Integrating Generic Skills into Disciplinary Curricula

Authors : Sitalakshmi Venkatraman, Fiona Wahr, Anthony de Souza-Daw, Samuel Kaspi

Abstract : There is a growing emphasis on generic skills in higher education to match the changing skill-set requirements of the labour market. However, researchers and policy makers have not arrived at a consensus on the generic skills that actually contribute towards workplace employability and performance that complement and/or underpin discipline-specific graduate attributes. In order to strengthen the qualifications framework, a range of ‘generic’ learning outcomes have been considered for students undergoing higher education programs and among them it is necessary to have the fundamental generic skills such as literacy and numeracy at a level appropriate to the qualification type. This warrants for curriculum design approaches to contextualise the form and scope of these fundamental generic skills for supporting both students’ learning engagement in the course, as well as the graduate attributes required for employability and to progress within their chosen profession. Little research is reported in integrating such generic skills into discipline-specific learning outcomes. This paper explores the literature of the generic skills required for graduates from the discipline of Information Technology (IT) in relation to an Australian higher education institution. The paper presents the rationale of a proposed Bachelor of IT curriculum designed to contextualize the learning of these generic skills within the students’ discipline studies.

Keywords : curriculum, employability, generic skills, graduate attributes, higher education, information technology