

**Not for publication**

# Office for Learning and Teaching

## Grants program

Progress Report (20 June 2012)

### **After standards: engaging and embedding history's standards using international best practice to inform curriculum renewal PP10-1812**

Lead institution: UNSW

Partner institutions: UNE, UQ

Project leader:

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Please refer to the document, *Project Management Information*, available on the OLT website, <http://www.olt.gov.au/grants-and-projects/project-management>.

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# 1 Progress against specified outcomes and deliverables

The After Standards project has continued to complete important work in the six months since the Year 1/Stage 1 report was submitted. This said, the project continues to work in an environment characterised by the continuing uncertainty regarding the nature of the new Teaching and Learning Standards environment and the role discipline-specific Threshold Learning Outcomes will play within it. The project was always conceived and designed as facilitating the discipline community's response to a new standards-based regulatory environment but three years after the project was originally envisaged we still await clear indications of what this environment will look like and what the compliance/audit requirements will be. Clearly the delay in the establishment of TEQSA and the consequent delays in the Higher Education Panel completing its important work has had an impact. As noted in the Year 1 report, the project did attempt to trim its sails so that it would be in the best position to act when this new environment was promulgated but it would appear clear now that it is quite possible that this project will draw to a close with the new Teaching and Learning standards environment still not in place.

Undeterred, the project continues to make good progress on a number of fronts. The major focus of the second stage of Phase 3 (Community of Practice Phase) was:

- (a) The conduct of a feasibility trial of an accreditation model for the discipline community that could be adopted by the Australian Historical Association as the peak body for the discipline in Australia.
- (b) The organisation and conduct of the second National Workshop on 7-8 July.

The accreditation trial was finalised at a workshop of the project partners on 29 February (held at UNSW) and after the completion of the trial, the results were examined at two-day workshop the project partners on 6-7 June (again held at UNSW). The three main partner universities in the project (UNSW, UQ and UNE) participated in the trial. The approach and methodology to be used for the trial became the subject of an academic paper that is forthcoming in the highly regarded international journal *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* (formerly ERA ranked A). The paper, titled, "Learning Outcomes Assessment and History: TEQSA, the After-Standards Project and the QA/QI challenge in Australia" forms part of a dedicated forum on Learning Outcomes Assessment and Assessment for Accountability edited by Sean Brawley and Mary Huber (Carnegie).

The trial produced a number of interesting findings that will be reported back to the discipline community at the second National Workshop to be held at the University of Adelaide on 7-8 July, immediately preceding the annual conference of the AHA. The trial showed that a national accreditation system for history was feasible but that the model originally envisaged had a number of flaws and would need a major overhaul. Much of this revisioning of the system was accomplished at the UNSW workshop on 7-8 June and will be conveyed to the discipline community at the National Workshop.

That second National Workshop is to be held on 7-8 of July at the University of Adelaide and has received strong support from the University of Adelaide and the AHA. Fifty delegates are registered to attend though the institutional representation has declined from 28 of the 32 institutions with a history major to 22. This is disappointing when it is recalled all but four institutions attended the first National Conference and their absence related to illness or them not sharing the common mid-session break. It is clear for some institutions that the continuing uncertainty regarding the national Teaching and Learning Standards environment has left them unwilling to invest the not

inconsiderable time investment in the second national workshop when what will be asked of institutions and disciplines remains unclear. The project is preparing a survey to further document non-attendance by certain institutions.

A copy of the Workshop Program is attached. As well as workshops being conducted by the project partners, we have three international speakers conducting workshops. Professors Booth and Calder return after their most welcome participation in 2011, and Professor Leah Shopkow joins us from the University of Indiana. It is to be noted that Professor Calder's attendance at the workshop was supported by the AHA, which is further evidence of the organisation's new engagement with Teaching and Learning.

### **Responding to feedback comments from the Year 1 Review**

The Project clarified some issues related to the second report in the email of the project leader to OLT on 15 March 2012. Further:

*Reference group:* We noted that the Year 1 report did not adequately reflect the briefings and support we had received from the Reference Group. This said, we reinvigorated our regular updates and feedback on the *History Australia* article from the Reference Group informed the *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* article.

*External reviewer:* The Year 1 report did note that the Reviewer (Michele Scoufis) attended the paper on the project presented at the ISSOTL conference in Milwaukee in October 2011 and that we had delayed the review process till after the completion of Phase 3. I note A/Professor Clark was delegated with express responsibility for maintaining the project's relationship with the Reviewer to ensure the matter was always in our considerations.

*Final report deadline:* We appreciate the suggestion regarding an extension of the final report deadline. We will consider this request after the completion of the National Workshop. It does raise the issue of the possibility of continuing the project past the originally envisaged October 2012. This could be beneficial if the new Learning and Teaching standards environment had become clearer because the efforts of the project could be directed to expressly addressing the consequences. The project would welcome advice on the possibilities associated with the extension of the project. It is noted in this regard that this is not a request for extra funding.

*2012 budget:* We acknowledged the block and the means by which the second year funds could be released. We were asked to provide an additional financial statement with this update and do so now. Funds expended since the Year 1 report are as follows:

<b>Expenditure to 15 June</b>		
Budget Item Sub-heading	Detail	\$
Project Activities	Workshop Travel	10109.13
Project Support	Meeting Travel + Other Costs	1273.38
Personnel/Project Support	Administrative Costs (Wages etc)	12120.88
	Total	23503.39

<b>Expenditure Due in Near Future</b>		
Budget Item Sub-heading	Detail	\$
Project Activities	Workshop Travel	2620

Project Activities	Workshop Travel: International Guests	4100
Project Activities	Workshop Accommodation	13837
Project Activities	Workshop Catering	4000
Institutional Overhead Levy	Years 1 and 2	15581
	Total	40138

It can be seen from the above that our current funds will soon be exhausted in the finalisation of expenditure for the national workshop and payment of the institutional overhead levy.

We would like this project report to be seen as the formal request for the release of the 2012 funds for the project and that this would be finalised as soon as possible.

## 2 Review of Progress

### 2.1 Major achievements against schedule/ project brief

The original markers of success for the Community of Practice Phase — Phase 3 were as follows:

- a. High levels of participation in synchronous and asynchronous activities
- b. Positive feedback as provided by a participant evaluation instrument completed at the end of the Phase, and any other sources
- c. The successful completion of the work of the two identified working parties (draft post-AQF 7 TLOs and a position paper on compliance for the consideration of the discipline) and any other working parties formed by the Group
- d. The completion by all participants of the survey and institutional reports
- e. Positive external review and successful address of any issues raised therein
- f. Completion of the interim report.

An evaluation of success against these markers observe the following:

- a. High levels of participation in synchronous and asynchronous activities

Achievements against this marker were reported in the Year 1 report. The Project's strong relationship with the Australian Historical Association continues. The consultation by the project leader with Monash University in February 2012 took place and secured very positive feedback. The Head of the History Department, Professor Alistair Thomson, emailed the project leader after the event and noted: "Sean, that was a terrific contribution today, many thanks. Several colleagues came up and said how useful it was to get the bigger picture, and I know my second hand version would have been very second best". The consultation has also prompted Dr Julie Kalman of Monash to seek to engage the Discipline Community in an OLT seed project application to build on the work of the After Standards project at Honours (AQF 8) and Postgraduate Coursework (AQF 9) levels. The After Standards project is assisting Dr Kalman and has arranged a session at the second National Workshop in July where the proposal will be work-shopped and greater engagement from the discipline community sought.

The planned consultation with the University of Newcastle mentioned in the Year 1 report did not take place.

The second National Workshop has been very much supported by the Australian Historical Association. The AHA agreed to fund the trip to Australia of one of the international speakers for

the Workshop, Professor Lendol Calder (Augustana College). The workshop is being hosted by the University of Adelaide (including a welcome reception hosted by the DVC at Adelaide and sessions are being filmed for further distribution by the Teaching and Learning unit at Adelaide).

The Project's efforts, through the appointment of the project leader to the Executive of the AHA, to greater harmonise work between the project and the Association and place teaching and learning on the national agenda of the discipline community has been well rewarded. The AHA annual conference which immediately follows the Workshop has set aside a plenary session on teaching and learning: "The Future of Teaching and Learning in History". Further, two panels on teaching and learning have been organized ("Teaching Australians at War" and "How best to Teach Australian History") and a session of individual papers is also being held. In all 18 academics will be talking about teaching and learning in history at the AHA. This is a significant uptake when it is recalled that as well as a briefing session by the After Standards project at the Launceston meeting in 2011 there were only two teaching and learning related papers delivered by two historians.

It is the case that a number of bilateral and multilateral relations between institutions provoked by the first National Workshop also continue. The most significant of these remains the collaborative working being undertaken by three regional universities (UNE, Southern Cross and Southern Queensland) which will include a workshop later in 2012.

The Year 1 Report noted that the Project's collaborative website only secured a tracking functionality in December 2011. Unfortunately this coincided with a period when the website is not playing a major role in the project. A snapshot of the analytics for the project are attached. As was the case last year it can be assumed that usage will increase in the wake of the second National Workshop.

b. Positive feedback as provided by a participant evaluation instrument completed at the end of the Phase, and any other sources

As noted in the Year 1 report a participant survey will be conducted after the completion of the second workshop in Adelaide in July.

c. The successful completion of the work of the two identified working parties (draft post-AQF 7 TLOs and a position paper on compliance for the consideration of the discipline) and any other working parties formed by the Group

As noted in the Year 1 report the Project delivered to the AHA a set of TLOs for AQF Level 8 in December and these were endorsed by the Executive. Further, a small amendment to the Level 7 TLOs, as a result of the work at Level 8, was endorsed. It had been expected that after community consultation the draft set of AQF 9 TLOs tabled in December would be placed before the Executive for endorsement at its March meeting. The feedback from the community, however, has raised a number of issues about standards at this level and especially the confusion that currently exists within the sector about the volume of learning requirement for AQF Level 9. Consequently, the finalization of standards at Level 9 has been postponed until the second half of 2012.

With regard to the accreditation trial it should be noted that the trial secured the support of the AHA at its Executive meeting at the University of Melbourne in March.

d. The completion by all participants of the survey and institutional reports

Five institutions will report on developments at their institutions at the July National Workshop. The institutional report idea, however, has been abandoned as it was based on sharing how institutions planned to respond to the new Teaching and Learning Standards environment.

e. Positive external review and successful address of any issues raised therein

As noted this review will take place after the National Workshop

f. Completion of the interim report.

As noted this work will take place after the National Workshop

## 2.2 Lessons learnt

- The project had been keen to understand developments at the secondary level, notably around the National Curriculum and so had invited the president of the National History Teachers Association to address the first workshop. The project's exposure through the Australian Historical Association executive where other non-university stake-holders hold membership, however, revealed a need from not only the History Teachers but the Association of Professional Historians of Australia to be more closely engaged with our efforts. The various state professional historians associations accredit individual historians, rather than program so their input was deemed important. Both these organisations are now briefed on the project through the AHA Executive and two delegates from the national executives of both organisations are attending the second national workshop.
- The feasibility trial threw up a number of issues, some very alarming. The project team was compelled to stop and pause and remind itself that that is what the nature of a feasibility trial is all about. An initial air of despondency from the trial was transformed when it was realised how much we had learned and how it could shape the next step. While it will be for the discipline community and the AHA executive to judge, the project team feel that the approach being finalised and which will be aired in Adelaide has much merit.

## 2.3 Challenges met

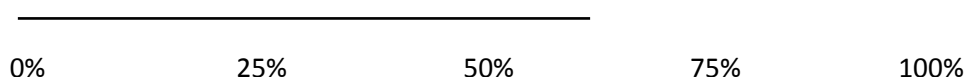
The challenge of the lack of clarity in the sector on the Learning and Teaching Standards environment remains the single-largest challenge the project has faced.

## 2.4 Indicate if and how these challenges will have an impact on the outcomes, the timeline or the budget?

Please specify.

The issues for outcomes and budget have been addressed elsewhere in the budget. Again the project would be interested in discussing possibilities regarding the extension of the timeline with the current funding.

2.5 In terms of the planned deliverables, what is your estimation of how far the project has progressed? Please indicate percentage below:



### 3 Formative Evaluation

3.1 What formative evaluation processes are being used?

No new evaluations have been completed for the project since the Year 1 report.

3.2 What have you learnt from these processes thus far?

### 4 Events

Provide details of events held during the period. Events include workshops, forums or colloquiums involving participants outside of the project team.


<b>Event Date</b>	<b>Event title, Location (city only)</b>	<b>Brief description of the purpose of the event</b>	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>Number of higher education institutions represented</b>	<b>Number of other institutions represented</b>
7-8 July	Adelaide	National Workshop	50	22	2

## 5 Certification

### *Certification by project leader*

I certify that this is an accurate representation of the progress of the project.

Project leader: SEAN BRAWLET

Signature:  Date: 18 JUNE 2012

### *Certification by DVC/PVC (Academic), or equivalent, or official delegate*

I acknowledge submission of the Progress Report.

Full name: .....

Position: .....

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**Please submit report via the Grants online portal:** <http://www.olt.gov.au/grants-and-projects/project-management>



**After Standards Workshop  
University of Adelaide  
8-9 July 2012**

**Sunday**

**8 July 2012**

**[All Sessions to be held in the Stretton Room (Room 420, Napier Building)]**

9 — 9.30am

Registration

9.30 — 10am

Welcome and introduction

10am — 11am

**Sector and International Developments Briefing**

Sean Brawley (UNSW)

Much is afoot and hopefully the briefing will bring you up to speed on recent developments.

11—11.30am

**Morning Tea**

11.30 — 12.30pm

**Institutional Reports**

Macquarie University,  
University of Newcastle,  
University of Sydney,  
University of New England

Each institution will provide a short ten minute briefing on recent developments.

12.30 — 1.30pm

**Lunch**

1.30 — 3.30pm

**Workshop 1: "Starting at the End: Disrupting the Rituals of the History Classroom"**

Leah Shopkow (Indiana University)

The final exercise of a history course is where we find out what our students have learned. Often, however, the students think we have offered them the same old questions and we think they have offered us the same old answers. The interchanges are highly ritualized and sometimes empty. What would it look like if we disrupted those rituals and instead if students produced work that clearly showed what they had learned? Participants are asked to bring an assortment of student work written at the end of one of their courses (five or six papers expressing the range of student performance), along with the assignment or examination itself. In the first part of this workshop, we will examine these to see what evidence of student learning they make visible and discuss what we might like students to show at the end of a course. In the second part of the workshop, I will

introduce some untraditional final exercises, and we will discuss them. Participants will then design their own final exercise or suggest alterations to their final exercise to enhance its ability to reveal student knowledge. In the third part of the workshop, after a brief introduction to the idea of backward design, participants will discuss how to organize their course so that students arrive at end able to show their knowledge in the project the participants have designed.

3.30 — 4pm

Afternoon Tea

4 — 5pm

**Workshop 2: Honours**

Julie Kalman (Monash)

Julie will present her plans for an OLT grant to examine Honours in History. We will workshop Julie's proposal and also examine ways your institution can become involved and we can give discipline community support to the proposal.

5 — 6pm

**Welcome Reception**

7 — 10pm

**Workshop Dinner — Lemongrass Thai Bistro, 289 Rundle Street (Rundle Mall)**

**Monday**

**9 July 2012**

**[Sessions to be held in Room 209, Napier Building (Breakout Room: 210, Napier Building)]**

9 — 10.30am

**Workshop 3: AHA Accreditation Trial**

Led by Jennifer Clark (UNE)

This workshop will report back on the accreditation trial involving UNSW, UNE and UQ. As well as discussing the structure of the proposed system and the success of the trial the workshop will provide delegates to engage in the self-evaluation phase of the system using the curriculum data for their major previously supplied to the project.

10.30-11am

**Morning tea**

11 — 12 pm

**Workshop 4: Talking about Teaching: Lessons from Being a History Teacher in Higher Education**

Alan and Jeanne Booth (University of Nottingham)

This workshop will report findings from the UK-based 'History Passion Project' which is investigating how historians represent the teaching of their subject in higher education, its benefits to students and what constitutes history teaching 'at its best'. The focus of this session will be upon the experience of being a history teacher and especially historians' reflections about those teachers who inspired them and the lessons they would wish to pass on to others. The workshop will have a practical focus and encourage participants to reflect on and share their own experiences as teachers of the subject.

12 — 1pm

Lunch

1pm — 3pm

**Workshop 5: Capstones**

Led by Lisa Ford (UNSW)

The accreditation trial raised the importance of Capstone courses as the place where standards should be tested. This workshop will discuss current practice in capstone courses and their usefulness in a standards environment.

3 — 4pm

**Workshop 6: The End of the History Survey Course**

Lendol Calder (Augustana College)

The title of the workshop refers both to the purpose of the introductory history course and to problems facing the course which portend its decline. In recent years, the "coverage model" for teaching introductory history courses has fallen under increasing criticism. To be sure, most history professors continue to teach introductory history courses as coverage-based "surveys," albeit usually as surveys that are enriched by primary sources and essay exams. But a number of factors suggest that alternatives to the coverage model will continue to gain ground. What are the leading alternatives to coverage? What goals, assessments, and activities might replace coverage-oriented surveys? What is the introductory, general education history course *for*? To prepare for the workshop, attendees will be asked to read Joel Sippess and David Voelker's chapter, "From Learning History to Doing History: Beyond the Coverage Model" in *Exploring Signature Pedagogies: Approaches to Teaching Disciplinary Habits of Mind* (2009).

4pm

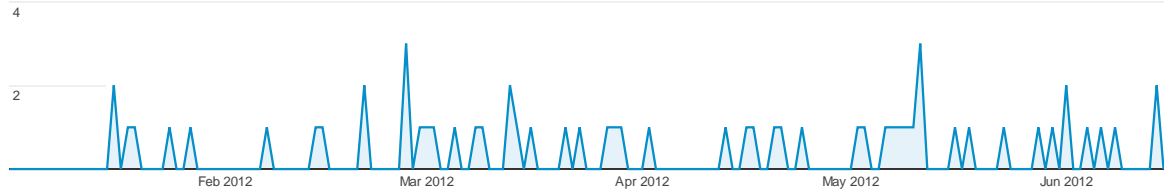
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