



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
*Achieve International Excellence*

# THE ULTRIS MODEL

(Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Research Internship Scheme)  
Sally Sandover and Lee Partridge

## Main Features

- Novel research focus on teaching and learning
- 6 month internship - \$3000
- Research topic an identified priority to institution
- Authentic research outside students' discipline
- Extracurricular – no academic credit but formal acknowledgement
- Postgrad experience for undergrad students
- Scaffolded support and supervision
- Broad dissemination of findings
- Non tokenistic (findings relevant beyond the institution)
- Student ownership of project
- Student-initiated community of practice



## Student Selection and Support

- Competitive scheme – interns selected from every faculty
- Selection by academic record, personal statement and faculty recommendation
- Introduction to Research preparation (8 x 3hr workshops)
- Research supervisor and 'faculty friend' for each intern
- 'Just-in-time' follow up sessions to develop specific skills
- Peer support

## Strengths

- Promotes student awareness of the Scholarship of T+L
- Transferability of general/research thinking and skills
- Opportunity to interact and learn from students in different disciplines
- Improved relations between staff and students
- Increased understanding of how the university works
- Greater awareness and incentive for students to progress to postgraduate study
- Research findings inform university policy and practice



## Future Challenge

- Adaptation of resource-intensive ULTRIS to a wider cohort of undergraduate students



*“Independent research; collaboration with others – discussing my ideas; public speaking – presenting to a group (on the spot!); the nature of researching – learning to think ahead, trying to cover all options, that is, looking at both the big picture and the small details and trying to integrate them. Communication was probably the biggest thing I learned – with the other interns, supervisor(s) etc. Even though independent learning was involved I learned to communicate my ideas and to ask advice” (2009 ULTRIS intern).*