

1.2 Develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

- Understand what is involved in leadership for learning
- > Recognise that in this context my 'content' is knowledge of leading for learning
- > Engage with current research on leadership that positively impacts on student and staff learning
- > Recognise the power of my instructional leadership role to influence and develop a whole school learning culture, and prioritise meeting time and resources for professional learning and work with staff to ensure clarity of our vision for learning
- Accept responsibility to keep abreast of, engage with and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice
- > Seek out conferences and professional learning opportunities to be exposed to a range of learning theories
- > Regularly engage in professional learning
- Develop personal clarity and precision with the metalanguage of learning and teaching
- > Discuss, debate and define the meaning of terms such as pedagogy, constructivism, mastery learning, student centred learning, personalised learning, explicit teaching, authentic assessment, professional learning community, learning styles ...
- Appreciate that designing learning for understanding is strengthened by deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge
- > Identify staff members with expertise in particular learning areas, observe their practice and reflect on the role that deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge plays in their effectiveness

I will strategically design to:

- Ensure staff keep abreast of and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice
- > Provide professional learning opportunities on new pedagogy, including structured critique
- > Identify staff with pedagogic expertise and develop opportunities for this to be shared through teams, mentors and staff professional learning programs
- Encourage and support staff members to develop their disciplinary and pedagogical expertise to ensure greater responsiveness and flexibility in their teaching
- > Encourage staff members to keep up to date with new knowledge in their relevant disciplines
- > Distribute disciplinary expertise across collaborative teams
- > Ensure faculty/year level leaders understand their roles as leaders of disciplinary learning as well as coordinating management tasks



In the past, knowledge was seen as a static body to be transmitted. Given this, it was reasonable to use strategies that simply required students to record and recall information.

However, if we truly believe that learning requires individuals to construct meaning and it is the teachers' role to foster this, we need to develop deep professional knowledge of the processes that best enable us to do this. We need to know the curriculum and the best ways to help students get to know 'the stuff'.

Practice check

- Have I scheduled time for my own learning about educational leadership and learning through reading and conferences?
- O Do I regularly update my professional reading to ensure I'm abreast of current theories and engage in critiquing them?
- Am I careful and precise in my use of professional language and ensure I'm communicating meaning, not empty words?
- O Do I challenge teachers to interrogate assessment information to determine where learning was not successful and to deliberately refine teaching to address this?
- O Do I support Learning Area/Year Level coordinators in their roles as leaders of learning?
- O Do staff members alert each other to emerging ideas and knowledge in their respective Learning Areas? Do I actively seek to develop content knowledge by engaging with my staff members who have experience in certain areas.

If teachers develop their pedagogical and content knowledge, they will ...

- o understand their professional work as being intentional and responsive, not just technical implementation of textbook activities or others' programs and strategies
- o understand the nature of knowing through different disciplines and its application in real world/authentic contexts
- o maintain a responsiveness to learners and learning
- o develop and draw on an extensive repertoire of practice to provide multiple entry points into student learning
- know and emulate contemporary pedagogical thinking and practice
- o work together to share and develop approaches to introduce new concepts/skills, identify misunderstandings, build and consolidate learner knowledge and design assessment tightly linked to the desired learning outcomes

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

Content Knowledge

is knowledge about the actual subject matter that is to be learnt or taught. Clearly teachers must know and understand the subjects that they teach, including knowledge of central facts, concepts, theories, and procedures within a given field; knowledge of explanatory frameworks that organise and connect ideas ... (Shulman 1986). Teachers must also understand the nature of knowledge and inquiry in different fields. For example, how is a proof in mathematics different from a historical explanation or a literary interpretation? Teachers who do not have these understandings can misrepresent those subjects to their students.

Pedagogical Knowledge

is deep knowledge about learning and the processes and practices or methods of teaching and learning. This is a generic form of knowledge that is involved in all issues of student learning, classroom management, lesson plan development and implementation, and student evaluation. A teacher with deep pedagogical knowledge understands how students construct (meaning), acquire skills, and develop habits of mind and positive dispositions toward learning.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge is where pedagogical and content knowledge come together When we have deep knowledge of what we are teaching, we can anticipate likely misconceptions and we know what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn. Deep pedagogical knowledge means we have a repertoire of specific and effective strategies to respond.

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7	Content
V	Knowledge

Notes:

... Australian operational views of constructivism confuse a theory of knowing with a theory of teaching.

We confuse the need for the child to construct her own knowledge with a form of pedagogy which sees it as the child's responsibility to achieve that.

We focus on the action of the student in the construction of knowledge, rather than the action of the teacher in engaging with the child's current misconceptions and structuring experiences to challenge those misconceptions ... The constructivist theory of knowing has been used to justify a non-interventionist theory of pedagogy, whereas it is a fair interpretation to argue that constructivism requires vigorous interventionist teaching: how, after all, is a student with misconceptions supposed to challenge them unaided? How does she even know they are misconceptions?