Reflection: Alignment of practice as a strategy for building capacity for learning

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Reflective practice can play a key role in the collaborative education curriculum as it supports learners with developing a capacity to build cognitive bridges between the theory of the classroom and their professional or community experience. The argument presented is that a whole of institution and aligned approach to reflective practice may build capacity for learning and foster a deep approach to learning. The holistic approach adopted by the PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) initiative at Macquarie University provides the case material of a program that is core to a university’s vision, and through which the embedding of reflective mechanism(s) is a requirement. A holistic approach to the practice of reflection is achieved through the alignment of policy, infrastructure and practice. Good practice examples of resources and strategies that can each contribute to building capacity at an individual, program and institutional level are outlined. Evaluative data and outcomes will be considered as a means for demonstrating the potential for success with institution-wide reflective practice – an approach that may offer synergistic and positive outcomes well beyond the Macquarie experience.

Keywords: Reflective practice, capacity-building, curriculum design, whole of institution approach