	2	Speakers	Mackie	SR1530	$1,910.81	**$3,821.62**
Jazz	2	Speakers	Mackie	SRM450	$1,464.21	**$2,928.42**
Jazz	1	Desk	Mackie	CFX16	$1,528.01	**$1,528.01**
Reception	1	Paging Mic	Audio Telex	AT001	$300.00	**$300.00**
Studio	2	AV	Yamaha	Natural Sound	-	-
Studio	2	Piano	Yamaha	C2	$21,250.00	**$42,500.00**
Workshop	1	Tallescope	Bailey		$10,000.00	**$10,000.00**
Workshop	1	Soldering Iron	Weller		$250.00	**$250.00**
Workshop	1	Welder	Mig		$300.00	**$300.00**
Workshop	1	Compressor			$1,000.00	**$1,000.00**
					TOTAL	**$242,082.17**

Table 10: An overview of equipment installed within the Mackay precinct

Tabulated comparisons of Traditional 'physical' F2F delivery models and the CQCM *Virtual Conservatorium's* 'virtual' model.

The quality implications, advantages and disadvantages associated with a comparison of traditional F2F delivery and virtual delivery can be deduced from Table 11.

ITEMS	PHYSICAL	VIRTUAL
Location	On-campus	On and Off-campus
Lecturers	Anybody who is available from within the faculty	Selective. Can be recruited from anywhere in the country
Course Content	As per Course Profiles	As per Course Profiles

Contact hours	Limited to class hours and lecturer's office availability	Continuous engagement in synchronous and asynchronous modes
Class experience	Students often do not prepare for class; they come to listen to a professor lecture.	Students must prepare in order to digest what they have learned; professor moderates
Class meetings	Face to face	Virtual, synchronous and asynchronous
Class cancellations	Fairly regularly (staff illness, unavailability etc)	Rarely
Holidays	Holidays taken as per EB agreements	Very few holidays observed
Class attendance	As the semester progresses fewer enrolled attend the class and thus defeat the purpose of F2F class meeting	100% class attendance required
Class participation	Typically, class participation is low.	All must participate in the written form in synchronous and asynchronous modes
Participation grades	Generally based on instructor's memory	Based on recorded responses
Feedback	Students are evaluated periodically at the end of a test or a paper	Continuous evaluation and real-time feedback
Assessments	Tests and quizzes, homework	Portfolio of tools
Lectures	Notes or audio are not archived and not available to students after the class	Text, audio, and video lectures are archived and available on demand
Access to materials and references	Unlimited access could be provided but not practised	The virtual nature provides unlimited access
Syllabus	Sketchy and incomplete syllabus is sometimes used	Must be detailed and complete
Course Evaluation	At the end of the semester with a long lag time	On line and real-time, no lag time.
Course audit	Faculty course files are not open for review	Always open to administrators and are reviewed periodically
Staffing	Predominately Full-time	Predominately casual

Table 11: Comparisons between Physical and Virtual Delivery

The pedagogical debates may still exist but it seems that there is little disagreement in the implications listed. It is our belief that the benefits of virtual delivery exceed expectations.

Table 12 presents broader pedagogical concept comparisons between the traditional and virtual learning –

	Traditional Learning	Virtual Learning
Information Sources	Teacher & Textbook	Various resources
Format of Information	Text	Text & Multimedia
Presentation Format	Linear	Hypermedia / Multimedia
Presentation Style	Face to face (F2F)	Multi-modal
Interaction Format	Synchronous	F2F, Synchronous & Asynchronous
Interaction Space	Time & Space Bound	Time & Space Free
Instructional Emphasis	Acquiring Knowledge	Building Knowledge
Objectives	Specific/predefined	General/evolving

Table 12: Comparison of Traditional Teaching with Virtual learning

The major paradigms currently in use in ALN and Virtual Studies

We have incorporated the teaching and design considerations that Asynchronous Learning Networks have adopted as the standards for ALN teaching. We have adopted most of these to suit our needs. Our model is an amalgam of traditional and ALN concepts as outlined in Table 13:

On line materials that include:	Course Profiles
	Assignments
	Readings,
	Problems (theoretical & real),
	Interactive Learning Modules

Course management	Electronic submission
	Electronic grading,
	Access to student results
	Student's access to enrolment status
Interaction with students	E-mail
	On line 'chat' applications
	List servers
	Message boards
Audio recordings	Downloadable from a server MP3 etc
	CDs,
	Cassettes
Video clips of lectures	VAL Tapes
	Downloadable / streamed from a server

Table 13: Major paradigms currently in use

Delivery and time factor efficiencies

As part of a comparison of academic delivery commitment measured in terms of hours the 1999 version of the Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts as shown in Table 14 is placed along side the 2003 version in Table 15. By redesigning the way in which we deliver the coursework we have reduced the total equivalent hours from 746 (in 1999) to 348 (in 2003) without compromising the integrity of the course structure -

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points
38401	Chief Practical Study 1	1	24	24	10
39401	Writing Techniques 1	2	12	24	2
39402	Writing Techniques 2	2	12	24	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
39413	History /Art Music	2	12	24	3
39030	History/Popular Music	2	12	24	3
various	Elective @ 6	6	12	72	18
39801	Small Ensemble 1	1.5	12	18	3
39802	Small Ensemble 2	1.5	12	18	3
				252	**48**

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points

38401	Chief Practical Study 2	1	24	24	10
39401	Writing Techniques 3	2	12	24	2
39402	Writing Techniques 4	2	12	24	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
39413	Studies in Form	2	12	24	3
39030	Studies in Form	2	12	24	3
various	Elective @ 6	6	12	72	18
39801	Small Ensemble 3	1.5	12	18	3
39802	Small Ensemble 4	1.5	12	18	3
				252	**48**

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points
38401	Chief Practical Study 2	1	24	24	10
39401	Writing Techniques 3	2	12	24	2
39402	Writing Techniques 4	2	12	24	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	2
39413	Studies in Form	2	12	24	3
39030	Studies in Form	2	12	24	3
various	Elective @ 6	6	12	72	18
39801	Small Ensemble 3	1.5	12	18	3
39802	Small Ensemble 4	1.5	12	18	3
				252	**48**

Total Hours   **756**

Table 14: Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (1999 version)

The savings in contact hours have not been made by reducing content but rather by effective amalgamation of courses and year levels.

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points
38401	Chief Practical Study 1	1	24	24	12
39401	Writing Techniques 1	1	12	12	3
39402	Writing Techniques 2	1	12	12	3
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	3
various	Musicianship 4	1	12	12	3
39413	History /Art Music	1	12	12	3
39030	History/Popular Music	1	12	12	3
various	Electives @ 4	4	12	48	12
39801	Ensemble 1	1.5	12	18	3

39802	Ensemble 2	1.5	12	18	3
				180	**48**

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points
38401	Chief Practical Study 2	1	24	24	12
various	Musicianship 5	1	12	12	3
various	Musicianship 6	1	12	12	3
39413	Studies in Form	1	12	12	6
39030	Studies in Form	1	12	12	6
various	Electives @ 4	All BM/PA students one class			12
39801	Ensemble 3	1	12	12	3
39802	Ensemble 4	1	12	12	3
				96	**48**

Code	Unit	Contact	Weeks	Total Time	Credit Points
38401	Chief Practical Study 3	1	24	24	12
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	3
various	Musicianship 3	1	12	12	3
39413	Studies in Form	2&3 years students one class			6
39030	Studies in Form	2&3 years students one class			6
various	Electives @ 4	All BM/PA students one class			12
39801	Ensemble 5	1	12	12	3
39802	Ensemble 6	1	12	12	3
				72	**48**

Total Hours   **348**

Table 15: Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts (2003 version)

Undergraduate course delivery Methodologies

The evolution from singularly Face to Face delivery on-campus has mirrored the delivery of the off-campus virtual model to the point that the two have become indistinguishable in terms of delivery format. Table 16 provides an overview of the 'blur'. This pedagogical

change has not been imposed on the on-campus students but has been requested by this body of students.

Year 1

Course Code	Course Name	Semester	CP	Mode
MUSC 11236	Chief Practical Study 1	A+W	12	F2F
MUSC 11266	Writing Techniques 1	A	3	ISL/VCD
MUSC 11267	Writing Techniques 2	W	3	ISL/VCD
MUSC 10250	Musicianship 3	A	3	SBL/CAL
MUSC 10251	Musicianship 4	W	3	SBL/CAL
MUSC 10274	History/Art Music	W	3	On line/VCD
MUSC 10260	History/Popular Music	A	3	On line/VCD
MUSC 10325	Ensemble Studies 1	A	3	F2F
MUSC 10326	Ensemble Studies 2	W	3	F2F
Various	4 @ Electives	A/W	12	mixed

Year 2

Course Code	Course Name	Semester	CP	Mode
MUSC 12237	Chief Practical Study 2	A+W	12	F2F
MUSC 10252	Musicianship 5	A	3	SBL/CAL
MUSC 10253	Musicianship 6	W	3	SBL/CAL
Various	Studies in Form: (various)	A	6	On line/VCD
Various	Studies in Form: (various)	W	6	On line/VCD
MUSC 10327	Ensemble Studies 3	A	3	F2F
MUSC 10328	Ensemble Studies 4	W	3	F2F
Various	4 @ Electives	A/W	12	mixed

Year 3

Course Code	Course Name	Semester	CP	Mode
MUSC 12237	Chief Practical Study 2	A+W	12	F2F
MUSC 10254	Musicianship 7	A	3	SBL/CAL
MUSC 10255	Musicianship 8	W	3	SBL/CAL
Various	Studies in Form: (various)	A	6	On line/VCD
Various	Studies in Form: (various)	W	6	On line/VCD
MUSC 10329	Ensemble Studies 3	A	3	F2F
MUSC 10328	Ensemble Studies 4	W	3	F2F
Various	4 @ Electives	A/W	12	mixed

Table 16: Bachelor of Music/Performing Arts course revisited

COMPARISON OF EXPECTATIONS FROM THE ORGANIZATION AND INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

The decision to create *The Virtual Conservatorium* was not a hasty one. We have been involved in the management and delivery of off-campus materials over the past decade and have a background in computer science and course development. This has meant that *The Virtual Conservatorium* has had a lengthy incubation period.

As a result of this long planning period, a realistically planned financial and delivery programme was designed and implemented. Nearly all of our targets have been achieved on schedule and according to our strategic plan. The only variation that was not predicted was the actual cost of delivery for the undergraduate programme. We had assumed a costing of $3,600 per student and are currently delivering for approximately $3,200 per student. This is partially due to the cost savings created by using some of the full-time CQCM staff teaching within the program. The $3,600 figure assumed maximum outsourcing of the practical and academic delivery of courses.

Another unpredicted outcome was the request by the on-campus Mackay students for the adoption of the virtual materials for two of the undergraduate courses. Writing Techniques 1 (Autumn) and Writing Techniques 2 (Winter) were to be delivered in two separate modes during 2003 in preparation for only virtual delivery in 2004. For the Mackay and Rockhampton students the courses were to be delivered via ISL whilst the off-campus students were to receive a specifically created series of VCDs and associated

study guides. The assumption was that the virtual students may have felt as though they were getting a second rate option. We were very conscious of this and created a comprehensive and attractive package for them. The opposite occurred. The Mackay and Rockhampton students requested access to the virtual VCD/study guide package in place of the scheduled lectures.

Further, the courses Musicianship 1, 3, 5 and 7 (Autumn and Spring/Summer) and Musicianship 2, 4, 6 and 8 (Winter and Spring/Summer) had a similar evolution. The On-campus version was also planned to be delivered via ISL whilst the virtual model utilized a CD-Rom software package with a CQCM navigation/study guide. Again the on-campus students requested access to the same materials as the virtual students.

With these changes coming an unprecedented year before predicted, the distinction between on-campus study and virtual study is now blurred. The only difference in study and lecture mode is now the physical location in which the courses are undertaken. What we anticipated as a long term, possible evolution actually occurred considerably faster than anticipated.

In this chapter we provided a focus on the project outcomes that can be viewed from a non specialist point of view and from a more scientific, quantitative angle. The next chapter draws together the issues and considerations that help demonstrate how a conservatorium in a geographically isolated area with a relatively small catchment area can survive and thrive in the 2000's.

5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter we summarise the key achievements of the project and reflect on the impact the initiative has had on the larger industry context.

THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROBLEMS OF THE PROJECT WERE SOLVED AND THE PROJECT REACHED ITS GOALS

The Virtual Conservatorium serves as a working example of a speedy initiative, which has placed the conservatorium in a satisfying location in relation to other conservatoria around the country. With the formal launch in July, 2002, it was an exciting new venture that changed the nature of conservatoria in that it acknowledges that teaching and learning can take place in a range of settings using a range of new and interesting resources developed for the project by staff and allied services. The internet has proven a useful medium for teaching and learning.

The project (*The Virtual Conservatorium*) has provided a new and effective access to students outside the normal access sphere. With additional funded places at undergraduate level (60) and an unlimited number of places at post graduate level *The Virtual Conservatorium* has the capacity to grow to a gross income achievement of $1m within the next three years (with 40 post graduate students) placing it alongside some of the more capable and distinguished elements within the current larger conservatorium business.

The project also has the potential of providing, and to some degree has already achieved, a certain competitive edge given the fact that it is the first of this kind of programme available in Australia and will certainly make other conservatoria rethink they way they operate. This is already happening. Three like institutions have already requested support from the authors in establishing similar designs and projects.

In a time of conservatoria cutbacks, reductions and high deficits it is indeed pleasing to see an entity within the industry that is reversing the trends in terms of growth and operation and at the same time making a significant contribution to the review and redevelopment of future practice. The key to future success will be maintaining an environment of innovation and creative thinking that will attract capable and forward thinking personnel and will keep already achieving members of staff in place and motivated.

'The Virtual Conservatorium' is able to exist by not allowing itself to be boxed in by the mentality that in the arts, virtual education only means isolated, individual, personal computer centred education. The mass media portrays this negative image that virtual and innovative technologies are synonymous with exclusive interaction with a computer. This image suits the Hollywood stereo-typecast scenario, but on the whole bears little resemblance to the impact of the overall possibilities of the virtual landscape.

The assessment instruments have been utilised by all four undergraduate programs for 2 years. Progressive versions have been created in response to staff's requirements. The response from staff using this has been overwhelmingly positive.

From June 2002, the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts underwent a Quality Assurance audit and assessment. Fundamental issues resulting from this process will be identified and strategies adopted to rectify problems. *The Virtual Conservatorium* is governed by all faculty Quality Assurance procedures. In September 2002, The Faculty of Education and Creative Arts (which incorporates CQCM) received its ISO 9001: 2000 accreditation. CQCM recently (November 2003) was externally audited and received a positive outcome with regard to processes and mechanisms.

THE EXPECTED IMPACTS ON THE ORGANIZATION / INDUSTRY

The Virtual Conservatorium project represents a bold and well needed tertiary music initiative that provides a range of options for undergraduate and post graduate students. The project team has spent considerable time and effort to date developing the framework for delivery and management.

In Distance Education models, the aspects of *The Virtual Conservatorium's* support network of 'eCarers' is unique. Even in traditional on-campus models, pastoral care is generally the realm of chaplaincy and only utilised by students who actively pursue this action. *The Virtual Conservatorium* engages all students on a regular basis, the rationale behind this is to identify and treat any concerns before they emerge as problems.

The notion of a single examiner for all CPS performance examinations has a financial implication but it has been noted the quality assurance gained surpasses this as a major

concern. These examiner's visits allow the family of the student, the staff member and if required the community, the ability to directly and personally access the manager of *The Virtual Conservatorium.*

The on line delivery of some academic courses mimics the pedagogical concepts of ALNs. *The Virtual Conservatorium* uses forms of Asynchronous communication such as email but further develops this to include synchronous communication such as ISL.

Software based delivery (CAL – computer based learning) has similarities to distance education packages currently in use in other Australian universities. The use of CQCM generated study guides also is a standard distance delivery tool.

Even though *The Virtual Conservatorium* has enrolments from on-campus students and delivers some units similarly, the differences are too great to refer to it as "on-campus".

THE 'PRODUCT OUTLINED

'The Virtual Conservatorium' is an innovative mix of traditional and new pedagogical approaches to the process of arts education with a modern structured entrepreneurial business strategy.

The Virtual Conservatorium exists in a unique pedagogical location. It is neither traditional F2F nor Synchronous nor does it fit within the Asynchronous Learning

Network models. It is not a truly distance model as regular F2F tuition is given locally. The title "virtual' education, an amalgam of the four delivery models stated above, is the only suitable title for the deliver format of *The Virtual Conservatorium*.

The Virtual Conservatorium (eConservatorium) offers two electronic based products from mid 2002 and beyond. The **MAA on line** became available from mid 2002. Features included all seven courses being available electronically and supported by an electronic tutor; an electronic administrator; and an electronic carer. The product has been piloted and evaluations, from post graduate students, have been positive and suggestions for improvement have been incorporated into the new design. Access to the courses is via The Virtual Conservatorium portal. Current students are located in four states and two territories throughout Australia.

The **eBachelor of Music/Performing Arts** became available from early 2003. Most of the programme is available on line or with the aid of commercially developed software. Chief Practical Study and Ensemble courses are taken with approved Master Teachers and Ensembles anywhere in Queensland from the outset – and shortly from anywhere in the world in the not too distant future.

Both programmes represent an innovative and exciting way forward for the *Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music* placing the institution firmly in the new economy and in the adventurous and stimulating realm of eBusiness.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adelman, C., Jenkins, D. and Kemmis, S. (1976). Rethinking case study: notes from the second Cambridge conference. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 6 (3), 139-50.

Allport, C., (2001). *Educating and organising globally:perpectives on the internet and higher education,* Australian Universities review, 2(2): 21-27

Baghai,M., Coley, S. and White, D. (1999). *The alchemy of growth.* Texere: London.

Barnett, R. (1990). *The idea of higher education*: SRHE/Open University Press: Buckingham

Barnett, T. (1992). Quality in international education - an academic perspective. *Open Forum,* 2 (1), 41-42

Bauman, Z. (1997). Universities: old, new and different. In Anthony Smith and Frank Carmichael, L. (Chair) (1992) *Australian vocational certificate training system,* Employment and Skills Formation Council: Canberra

Beare, H., Caldwell, B.J., and Millikan, R.H. (1989). *Creating an excellent school.* Routledge: London.

Bennis, W. (1998). 'Becoming a leader of leaders' in Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking the future.* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Birch, C. (2000). *Future success.* Prentice Hall: Sydney

Bostrom, N., (2000*), How long before superintelligence?* Retrieved April 2002 from http://www.nickbostrom.com/superintelligence.html

Bostrom, R., Ellinger, A., & Watkins, K., (2000), Managers as facilitators of learning organizations: a rejoinder to Dirk's invited reaction, *Human Resource Development Quarterly,* 11:4, Winter 2000, pp.403-409

Bourne, J., McMaster, E., Rieger, J. and Campbell, J. (1997). Paradigms for on line learning: case study in the design and implementation of an asynchronous learning networks (aln) course. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks,* 1 (2) on line.

Bowen, A. (Chair) (1993). *Flexible delivery: a guide to implementing flexible delivery,* Flexible Delivery Working Party: Brisbane

Bowen, A. (Chair) (1992) *Flexible delivery: A national framework for implementation in TAFE,* Flexible Delivery Working Party, Brisbane

Bowman, C. (1990). *The essence of strategic management*. Prentice Hall, London.

Bradley, T. (1995). Australian education and training celebrate a decade of internationalism, *Panorama*, November.

Broderick, D., (1997). *The Spike,* Reed: Kew,Victoria.

Brodsky, P.H. (1998). How companies kill fundamental research - a 'tootorial'. *Research.Technology Management,* 41 (5): 10-13.

Bruce, R. (2000). *Creating your strategic future,* Harper Business: Sydney

Buckingham, M. and Coffman, C. (1999). *First, break all the rules.* Simon and Schuster: New York.

Bunting, M. and Seal, M. (1997). *Virtual power.* Simon and Schuster: New York.

Burgess, J. (1993). Designing self-paced, multimedia training for industry. *Open Forum,* 3(2), 5-17.

Burt, W (1999) *Greg Schiemer, an email interview with Warren Burt May-June 1999* Retrieved July 2003 from http://www.acma.asn.au/Chroma25.html

Central Queensland University's *Statement of strategic intent 2001-2005* Retrieved January 2002 from (http://www.cqu.edu.au/strategic2001.htm)

Chappel, S. (1993). *Striking a balance - adult and community education in Australia towards 2000,* Centre for Human Resource Studies: Adelaide.

Charan, R. (1991) How networks reshape organizations – For Results. *Harvard Business Review*, Sept-Oct,pp.104-115

Choy, C.K. and Fatt, L.W. (1993). Trends for school management from futuring. *Studies in Educational Administration,* 58, 9-14.

Clark, J. and Edwards, O. (1999) *Netscape Time – The making of the Billion-Dollar Start-Up that took on Microsoft*. St. Martin's Press. New York.

Collins, J.C. and Porras, J.I. (1994). *Built to last: Successful habits of visionary companies.* Harper Business: New York.

Collis, J,. (1998). *When your customer wins, you can't lose.* HarperCollins: Sydney,

Covey, S. (1992). *Principle-centred leadership* (Fireside Edition). Fireside - Simon and Schuster: New York.

Crandall, N.F. and Wallace, M.J. (1998) *Work rewards in the virtual workplace.* American management Association: New York.

Crook, C. & Webster,D.S., (1999). *Designing for informal undergraduate computer mediated communication.* Retrieved September 2001, from http://www.cti.ac.uk/publ/actlea/al7pdf/crook.pdf

Cyert, R. and Goodman, P.S. (1997). Creating effective university-industry alliances: An organisational learning perspective. *Organisational Dynamics,* Spring: 45-57.

David, F.R. (1986). *Fundamentals of strategic management.* Merrill: Columbus, OH.

Davidson, J.O. (1990). The road to functional flexibility: white collar work and employment relations in a privatised public utility. *Sociological Review.* 38 (4): 689-711.

Davis, S. and Meyer, C. (1998). *Blur: The speed of change in the connected economy.* Addison-Wesley: Reading, Mass.

DeBrito, S. (2002). *Flirty fingers.* The Sunday Telegraph, April 21, 30

Dinnocenzo, D. & Swegan. R.B., (2001). *Dotcalm, the search for sanity in a wired world,* Barrett-Kohler: San Fransisco.

Douglas, E. (2001). Entrepreneurship: the link between invention, innovation and success.. Chapter in Barker, C. (Ed) *Innovation and Imagination at Work.* McGraw –Hill: Sydney.

Dunphy, D. and Griffiths, A. (1998). *The sustainable corporation.* Allen and Unwin: Sydney.

Dutka, A. (1999). *Competitive intelligence for the competitive edge.* NTC Business Books: Chicago.

Edler, R. (1995*). If I knew then what i know now.* Berkley: New York.

Elger, A. (1990). Technical innovation and work reorganisation in British manufacturing in the 1980s: continuity, intensification or transformation? *Work, Employment and Society,* (May): 67-101.

Ellsworth, J.H. (1994). *Education on the internet.* Sams Publishing: New York.

Ellyard, P. (2001). Imagining the future and getting to it first. In Barker, C. (Ed) *Innovation and Imagination at Work.* McGraw –Hill: Sydney.

Episale ,F., (2002) *The unkindest cuts* retrieved May 2003
fromhttp://www.offoffoff.com/film/2002/facingthemusic.php3

Fallah, M. and Ubell, R. (2000). Blind scores in a graduate test: Conventional
compared with web based outcomes. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks,* 4 (2).

Fitzpatrick, R., (2001). *Is distance education better than the traditional classroom?*
Retrieved May 2002 from
http://www.clearpnt.com/accelpoint/articles/r_fitzpatrick_060101

Flexible Delivery Working Party (1992). *A national framework for implementation in TAFE,* Flexible Delivery Working Party: Brisbane.

Flexible Delivery Working Party (1993). *Towards new alliances for learning in industry, private and non-institutional providers,* Flexible Delivery Working Party: Brisbane.

Foley, G. (1995). *Understanding adult education and training.* Allen and Unwin: Sydney.

Fradette, M. and Michaud (2000) *The power of corporate kinetics.* Simon and Schuster: London.

Gates, B. (1995). *The road ahead,* Viking Press: New York.

Gates, B. (1999) *Business @ the speed of thought – using a digital nervous system,* Viking Press: Melbourne

Gibbons, M., (2000). *Innovation and the developing system of knowledge production*
Retrieved June 2002 from
http://edie.cprost.sfu.ca/summer/papers/MichaelGibbons.html

Gibson, R. (1998). Rethinking business. In Gibson (Ed) *Rethinking The Future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Giordan, J.C. and Ahern, A.M. (1994). Self-managed teams: Quality improvement in action. *Research Technology Management,* 37 (3): 33-37.

Goodwin, C., Graham, M. & Scarborough, H., (2001). Developing an asynchronous learning network, *Educational Technology and Society* 4 (4)

Gooley, A., (1999). *Submission to the review of higher education and financing policy – prepared by Queensland Open Learning Network.* Retrieved July 2002 from
http://www,dest.gov.au/archive/highered/hereview/submissions/submissions/q/ql openlearn.htm

Gwynne, P. (1997). Skunk works, 1990s-Style. *Research. Technology Management,* 40 (4): 18-23.

Halsne, A.M. & Gatta, L.A. (2002). Online versus traditionally-delivered instruction: a descriptive study of learner characteristics in a community college setting, *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration,* Volume IV, Number IV, Winter. Retrieved February 2002, from http://www.westga.edu/%7Edistance/ojdla/spring51/halsne51.html

Hamel, G. (1998) 'Reinventing the basis for competition' in Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking the future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C.K. (1996). *Competing for the future,* Harvard Business School Press: Boston.

Hamilton, C. (2003) *Growth fetish.* Allen and Unwin. Sydney.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1983). *Ethnography principles in practice.* Tavistock: London.

Handy, C. (1991). *Gods of management.* Random House: London.

Handy, C (1998). 'Rethinking principles' in Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking the future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing, London.

Helgensen, S. (2001). *Thriving in 24/7 – six strategies for taming the new world of work.* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Herceg, R. and Flattery, T. (2000). *Ideas generation.* Lansdowne: Sydney.

Higher Education Review (1997). *Learning for life: review of higher education financing and policy – a policy discussion paper* (West Committee), Australian Government Publishing Service: Canberra.

Hiltz, S., Zhang, Y. and Turoff, M.,(2001*). Studies of effectiveness of learning networks* Retrieved March 2002 from http://www.alnresearch.org/Html/aln_study.htm

Hodgetts, R. (1995). A conversation with Rosabeth Moss Kanter. *Organisational Dynamics,* Summer: 57-69

Hodgson, B. (1993). *Key terms and issues in open and distance learning,* Kogan Page: London,

Holton, D, Hong ,K. & Kwok-Wing, L.(2001). Web based learning environments: observations from a web based course in a Malaysian context. *Australian Journal of Educational Technology,* 17 (3), 223-243

Honeywell, R. & Blythe, V.,(2001). *I-Cons: the essential guide to winning and keeping high-value customers* Routledge: London.

Hong, K.S., Lai K.W. & Holton, D. (2001), Web based learning environments: observations from a web based course in a Malaysian context, *Australian Journal of Education Technology*, 17 (3).Retieved July 2002, from http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet17/hong.html

Howitt, R., (2001) *Premier of NSW and Sydney University senate to see "Facing the Music"* retrieved May 2003 from http://angrymusic.freehomepage.com/

Huston, M. and Huston, G. (1995) *Going to school on the internet*, CiscoSystems: Sydney.

Illing, D. (2002), *Charges and fees counter the funding gap*, *The Australian*, 9/1/02, p.25.

Inglis, A., Ling, P. and Joosten, V. (2000). *Delivering digitally: managing the transition to the knowledge media*. Kogan Page: London

Jennings, J. and Haughton, L. (2000). *It's not the big that eat the small ... it's the fast that eat the slow*. HarperBusiness: New York,

Johnson, D (1997). *Isdesignet on-line: let the mud fly*. Retrieved January 2002 from http://www.isdesignet.com/Magazine/J_F'97/Isdesignet.html

Jones, D. and Bell, L. (1994). *Flexible delivery of subjects: evaluations and corporate university implications*. Centre for Applied Education: Griffith University Gold Coast

Joughlin, G. (1991). Quality in distance learning: A critical review of the role of self directed learning. *Open Forum*, 1(1), 11-20.

Joughin, G. (1995). *Aspects of flexible learning at Griffith University*, Griffith Institute for Higher Education Commissioned Report: Brisbane.

Judson, B. and Kelley, K. (1999*). Hyper wars – 11 strategies for survival and profit in the era of online business*. Scribner: New York

Kanter, R.M. (1995). *World-class: thriving locally in the global economy*. Simon and Schuster: New York.

Kanter, R.M. (1994). Collaborative advantage: the art of alliances. *Harvard Business Review*, July-August: 96-108

Kanter, R.M. (1989). Navigating the 90's. *Best of Business Quarterly,* 11 (4): 80-5.

Kanter, R.M. (1989). *When giants learn to dance: mastering the challenges of strategy, management and careers in the 1990's.* Simon and Schuster: London.

Kaye, M. (1994). Implementing change in Australian tertiary education systems: reflections on some practical strategies. *Unicorn,* 20 (1) 52-62

Karmel, P.(1997). *Submission to the review of higher education, financing and policy* (West, R., Chair). Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

Kelly, K. (1998). The new biology of business, in Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking The Future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Kelly, K. (1998). *New rules for the new economy.* Fourth Estate: London.

Kelley, R.E. (1985). *The gold collar worker.* Adison-Wesley: Reading, Mass.

Killian, C., (1997). *F2F – Why teach online?* TCC-J Volume 32, Number 4 http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/review/reviewArticles/32431.html

Kinsman, F., (1990*). Millennium - towards tomorrow's society.* Penguin: London

Koch, J. (1999) *CQCM to have new campus building.* The Courier Mail. Brisbane.p.29

Kotter, J. (1998) Cultures and coalitions. In Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking the Future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Krupitz, V.,(2002), *The medium is the message: Implications for teaching in cyberspace.* http://www.usq.edu.au/electricpub/e-jist/docs/old/vol3no2/article2/index.htm

Learmonth, A. (1993). *Creating a learning environment in the workplace.* NCVER: South Australia.

LeBoeuf, M. (1993). *How to win a lot more business in a lot less time.* Piatkus: New York.

Lev, B., Hatsopoulos, G. (1998*). Grasping the intangible:What they're talking about at the Intangibles Research Center.* Retrieved May 2002, from http://www.businessinnovation.ey.com/journal/issue2/features/graspi/loader.html.

Levine, R., Locke, C., Searls, D., and Weinberger, D. (2000). *The Cluetrain Manifesto.* Perseus Books.: Cambridge.

Levinson, H. (1996). When executives burn out. *Harvard Business Review,* July-Aug: 152-163.

Limerick, D.C., Cunnington, B., and Crowther, F. (1998). *Managing the new organisation* (Second Edition). Business and Professional Publishing: Sydney.

Lin, I. (2001). Innovation in the networked world. In Barker, C. (Ed) *Innovation and Imagination at work*. McGraw –Hill: Sydney.

Love, J.F. (1994). *McDonald's: Behind the arches* (Revised Edition). Bantam: New York.

MacKenzie, K.,(2001), Survival in the corporate jungle: Innovation or perish. In Barker, C. (Ed) *Innovation and Imagination at Work*. McGraw –Hill: Sydney.

Maister, D. (2001). *Practice what you preach*. Simon and Schuster. London.

Marquardt, M. and Reynolds, A. (1994) *The global learning organisation*. Irwin: New York.

Martin, T. (1995). *The development of interactive world wide web courseware for students of engineering and technology at Deakin University,* Southern Cross University: Toowoomba

McCormack, M., (1994). *What they don't teach you at Harvard Business School,* Caledonian International: Glascow.

Meltzer, G., (2001). M*inding their own business (how real life Australian entrepreneurs have successfully set up their small business),* McGraw-Hill: Roseville.

Mickelthwait, J. & Wooldridge, A. (2000). *A future perfect, the challenge and hidden promise of globalization,* Crown: New York.

Microsoft Word Thesaurus, Soft-Art inc (1994): California

Miller, R. (ed). (1991). *Applying the Deming method to higher education for more effective human resource management.* CPA: Washington.

Minutes of a meeting held on Friday, 19 January 2000 in Committee Room A, Northcote House at 13.00 hrs. University of Exeter, Academic Affairs Committee retrieved July 2003 from http://www.guild.ex.ac.uk/services/education/010119.htm

Modahl, M. (2000) *Now or Never – How Companies must change today to win the battle for internet customers.* Harper Business. New York.

Modjeska, D. (1996). *Poppy*, Penguin: Melbourne.

Moran, T. (1993) Meeting the challenges in vocational education, ANTA and the new national priorities. *Unicorn*, 19 (4) 9-17

Morgan, H. (1995) *The internet and education,* Columbia University: New York

Nelson, B., (2002) *Higher education at the crossroads : an overview paper* retrieved August 2003 from www.dest.gov.au/crossroads/submissions/rtf/300.rtf

Noble, C. (1994) Co-operating with industry. *Australian Training Review*, no. 11, 42-44

Norris, D. (1966) Flying solo, *Panorama,* March.

Ocker, R.J. and Yaverbaum, G.J., (1999). *Asynchronous computer-mediated communication versus face-to-face collaboration: results on student learning, quality and satisfaction.* Kluwer Academic Publications: Netherlands.

Olson, P.D. (1990) Choices for innovation-minded corporations. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 11 (1): 42-46.

Pasternack, B.A. and Viscio, A.J. (1999). *The centreless corporation.* Booz-Allen & Hamilton: New York.

Peeke, G. (1994). *Mission and change-institutional mission and its application to the management of further and higher education*.: SRHE/Open University Press: Buckingham.

Peters, T. (1987). *Thriving on chaos - handbook for a management revolution.* Macmillan: London.

Peters, T. (1999) *Reinventing work – the project 50.* Alfred A. Kn of. New York

Peters, T.J. and Waterman, R.H. (1982). *In search of excellence: lessons from America's best-run companies.* Harper and Row: New York.

Powell, W.W. (1990) Neither market nor heirarchy: network forms of organisation. *Research in Organizational Behaviour,* 12: 295-366.

Prahalad,C.K. (1998). 'Strategies for growth. In Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking The Future,* Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London,

Race, P. (1994). *The open learning handbook: promoting quality in designing and delivering flexible learning,* Kogan Paul: London.

Radbourne, J & Fraser, M (1996). *Arts management: a practical guide.* Allen & Ulwin: Sydney

Rahmann, M.,(2001), Faculty recruitment strategies for online programs *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, Volume IV, Number IV, Winter http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/winter44/rahman44.html

Review of tertiary music education and training in South Australia The University of Adelaide Item 2.2, Academic Board 1/00 retrieved May 2003 from www.adelaide.edu.au/academbd/archive/meetings2000/ab100/22musrev.pdf

Rheingold, H. (1994) *The virtual community – surfing the internet*. Minerva. London.

Ries, A. and Ries, L. (2000) *The 11 immutable laws of internet branding*. Harper Business: New York.

Ries, A. and Trout, J. (1998). Focused in a fuzzy world. In Gibson (Ed) (1998) *Rethinking The Future*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Rodin, R. and Hartman, C. (1999). *Free, perfect and now – connecting to three insatiable customer demands*. Simon and Schuster: New York.

Rosenberg, M.J. (2001). *e-Learning – strategies for delivering knowledge in the digital age*. McGraw-Hill: New York.

Rosensweig, R.M. (1994). The permeable university: academic life in an age of special interests. *Interchange*. 25 (1): 11-17.

Ross, V., (2001). Offline to online curriculum: a case study of one music centre. Making it work: *Case studies and Techniques for Real World Online Learning*. Singapore

Rowntree, D. (1994*). Preparing materials for open, distance and flexible learning,* London, Kogan Paul.

Rosenoer, J., Armstrong, D. and Gates, J.R. (1999) *the clickable corporation – successful strategies for capturing the internet advantage*. Arthur Anderson. New York.

Ryan, Y. (1994). Class and classlessness: alternative modes of delivery in higher education. *Unicorn,* 20 (3): 20-27.

Rylatt, A. (1994). *Learning unlimited: Practial strategies and techniques for transforming learning in the workplace*. Business and Professional Publishing: Sydney.

Schiemer, G., (1999) *An email interview with Warren Burt May-June 1999* retrieved June 2003 from http://www.acma.asn.au/Chroma25.html

Schuller, T. Ed. (1991). *The future of higher education*. SRHE/Open University Press: Buckingham.

Semler, R. (1994) Why my former employees still work for me. *Harvard Business Review*, Jan-Feb: 64-74.

Senge, P. (1998) 'Through the eye of the needle. In Gibson (Ed) (1998). *Rethinking The Future*, Nicholas Brealey Publishing: London.

Sheehan, P. (2001). The idea of a university beyond 2000. *Sydney Morning Herald* (February 4).

Smith, J. (2000). *Successful customer retention*. Hodder and Stoughton: London.

Sinclair, A. (1995). The seduction of the self-managed team and the reinvention of the team-as-group. *Leading and Managing*, 1(1): 79-92.

Spring, G. (1995) *Using the information highway to move Australia's schools into the information age,* Paper delivered at the ITEC Conference: Sydney

Streeck, W. (1987). The uncertainties of management in the management of uncertainty: employers, labour relations and industrial adjustment in the 1980s. *Work, Employment and Society,* 1 (3): 281-308.

Treyvaud, E., and Davies, A. (1991). *Cooperative education for professional development in regional areas.* AGPS: Canberra.

Tuccille, J. (1989) *Rupert Murdoch – Creator of a world wide media empire*. Donald Fine. New York.

Tucker, S.,(2001). Distance education: better, or as good as traditional education*, Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration,* Volume IV, Number IV, Winter

Turoff, M. (1997). *Alternative futures for distance learning: the force and the darkside, in virtual learning environments and the role of the teacher.* retrieved May 2003 from http://www.westga.edu/~distance/turoff1.html

Watkins, S. (ed) (1994) *Sculpting the learning organization: lessons in the art and science of systematic change.* San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Webber, A. (1998) Legacy metrics: who will set the new standard. http://www.businessinnovation.ey.com/journal/issue2/features/legacy/loader.html.

Weil, S. (ed) (1994). *Introducing change from the top in universities and colleges.* Kogan Page: London.

Welch, J.,(2001). *What I've learned leading a great company and great people.* Headline Book Publishing: London.

Werner, O. and Schoepfle, G.M. (1987). *Systematic fieldwork - ethnographic analysis and data management* (Volume 2). Sage: California.

Whateley and Jankoff (2001). Professional E-learning down under, *Education Quarterly.* 19:40, November/December 2001

Whateley, G. and Young, B (1991) *Towards co-operative course development between TAFE and universities - a Gold Coast model.* Paper presented at the AARE Conference, Queensland, November.

Wiersema, F. (1996) *Customer Intimacy.* HarperCollins Business. London.

Wiersema, F. (2001) *The new market leaders.* The Free Press: New York.

Wilkinson, L. (1995). How to build scenarios. *Wired.* Special Edition Dec 1995-Jan 1996: 74-81.

Willcocks, L., Sauer, C. et al (2000) *Moving to e Business – the ulimate practical guide to effective E-Business.* Random House: London.

Windham, L. (1999) Dead Ahead – *The Web Dilemma and the New Rules of Business.* Allworth Press. New York.

Yeung, D, (2001). Quality assurance of web-based learning in distance education institutions, *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, Volume IV, Number IV, Winter

Zyman, S. and Miller, S. (2000). *Building brand-width.* Harper Business: New York.

Other URLs consulted include:

http://www.cqu.edu.au/cquhandbook/pages/admissblk_5.html

http://www.cqu.edu.au/strategic2001.htm

http://www.counseling.org/resources/codeofethics.htm#eb

http://www.ex.ac.uk/admin/academic/tls/tqa/pastora.htm

http://www.counseling.org/gc/cybertx.htm

https://e-rolment.cqu.edu.au/erolment/user/html/cq_ad_web_appl_pg/application1.html

https://e_rolment.cqu.edu.au/erolment/user/ASP/CQ_AD_WEB_APPL_PG/CQ_AD_WEB_AP
PL_PG.asp?mode=A&Key1=ACAD_CAREER&Key1Value=UGRD

http://216.239.33.100/search?q=cache:AMxVgeEihHUC:www.canterbury.ac.nz/hr/vc/A
R37.doc+student+administration+position+description&hl=en&ie=UTF-8

http://www.apple.com.au/htm

http://www.smsfree.co.uk/htm

APPENDIX 1

A REPORT

ON

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

PREPARED FOR

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY

by

Dr Peter Shepherd

May 1999

CONTENTS

**REPORT ON
CENTRAL QUEENSLAND CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC**

THE BRIEF

The brief for this report was to investigate the present serious budget problems of the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music and to make recommendations on the future of the institution.

Specifically there are three main areas to be attended to:

1. Balancing the 1999 Budget.

2. Setting up strategies to allow balancing the 2000 budget and commence the payment of deficit – $50,000 black-line in 2000 and $100,000 black-line in 2001.

3. Planning that will allow further income generation and expansion of the teaching programs.

NOTE

The 1999 Budget is already the subject of discussions leading towards its finalisation and adoption. The Director of the Conservatorium is presenting detailed information that supports a likely outcome of balance for the year. As a result of this it was considered more appropriate that this report would not address the 1999 Budget, but rather that it would focus on issues and make recommendations, which are in a longer-term context.

SELECTED BIOGRAPHY

Consultant- Dr Peter Leonard Shepherd

Current Positions   Contracted Independent International Representative for:
Australian National University and University of Wollongong
Director - Ozfair Pty Ltd, Arts and Education Consultants
Musical Director, Illawarra Performing Arts Centre

Academic Qualifications

1959	NSW Teachers' Certificate, Balmain Teachers' College; Dux of College
1972	Diploma of Art (Education) National Art School, Sydney
1979	Graduate Diploma in Drama (With Distinction) Sydney University
1981	Bachelor of Education (Art) University of New South Wales
1988	Doctor of Creative Arts (DCA) University of Wollongong

Music Studies

1963-1964	Voice, with Lyndon Jones Sydney Conservatorium of Music
1968-1969	Voice with Raymond MacDonald, Sydney
1973-1974	Oboe with Gary Matherson ,Sydney

Employment Experience

Schools

1960- 1964	Primary Teaching, NSW
1965- 1966	Primary Art & Music Specialist, London UK.
1967-1968	Primary Art & Music Specialist, NSW
1969-1974	Secondary Art Teacher & Head, NSW

University of Wollongong
School of Creative Arts

1983 - 5	Senior Lecturer, Co-ordinator of Undergraduate Studies
1986 - 7	Co-ordinator School of Creative Arts
1988 - 9	Head of School of Creative Arts
1990 -3	Associate Head and Associate Professor, Director International Affairs

Faculty of Creative Arts

1994	Interim Dean of Faculty -
1995 - 6	Associate Dean and Associate Professor, Director International Affairs

Music and Theatre Employment

1976 - 88	Oboist Wollongong Symphony Orchestra
1977 - 82	Musical Director/Director Sutherland Light Opera Company
1978 - 81	Conductor Campbelltown City Orchestra
1988 -	Musical Director, Illawarra Performing Arts Centre

Selected Consultancies

1983- 84	Campbelltown City Recreation Planning Committee, a Committee of the State Government of NSW for the planning of new city projects
1986	Catholic College of Advanced Education Sydney, Committee of Review '
1986	Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Integrated Arts Program Consultant
1990	Member Audition Panel, Royal National Theatre, London,
1993	Member Accreditation Committee RMIT
1990	Media Information Australia Representative 1990
1990 -	Examiner for the National Cultural & Heritage Committee
1992 -	Member Board of Directors, Wollongong City Gallery
1993 - 1996	Member IDP Steering Committee for Visual & Performing Arts
1993 -	Patron Music Illawarra
1994	Member Accreditation Committee NSW TAFE Commission
1995	Member Australia Council Working Party on Arts Education
1996	Member Review Committee Music Faculty Charles Sturt University
1996 -	Register of Peers Australia Council
1997 -	Chair of Board - Project Contemporary Artspace
1997 -	Representative in Taiwan for ANU Canberra School of Music and Canberra School of Art
1997 -	Representative in Taiwan for University of Wollongong

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE REPORT

These Recommendations have been extracted from the body of the report. They appear there in the relevant sections of text. They are based on the observations made during a short visit to the Conservatorium; the examination of material provided; and from meetings with the University Pro-Vice-Chancellor's Group, the Director of the Conservatorium, Mr Graham Davis (Chair of the Conservatorium Advisory Committee, Mr John Tait, staff and students. There may be inconsistencies of interpretation of some information gained during such a short period, but the material is presented with the understanding that is intended as an accurate review with appropriate recommendations. The University may choose to act on the recommendations as it sees fit.

Recommendation 1

(i)   That the Conservatorium become a unit within the Faculty of Education and CreativeArts to allow it full representation at higher-level planning within the University.
(ii)   That it keep its own budget line; its higher levels of funding; the ability to operate differently.
(iii)   That it be responsible for and have control of all programs in Music Performance within the University.

Recommendation 2

That the Conservatorium's EFTSU be allowed to grow:
By an additional 5 places in 2000 - no extra funding
By an additional 5 places in 2001 - no extra funding
After this, with the benefit of new facilities, further growth with appropriate funding should be allowed until an EFTSU of 120 is reached for the Mackay Campus.

Recommendation 3

The Conservatorium carry out an analysis of the reasons students leave courses. It should review its entry procedures, assessment procedures and course structures as part of this analysis to ensure the attrition rate stays at acceptable levels.

Recommendation 4

That the Conservatorium, as the unit responsible for all music training in the University, present a plan 'By the end of 1999 for cooperative development of courses with other departments and across campuses. These should include strategies for presentation of both University level and community/pre-tertiary work.

Recommendation 5

(i)   That the teaching staff of the Conservatorium be contracted on full-time or fractional appointments, according to their work in the tertiary programs – teaching, performance, course development and administrative duties.

(ii)   That fractional appointees be paid by direct fee collection for non-tertiary teaching work.

(iii)   That the Conservatorium collect these fees and retain suitable amounts for use of facilities, equipment and running costs.

Recommendation 6

That the Conservatorium review present staff contracts and rather than create redundancies, set up new contracts employing staff on the basis of Recommendation 5.

Recommendation 7

That a minimum of one position be kept unfilled at the end of 1999 for one year to allow some budget catch-up.

Recommendation 8

That part-time staff levels be retained, but that non-tertiary teaching be paid by collection of direct fees, rather than from the University's allocation for tertiary staff.

Recommendation 9

- That there be no new intake to the Associate Diploma courses for 2000.
- That the present Associate Diploma students be allowed to continue until completion or encouraged to transfer into the degree courses.
- That the Associate Diploma courses be discontinued after that time.

Recommendation 10

That the Certificate of Music Theatre be simplified and restructured to be a Certificate in Performance that will allow access to degree entry for students who need further pre-tertiary training. That it be a full-fee course, but with a lower level fee structure than at present.

Recommendation 11

Depending on the degree names in the Undergraduate courses, that the Graduate Diploma in Performing Arts be restructured as

Master of Performing Arts,

Or two titles

Master of Music Theatre
Master of Music

Recommendation 12

That with the re-introduction of the 'classical' music course, Jazz Studies become a major strand alongside this within a music degree program.

Recommendation 13

That the undergraduate courses be restructured into either a single degree Bachelor of Performing Arts Or into two degrees Bachelor of Music Theatre Bachelor of Music

Recommendation 14

That the undergraduate degree courses be restructured to allow greater cross-program teaching of larger groups, that they be simplified by reducing the number of areas on offer, through deleting and combining subjects.

Recommendation 15

That a system of weekly budget reporting be set up within the conservatorium and that the University's Finance Section receive regular reports based on this,

That an Administrative Officer, qualified in financial management and accounting systems , be responsible for the operation of this reporting process

Recommendation 16

That this Administrative Officer oversee the management of alll Conservatorium accounts and prepare all material for the Director's signature.

Recommendation 17

That separate accounting lines be kept for

University teaching and associated operations
The Performance Program
Pre-tertiary and Community work

OBSERVATIONS

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

These observations are taken from initial notes and are presented to give some understanding of the Consultant's way into the analysis.

The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music at Mackay is a small unit of the University, running programs at tertiary level in Music Performance, Jazz and Music Theatre. It also provides the local communities with programs in music training for children and young people.

Despite the present difficulties, the Conservatorium has built something of a reputation, particularly in the area of Music Theatre training in a very short time, drawing students from around Australia. It is also a very important element in the cultural life of its local communities, through its performance and teaching programs.

The unit is hardly at a viable size with the present numbers.
It offers too many courses.
It offers too many subject areas in courses.
There is not enough linking of subjects across the programs.

Young people trained in the Conservatorium Music School program at present go elsewhere to further their traditional music studies. (This will be addressed by re-introduction of the 'Classical' Music strand in the degree program in 2000.)

Although the Music Theatre degree draws its students from around Australia, it is clear from discussions with students, the course has often been discovered almost by accident. (Marketing needs to be looked at seriously.)

Jazz has a very small student load. Although the performance work that students are producing in this area, as in Music Theatre, seems to be developing to high standards from reports and from my personal observation.

The University has expressed some concern at what appears to be a high attrition rate.

The teaching staff is made up of professionals with high standards of performing and teaching. They are enthusiastic and hard working and their work is obviously a strong focus in their lives. Most of the staff have heavy teaching loads, with performance and other duties adding to this. Naturally this time element is somewhat offset by much of the teaching being one-to-one and small group work.

The Conservatorium has relied on input of visiting professional artists to add to the performance programs and to allow students access to this expertise as part of the teaching program. This may have been a basic necessity when the unit was started and full-time staffing levels were very low. It is still most important that students are exposed to this professional expertise, but the amount of this requirement should be carefully

examined, now that full-time staff are engaged to cover most areas of teaching and performance.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE BUDGET

At present the operations budget is being exceeded each year by considerable amounts. While it is not unusual for performance based units to have budgets that are higher in funding levels and sometimes unstable, it is obvious that the University cannot maintain programs that are so costly. It also seems to be common practice for units as small as this to try to run programs which encompass too many options - causing budget blow-outs in trying to maintain all areas at the required standard.

The funding base of $9000 per EFTSU is generous if taken on a national basis. This is not the highest rate in the country, but is some way above the average.

The budget operates on hard money from the annual allocation and soft money through
a. fees paid for non-tertiary teaching/staff generated funds
b. the performance program
c. donations

At present salary costs exceed the annual allocation, so that actual operations depend entirely on the soft budget lines. These have not been delivering the funds required. Projections in this area have been over-optimistic

OBSERVATIONS ON STAFFING

Staffing shows as

- 12.5 Academic Positions (one 50%)
- 4 Administrative Positions
- 7 Part-time Academic Positions
- 7 Off-Campus Instrumental Instructors

The staffing levels are high for an EFSTU of 92, but because of the range of programs and the number of subjects in these programs, the staffing of some areas is barely adequate. (I am not able to evaluate the final levels of training in such things as technical theatre. I would find it difficult to see that a student could claim to be fully professionally trained at a major level in these areas, without a full staff responsible for each of the various divisions within this discipline.)

The staffing issue is complex, because staff members are not only responsible for the above EFTSU, but also deliver the community and pre-tertiary programs and performance work.

OBSERVATIONS OF FACILITIES

The present facilities are near the centre of the city, are not purpose built and are inadequate and crowded. Restrictions are placed on timetabling and the ways some programs are offered, because of the spaces available. Given all of this, it is not an impossible situation - I have seen and worked in worse – and there are some very positive things within this present building. The access to the city and by the community is one benefit. There is some good technical equipment and the small-scale operation allows for a very personal teaching program.

The proposed new purpose-built facilities on the main campus at Mackay will no doubt overcome the major problems for the teaching of a viable tertiary program. The University will need to work with local transport providers to make access easier as the campus gains these and further student numbers.

OBSERVATIONS OF CURRICULUM STRUCTURES

At present the offerings are

Certificate of Music Theatre - fee-paying (1 enrolment)
Associate Diploma of Music (Classical, Jazz or Modern in Composition / Instrumental /Vocal)
Bachelor of Music Theatre
Bachelor of Jazz Studies
Bachelor of Music (to be re-instated in 2000)
Graduate Diploma in Performing Arts - fee-paying (no enrolments)

The programs are set up with some complex small divisions of subjects and of credit points in an effort to provide what is seen as the desired standard in all areas of each student's program.

The standards are high and it would not be productive or desirable to lower these, but efficiencies and cuts to offerings could be carried out without major compromise.

OBSERVATIONS ON TEACHING

The impression is that staff members are teaching too much and while this generates a sense of strong involvement and excitement, it also places strain on staff and can eventually cause burnout. Some of the activities associated with programs such as this are only possible with one-to-one teaching or small group teaching. There does not seem to be an over-use of one to-one teaching, with most performance students receiving a

weekly half-hour lesson in their area. On the other hand, in areas where large group teaching could occur across programs, there are small group structures within individual programs and duplication of material.

OBSERVATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

The Conservatorium has obviously become what it is through the work of its present founding Director, Helen Lancaster. Her close connections with the music profession and her personal enthusiasm and belief in the work of the institution are large factors in the unit's successes and the regard that the local community and outside professionals have for the place.

The recruitment of staff has been a second crucial element in the development of the Conservatorium. My observation is that this has been carried out judiciously, so that some very good people - in terms of professional skills and teaching abilities - have been engaged.

From a time when the Director undertook most of the academic planning, the process has now moved to a committee structure where other staff have been given specific areas of responsibility. The Academic Programs Committee has responsibility for planning and development and at present is considering and working on changes to make the teaching program more unified and efficient. During the consultancy visit, this committee discussed possibilities for change and members are now providing information on some of the likely ways that the restructuring may happen.

The Administrative Staff shares a complex range of work, involving both tertiary and community organisation. There is one member of this staff, Bernadette Howlett, with particular expertise in budget and accounts procedures. At present she is working with the Director on the structures that will make the accounting system more transparent and accurate. This must be put in place as a matter of urgency.

POSSIBLE CHANGES WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

POSITIONING THE CONSERVATOMUM IN THE UNIVERSITY

In the initial stages of the Consultancy, a list of possible options was made. It contained detailed arguments for and against each option. As it became clearer that some of these options were more appropriate and others not appropriate, these statements have been presented in briefer form.

OPTIONS

Option 1. Close the Conservatorium

I believe that this is not a real option. The Conservatorium, even though small, is beginning to be seen as a real option for students not only from its own region and across Queensland, but from around Australia. It is also an important element in the cultural life of the City of Mackay and its surrounding districts.

Option 2. Separation of Conservatorium and Tertiary Music

Another way to structure the Conservatorium and its programs in relation to the faculties and their programs would be to have the Conservatorium offering pre-tertiary and community music training only. The most appropriate faculty would then undertake all degree teaching and associated activities. I would not recommend this as a worthwhile move, as the Conservatorium has already proved to be earning a reputation for its tertiary courses.

Option 3. Leave the Conservatorium independent but with room for possible future growth

This is the option closest to the hearts of the staff working in the unit at present and understandably so, as they feel that they have built a certain excellence in reputation under this banner. However, if there are problems in representation for this small independent unit within the committee structures of the University - ie. at the planning level where deans might represent their faculties - then the unit should be merged or some other arrangement should be made for its inclusion is such forums.

Option 4. Place the Conservatorium in another Academic Unit

There is merit in this option if there is an opportunity for the unit to flourish and not to be compromised in its objectives and the quality of its programs. In terms of financial rationalisation, it may not prove particularly beneficial, but if at present it misses out on true representation at planning levels within the University, there would be strong reason to consider this option.

If this option were considered, then the most obvious placing would be within the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts. This would not be as straightforward as it may appear. Although the Faculty may be developing high-level 'performance' degrees in the area of

media, the types of training offered in Music Education and Music Performance are necessarily very different. I am not making any judgements about the comparative levels of expertise of staff and understand that music staff in the Faculty have high qualifications and reputations. It is simply that the focus on 'education' or on 'performance' produces quite different reasons for existence and modes of operation. There is no reason why both modes cannot be included in one faculty, as long as the differences are acknowledged and are allowed to exist.

If the aims of the Faculty and the Conservatorium were to develop in a closer direction, this option is worth considering as the most logical. In this type of arrangement, I believe the Conservatorium must keep its own separate budget line, its own higher funding levels and autonomy in the types of programs it offers.

Recommendation 1

- That the Conservatorium become a unit within the Faculty of Education and Creative Arts to allow it full representation at higher-level planning within the University.
- That it keep its own budget line; its higher levels of funding; the ability to operate differently.
- That it be responsible for and have control of all programs in Music Performance within the University.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVATORIUM

2 SHORT-TERM LIMITED GROWTH

The Conservatorium is limited by its size and its lack of critical mass. For its small EFTSU it is offering a range of complex programs at too many levels. If there is the possibility of the University shifting some EFTSU across the faculties, then some more places should be made available for the Conservatorium programs. I believe that these should be offered in the first two years without increase to the overall funding base - ie. a slight reduction of funding per EFTSU will occur. This could be seen as $45,000 per year for two years off the debt.

Recommendation 2

That the Conservatorium's EFTSU be allowed to grow:
By an additional 5 places in 2000 - no extra funding
By an additional 5 places in 2001 - no extra funding

.

After this, with the benefit of new facilities, further growth with appropriate funding to be allowed until an EFTSU of 120 is reached on the Mackay Campus. With programs developing on other campuses, this could grow further.

The Conservatorium should meanwhile carefully examine its present high attrition levels and find ways to overcome this.

I thought that this attrition might be related to the requirement for 60% averages in any year of the course for students to be able to continue in a performance program. Staff members have given assurance that there have been few losses through this, as students are able to continue if they show cause. After this process, which includes counselling and probationary periods, most of these students subsequently achieve excellent results.
The information gathered suggests that the students who leave are often those who came with unrealistic expectations, unresolved ambition, or undeveloped independent maturity. In reality this is not very much different from most humanities areas and may appear exaggerated by the small EFTSU. If one student leaves, it is >1% of EFTSU.

One other factor that contributes to the attrition rate is the very success of the courses and the quality of the best students. Some of these are offered professional work during their training and they leave to do this. There are two opposing courses of action available that may provide an answer to this.

- Students be asked to sign contracts on acceptance of enrolment that they will not be engaged in any outside production work, other than those cooperative productions the Conservatorium undertakes, while undertaking their studies - as in the NIDA model.

- Make it possible that for a suggested maximum period outside professional work, which is approved by the Conservatorium, can be counted as part of the professional studies area of the course, allowing credit for specified subjects. Any student, who is offered this high-level work, would stay enrolled part-time in this situation and would be expected to keep contact with their supervisors.

Recommendation 3

The Conservatorium carry out an analysis of the reasons students leave courses. It should review its entry procedures, assessment procedures and course structures as part of this analysis to ensure the attrition rate stays at acceptable levels.

3 LONGER-TERM PLANNED GROWTH

Should the University decide to place the Conservatorium within the faculty structures, this should be seized as an opportunity for genuine growth. It is now time for the Conservatorium to put in place a plan of its directions and possibilities for growth in collaboration with other units. The Conservatorium should have control over all music performance and the teaching of this area within the University's faculty structure. It thereforee should be able to work with the Faculty of Education to provide the delivery of music units for the training of music teachers. This should not be seen as the erosion of performance standards, but rather as an opportunity to offer higher performance standards to these teacher trainees. The Conservatorium would still have control of eligibility for entry to particular subjects or courses. This could mean that the best of the students from other courses could take performance subjects as electives, larger groups would take a different range of subjects suited to educational needs and all music trainees could take elements of the same theory and analysis courses. This would give economies of teaching across departments.

Within this structure, it is inevitable that the Conservatorium, while offering its main performance teaching at Mackay, will also be offering courses on other campuses within the system. This could and should extend to community access and school programs – staffed through fee-paying structures. This type of expansion would see the Conservatorium of Central Queensland being precisely that, by serving the central area of the state as a whole. It could follow that some present and future music staff positions within the Faculty might be relocated to the Conservatorium to present the performance training on other campuses.

Members of the staff of the Conservatorium are presently developing elective courses for distance learning. If possible these should be made ready for delivery for 2000. The next step will be working with staff within the Faculty to re-develop the music training on other sites.

Recommendation 4

That the Conservatorium, as the unit responsible for all music training in the University, present a plan by the end of 1999 for cooperative development of courses with other departments and across campuses. These should include strategies for presentation of both University level and community/pre-tertiary work.

• SEPARATION OF DEGREE AND NON-DEGREE TEACHING

The University should consider the difference in work at tertiary and pre-tertiary levels. This in no way underestimates the importance of the early training schemes. These are the means of developing future university students and provide the strongest links and service to the local community. However, at present staff are being paid as tertiary staff - on full and fractional appointments - to undertake this work. They are expected to carry out enough work at this level to bring back money to the unit as salary savings. If there is a shortfall in projected funds to be brought back, then the salary bill is not balanced. Some staff members do less of this work and in fact their expertise is probably best utilised at the tertiary level. Now that the tertiary programs have become fuller and there are greater tertiary student numbers, it has become harder for some staff to undertake this work.

When filling any vacant positions or renewing contracts the University should offer fractional contracts that reflect only the amount of tertiary teaching and performance work to be undertaken. All pre-tertiary teaching should be paid by direct fee collection. Staff would then have the opportunity to supplement their contract salary by income earned from non-tertiary activities. There may need to be a system of guaranteed minimum funds - so many hours pre tertiary teaching per week - when trying to attract new personnel. Under this arrangement, there is genuine incentive for individual teachers to keep the pre-tertiary student levels high. A smaller base of staff would then be on full-time contracts and would be expected to have major responsibility for the administration and teaching of the degree courses. These staff members could earn back some funding as in the present scheme if they were to be engaged for any pre-tertiary and community teaching - perhaps up to a maximum of 3 hours per week. Outside this, staff would be able to have normal access to private consultancy work, which is agreed on by the University.

Recommendation 5

1   That the teaching staff of the Conservatorium be contracted on full-time or fractional appointments, according to their work in the tertiary programs - teaching, performance, course development and administrative duties.

2   That fractional appointees be paid by direct fee collection for non-tertiary teaching work.

3   That the Conservatorium collect these fees and retain suitable amounts for use of facilities, equipment and running costs.

• REDUNDANCIES

It would be difficult to effect redundancies immediately, given that the program is under way with current offerings. It is also difficult to see where serious cuts can be made, given the range of essential expertise required to make the present programs legitimate. I believe that the staff is already too thinly spread to effectively offer all the areas that are presently in place.

I would look at the contracts for some staff who are undertaking large amounts of their work outside the tertiary program. These are obviously valued staff and have high levels of expertise, but the way they are contracted could perhaps have been different. It may be that the University would like to review all contracts at this time on the basis of actual tertiary work - teaching and performance - and rather than create redundancies, make new offers to staff based on these figures. If there is no alternative but to make some staff cuts, this might be accepted as a more equitable alternative.

Recommendation 6

That the Conservatorium review present staff contracts and rather than create redundancies, set up new contracts employing staff on the basis of Recommendation 5.

• VOLUNTARILY UNFILLED POSITIONS

There may be opportunity in the short-term to keep one or two positions unfilled if contracts finish. The Conservatorium should look at some alternative teaching arrangements in some areas in line with the restructuring of the teaching programs.

Recommendation 7

That a minimum of one position be kept unfilled at the end of 1999 for one year to allow some budget catch-up.

4. CUTS TO PART-TIME HOURS

The use of part-time staff for teaching of individual instruments is the most efficient use of funding. I believe the present part-time staff are necessary and are engaged according to needs. If the separation of payment methods for tertiary and non-tertiary teaching takes place, some of the part-time work would be devolved into work for direct fees. This would probably affect most part-time staff and the staff on the list of Off-Campus Instrumental Instructors.

Recommendation 8

That part-time staff levels be retained, but that non-tertiary teaching be paid by collection of direct fees rather than from the University's allocation for tertiary staff.

REVIEW OF PROGRAMS

1. CLOSURE OF COURSES

For a unit of this size there are too many programs at different levels. Although they operate in some areas with co-teaching, there are still entirely separate subjects and courses at each level. The Academic Programs Committee is now examining ways of rationalising the offerings.

The Associate Diploma is used to attract some students who do not qualify for entry to the degree courses. If students are not at the correct levels to come into a degree course, they should then be encouraged to undertake the fee-paying Certificate Course. Admittedly at present there are some students who apply only for Associate Diploma level and use this as a trial before deciding whether to move on to the degree program. They should be encouraged to undertake the fee-paying Certificate Course or if their work is at the correct levels to take the direct step of entry to the degree.

Recommendation 9

(i)   That there be no new intake to the Associate Diploma courses for 2000.
(ii)   That the present Associate Diploma students be allowed to continue until completion or encouraged to transfer into the degree courses.
(iii)   That the Associate Diploma courses be discontinued after that time.

(If these Associate Diploma courses have been advertised, I believe the University can still decide to have a zero intake. There may be some potential students lost by this step, but they may be assisted by the suggestions offered under 'Certificate Level'.)

2. FEE-PAYING COURSES

a. Certificate Level

At present there is a Certificate of Music Theatre with one enrolled student paying full fees. There is a feeling that the fee level is not attractive for a course at this level.

I believe that with the closing of the Associate Diploma, there could be a restructure at the Certificate level, specifically to accommodate people who might not be at the correct entry levels for a degree. This could be offered with a much-simplified structure and across all Music areas, rather than just in Music Theatre. The present range of subjects would allow this to happen, but could be somewhat reduced. If the course is to provide a way of building expertise for entry to the degree programs it would need to address three possible areas of weakness:

- Performance levels
- Basic music knowledge
- Academic levels

As this would be pre-degree work it may attract a lower level of fee-payment than a full-fee tertiary course would. The program would not offer the same levels of face-to-face work. Students would enrol in the subject selection which addresses their particular needs. It may be possible to offer this at $4000 per annum as a base fee. Those students undertaking individual instrumental/voice lessons as part of the program would either pay the usual fee paid by casual students or have this built into the suggested fee. There may be some subsidy towards this program through the University's Steps Program, or some of the units in that program may be suitable for inclusion in this Certificate course.

It would be possible for some of the work in practical studies to be undertaken with introductory subjects in the degree - eg. Basic Dance Technique, Stagecraft, Acting, but with examination requirements suitably lower than for degree level students.

Recommendation 10

That the Certificate of Music Theatre be simplified and restructured to be a Certificate in Performance that will allow access to degree entry for students who need further pre-tertiary training. That it be a full-fee course, but with a lower level fee structure than at present.

b. Postgraduate Level

At present there is a Graduate Diploma in Performing Arts. It has not attracted students and it is unlikely to prove any more attractive in the future.

Having looked at the structure and the levels of the course, I believe it stands equal to the one-year professional Pass Masters degrees offered by a number of universities. If it were changed to that level, with an appropriate revision of the content and structure, it is likely to attract some interest as a fee-paying course. This would apply particularly in the area of Music Theatre. It could very well have a simple structure with an area of Major Performance - which might allow for masters students to undertake as their major examinable piece, productions using undergraduates or filling major roles (unpaid or part-paid towards fee offset) in the present concert and visiting artists programs.)

Note: It was hoped that this Graduate Diploma would attract international Fee-paying students. It is not likely that they will come for courses at this level, but they would certain be interested in coming for courses at Masters level. Few students from Asia are likely to be attracted to a Masters in Music Theatre, as it is not part of the culture. Students from the US and Europe, however, could find this very attractive. On the other hand there could be a market in Asia for masters level work in traditional classical music.

The competition is strong, but even a small enrolment would add to the financial viability of the Conservatorium. It could also be a useful marketing tool directed at the international students who are at present enrolled in the private school programs in Mackay. Stay on at the campus here and undertake your Bachelor and Masters degree.'

Another potential market for the Pass Masters in the areas of Music Theatre and Jazz could be the pool of top-level professionals who have never had the chance for tertiary study. As with all professional courses of this nature offered by other universities, alternative entry can be offered, based on professional experience. This works well in many other institutions, but CQCM could capture the market in these particular areas.

Recommendation 11

Depending on the degree names in the Undergraduate courses, that the Graduate Diploma Performing Arts be restructured as

Master of Performing Arts,

Or two titles

Master of Music Theatre
Master of Music

4. RESTRUCTURING UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

There is considerable ground for savings in this area by use of

- Cross-program teaching
- Creating larger groups and simplified offerings
- Eliminating subjects
- Cutting hours in subjects
- Offering rotational programs

At present there are differences in each program and each program is divided into small subjects to cover each aspect of teaching. There is evidence that the teaching is producing good results in student performance work, but the differences across the programs are producing duplications and inefficient use of teaching staff.

While there should be differences in detail in the offerings in each program, there is a good case for having the larger structures working in a similar way - the big boxes being similar, with some different packages inside. There are elements unique to each area and these should not be compromised in re-structuring, but the areas of commonality should be found. It will mean that some compromises must be made here and that the course

designers need to make hard decisions and give up some things to make the whole structure work.

The Jazz Studies courses would appear on first view to be an area that the Conservatorium might seriously consider deleting from its programs. It has very few enrolments and is relatively highly staffed. The easy option would be to cut this and save a number of staff positions. There are two reasons why this is not recommended. Firstly, the genre is quite closely allied to many Music Theatre pieces and the musicians who work in both areas complement each other very well. Secondly, with the re-introduction of the 'classical' music courses and the rationalisation processes being undertaken by the staff, Jazz would easily become a strand of a wider degree in music.

Recommendation 12

That with the re-introduction of the 'classical' music course, Jazz Studies become a major strand alongside this within a music degree program.

If it were not for the fact that the Bachelor of Music Theatre is already attracting good people who may be coming because of the name of the present degree, I would be inclined to make the programs fit into an umbrella degree. It would need a name like 'Bachelor of Performing Arts'. This might also be applicable to things like Theatre or other degrees within the present Faculty. Whatever happens, I strongly believe that the title of the degree/s should clearly reflect the performance orientation.

This structure would give something like:

Bachelor of Performing Arts (Music Theatre)
Bachelor of Performing Arts (Contemporary Music)
Bachelor of Performing Arts (Jazz Studies)

And possibly within the Faculty structure - Bachelor of Performing Arts (Media?)

The alternative, which may be stronger and more attractive. would be something like:

Bachelor of Music Theatre
Bachelor of Music (Jazz Studies/Contemporary Music etc)

Recommendation 13

That the undergraduate courses be restructured into either a single degree

Bachelor of Performing Arts

Or into two degrees

Bachelor of Music Theatre
Bachelor of Music

NOTES ON COURSE RESTRUCTURING

The exact details of how the present degrees should be restructured are outside the framework of this report. At present the staff are engaged in a process of rationalisation. I understand that the rationalisation process in the Music degree will propose a considerable saving in annual teaching hours. There should also be similar rationalisation in the Music Theatre program.

The following are suggestions that may be useful in this process. Some of these are the result of discussions with staff.

The History and Writing courses should be combined to serve all students. This could be taught in a modular way, so that the teachers from each strand have input for a set number of weeks within each subject, rather than everybody teaching full separate courses as at present. These courses should eventually be the same for students in the Music Education degree. They would then be offered to large whole-year groups on two campuses.

Musicianship should be made into a common course, at least for the first two years. Jazz or other elements, which are at present separate, could become modules within the common course. The present multiple levels of Musicianship should be reduced to three - 6 single semester subjects with two at each level.

Students who are not performance majors in the Music Theatre degree, or who have had to drop their performance majors, may not need to continue Musicianship beyond the second year of the degree. This would allow space for their electives to have more credit weight or again Musicianship could be an elective at that level for these students.

The multiple Ensemble offerings, Ensemble Large and Ensemble Small, should be simplified into one Ensemble subject at each level per semester. Contact hours should be reviewed and if possible reduced.

Elective choices should be made smaller, with many of them being created by students using subjects from other major areas. I understand that this already happens, but the very large list of electives appears totally impractical for such a small unit to offer.

The subjects/credit weighting that each student undertakes in any one year should be simplified. At present there are many and different small subjects to be undertaken - some of 2 and 3 credit points value.

In reality there are 3 main areas in each degree:

- Academic Studies (Theory/History/Musicianship etc)
- Professional Practical Studies

- Electives

The structure could be revised to make these larger divisions reflect the weight the Conservatorium wants to apply to each. Within these, some of the present small subjects could be amalgamated to be modular areas of larger subjects.

It is clear that the Conservatorium is endeavouring to turn out fully trained professionals at the end of a three-year undergraduate degree. This is a pressure shared with any training unit that must reach standards required by their professional bodies - Law and Engineering would be good examples. It is an impossibility to teach everything within this three-year period and to try to do this must result in some very basic training in some areas.

Rather than claiming that professional training is offered in all areas, the Conservatorium should consider teaching some areas only at a basic level within overview subjects and remove them as major parts of the degree. Graduates while still gaining an understanding of the way these things operate in the profession, would not claim to be expertly trained in these areas. If they are removed, they could be placed into an Honours year program or into the Masters program to encourage students to return after spending some time in professional work.

Examples would be the areas in the Creative Studies program, which are more suited to higher levels. At present they are correctly placed at the end of the program, where they may give alternatives to students who wish to broaden their expertise away from performance. However, it would be argued in the professions that these areas - particularly directing, choreography, musical direction depend on full knowledge and if possible solid experience of the performance process. These areas might form the core for an Honours or Masters program in the future.

Recommendation 14

That the undergraduate degree courses be restructured to allow greater cross-program teaching of larger groups, that they be simplified by reducing the number of areas on often through deleting and combining subjects.

While there have been serious budget over-runs in the past two years, it would be a pity to sacrifice potential for short-term gains. The Conservatorium is already building a reputation for excellence in its various fields and has further potential as it enters a new phase with new facilities and a closer relationship with other units. The University cannot continue to live with red-line budgets. However, it would be advisable to focus on putting

in place procedures that will ensure efficient operations from 2000 onwards, rather than trying for a perfect outcome in 1999.

For the longer term, a system of regular reporting should be set up, so that any likely problems can be addressed at early stages. The Administrative Staff member in charge of financial matters (at present Ms Howlett) should be given authority to deal with all budget and accounting items directly, should prepare weekly financial reports to be presented in a weekly meeting with the Director, which would highlight any problems and suggest solutions. This officer should also prepare regular reports, which would go to the University Finance Section.

All budget approvals should go through this officer, who would prepare them for signature by the Director. All budget lines must be clearly identified in their coded accounts and these should be as specific as possible. Even though individual staff members, who control teaching and performance areas, may have access to some accounts to carry out their programs, there would be no drawing from accounts without this approval process.

If there is an adoption of some form of the recommendations made about the separation of funding for tertiary and non-tertiary activities, the University's annual allocation would adequately cover staff and operating costs of the Conservatorium's tertiary activities. The core activities should then operate without the present strains and the extent of the other programs would depend on their ability to attract funding through fees, donations and box office. They would then be adapted accordingly.

There should be a separation of budgets for

- University teaching and associated operations
- The Performance Program
- Pre-tertiary and Community work

The largest proportion of the University's allocation would be dedicated to cover not only salaries, as at present, but also the operations of the tertiary teaching work and the general operations of the Conservatorium.

The tertiary Performance Programs would be part of this tertiary teaching work and some support funding would be allocated to this. Other gained revenue would add to this base funding and would be held in account for this purpose. Eventually only base funds or small allocations should be needed into this area. This support should be available, so that the Program is not compromised in its pedagogical aspects. It is often necessary for students to experience forms of performance that may not be particularly popular at the box-office.

A minimum annual base of funds could come from this allocation to underwrite the Pre-tertiary programs, which would operate mainly through direct fee collection.

Recommendation 15

(i) That a system of weekly budget reporting be set up within the Conservatorium and that the University's Finance Section receive regular reports based on this.

(ii) That an Administrative Officer qualified in financial management and accounting systems be responsible for the operation of this reporting process.

Recommendation 16

That this Administrative Officer oversee the management of all Conservatorium accounts and prepare all material for the Director's signature.

Recommendation 17

That separate accounting lines be kept for University teaching and associated operations The Performance Program Pre-tertiary and Community work

The Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music has begun to make a name for itself in the national context in some well-defined areas of operation. In particular its offerings in the area of Music Theatre fill a niche that has no other provider on the East Coast of Australia. With careful refinement of its programs, so that they are realistic and yet still deliver the strong professional training that underscores the original aims, it has the opportunity to develop a leading role wider than its size would indicate. Some of the best arts-training institutions I the world are small and have a very restricted range of offerings. Some of these are also outside major cities and have learned to exploit this as a Factor in their attraction.

The Conservatorium needs to understand the advantages it has as a member unit of an Australian University with a unique mission and a growing reputation for difference in its programs and operations. It should seize the opportunity to have a wider influence in the University context by taking its place as the provider of Music programs University-wide and by developing strong relationships with other member units.

The University needs to understand the value of this unit that it owns. It should be seen as, and could become, a major marketing tool for the wider university programs. It is placed in an attractive city; it will have new facilities, which will encourage excellent

training; it has access to an outstanding performance centre in the city; it has developed close relationships with the city and with this has created interesting opportunities for its performance program. As the Conservatorium moves to its new facilities on the Mackay campus and then develops programs on other campuses, there should be a very strong national and international marketing program to put its name before the Australian and international arts communities. With this the University will find that there is a wider interest in the institution as a whole.

I believe that the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music can achieve balanced budgets and at the same time deliver pedagogically viable programs in Music Performance and Music Theatre, if the appropriate recommendations are acted upon. It should also be possible to deliver some repayment of debts by implementation of specific recommendations. Recommendations 5, 6 and 7 give possibilities for savings in salaries and Recommendations 12, 13 and 14 provide for greater efficiencies in delivery of programs. Together this should provide a modest surplus of perhaps $25 - 50,000 in the first year. Recommendations 10 and 11 give possibilities for added earned income - possibly from 2000, but with more certainty from 2001 onwards. This should provide for a $50 - 75,000 surplus in the second year and a $100,000 surplus from the third year.

Dr Peter Shepherd
Director
Ozfair Pty Ltd
International Arts and Education Consultants
1/6/99

APPENDIX 2

Papers published and presented on and around the topic of '*The Virtual Conservatorium*' during the three year Professional Doctorate candidature (2001-2003)

Refereed

Whateley, G. and Mienczakowski,J. (2002) Creating a sustainable future for the new conservatorium of music in the new economy. *Australian Journal of Music Education,* 9 (1): 50-54.

Bofinger, I. and Whateley, G. (2002) iCon – The realization of 'The Virtual Conservatorium'. Proceedings *ISME Commission for the Education of the Professional Musician.* Stavanger, Norway. 1-15.

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) The Virtual Conservatorium – an initiative of the new conservatorium in the new economy. *Proceedings Hawaii International Conference on Education,* Honolulu, USA. Pp 65-79 (Electronic) ISSN 1541 5880

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) 'The Virtual Conservatorium' - a new flexible model for conservatoria. *Proceedings of the 4th Asia-Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research* pp 401-406, July, Hong Kong. ISBN 962-949-134-6

Bofinger, I. and Whateley.G. (2002) The Virtual Conservatorium: a new emerging option for conservatoria in B.A.Knight (Ed) *Reconceptualising Learning in the Knowledge Society* (pp 135-150). Flaxton: Post Pressed. ISBN 1 876682 45 0.

Whateley, G. (2003) Foreword in P.Hayward (Ed) *Outback and Urban – Australian Country Music* (pp iv-v). Gympie. The Australian Institute of Country Music. ISBN 0 9750469 0 X

Book Chapters (Refereed)

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) Designing the teaching and learning environment for the virtual conservatorium at Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Knight, B.A. and Harrison, A. (Eds*) Research Perspectives on Education for the Future* (pp 97- 112). Flaxton: Post Pressed. ISBN 1 876682604

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2002) Creating and maintaining an environment of innovation and on going change and development within the modern

conservatorium in B.A. Knight (Ed) *Reconceptualising Learning in the Knowledge Society* (pp 119-134). Flaxton: Post Pressed. ISBN 1 876682 45 0.

Educational Products

Jankoff, C., Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) *Project design and development – the seven carriages* (Third Edition). Melbourne, Business Education Pty Ltd. ISBN 1 86493 001

Bartle, G. Bofinger, I. Heldsinger, D. and Whateley, G. (2003) *Australasian directory of music and music education institutions.* The Callaway International Research Centre in Music (CIRCME), Perth. CD ROM and website format.

Periodicals

Jankoff, C. and Whateley, G. (2001) Professional e-learning down under. *Education Quarterly,* 19 (November/December): 40.

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2002) Arts faculties slow to take up off-campus/on line learning. *Education Quarterly,* 20 (1): 40-41.

Bofinger, I and Whateley, G. (2002) The virtual university environment. *Education Quarterly,* 20 (2): 12-13.

Bofinger, I. and Whateley, G. (2002) The establishment of 'The Virtual Conservatorium' as an initiative of the emerging, innovative eConservatorium. *Music Forum – Journal of the Music Council of Australia,* 9 (1) 22- 25. ISSN 1327-9300

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) Developing strategic alliances with a range of partners: a key to the future well being of conservatoria in Australia. *Music Forum - Journal of the Music Council of Australia,* 9 (4):28-29. ISSN 1327-9300

Conference Papers Presented

Whateley,G. and Bofinger,I. (2002) *Contemporary directions: the virtual conservatorium.* CONNECTing Conference, April, Brisbane.

Bofinger,I. and Whateley, G. (2002) *iCon – the realisation of the virtual conservatorium.* ISME World Commission on the Education of the Professional Musician, August, Stavanger, Norway.

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) *The Virtual Conservatorium – an initiative of the new conservatorium in the new economy*. Hawaii International Conference of Education, January, Honolulu, USA.

Whateley, G.and Bofinger,I. (2003*) Designing the teaching and learning environment for The Virtual Conservatorium at Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music*. Education and Creative Arts Research Conference, Yepoon, September.

Whateley, G. and Bofinger, I. (2003) *Jazz Studies – a vehicle for Edutourism*. Asia Pacific Jazz Conference, Hamilton Island, Queensland.

APPENDIX 3

Four Assignments presented by each of the authors on and around the topic of '*The Virtual Conservatorium*' during the three year Professional Doctorate candidature (2001-2003)

These papers are presented on CD Rom and can be accessed by opening the file "assignments.html" using an internet browser such as 'Internet Explorer'. Each of the papers are in 'pdf' format and are automatically linked by mousing over and clicking each paper title. On some computers you may have to 'right click' and open using "Adobe Acrobat".

APPENDIX 4

Sampler CD Rom of '*The Virtual Conservatorium*'. This contains selections from both the postgraduate and undergraduate virtual coursework.

This sampler is presented on CD Rom and can be accessed by opening the file "Sampler.html" using an internet browser such as 'Internet Explorer'.