

Not for Publication

Grants Scheme

Progress Report - 20 June 2011

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

Lead institution: UNSW

Partner institution/s: UNE, UQ

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Please refer to the document [Project Management Information](#), available on the ALTC website, <http://www.altc.edu.au> for information on completing and submitting reports.

1. Progress against specified outcomes and deliverables

The Project has moved through its first two phases. Phase One was the Establishment Phase, the outcome for which was the successful Priority Project Application. Phase 2 was the Workshop Phase from December 2010 to April 2011. Included in this phase was the appointment of a part time Project Officer, Dr Stuart Upton.

The ultimate deliverable for Phase 2 was the successful completion of a three-day national workshop which was held at the University of New South Wales from 27-29 April 2011. The ultimate aim of the workshop was to engage the History discipline community in the project and establish working parties from within the community to continue the project's work into the next Phase. The success indicators for this phase suggest the Workshop was successful in achieving these goals. The markers of success for Phase 2 were as follows:

- a. A high participation rate from the relevant institutions (over 75%)
- b. The establishment of the Community of Practice
- c. Positive feedback as provided by a participant evaluation instrument completed at the end of the workshop and any other sources
- d. The establishment of the two working parties e. Establishment of T&L research collaborations between nominees & the international guests.

With regard to these markers we achieved the following:

1. The national workshop attracted 61 delegates from 25 institutions. This met our success marker of attendance by more than 75% of institutions with a history major. Four institutions were not represented due to them not sharing the common mid-semester break and not having sufficient staff to cover an absence. One institution was not represented due to illness, another due to family issues. We had sought to have nine international delegates but were unable to secure representation from the European Tuning Project. The Project Leader however did meet the History coordinator for the Project and filmed an interview which will be used as a resource for the project.
2. The national workshop did secure positive feedback. In the evaluation of the Workshop 89% of attendees found it to be "Very Useful" while 11% saw it as "Somewhat Useful".

Comments included:

Particularly useful to talk to colleagues from across Australian institutions about these common issues. Fab international guests with great attitudes. Great management, Sean.

Thank you for organising this event, which was the first opportunity I've had, in a 15-year academic career, to discuss in a formal setting such an essential element of my own working life. It should become a more frequent occurrence, for both ourselves and for the benefit of the students we teach.

I have to admit I was sceptical about how useful or productive this conf was going to be, but I was totally wrong - it was extremely productive and exciting - the beginning of what is hopefully a much longer and more involved conversation.

The evaluation data is now posted on the Project website.

In the wake of the conference the project leader also received a number of positive emails, including some from the International Guests who helped facilitate the Workshop:

I did not know what to expect but its easy to say the conference exceeded all expectations. Thank you for taking such good care of us ... I hope people will let you know what the conference meant to them. It's an incredible effort you put out and, apart from standards (who knows where that is going) there seemed to be a lot of learning going on. And the new friendships and connections are invaluable.

Since the Workshop the project team has been invited to follow up the achievements made in April through visits to three institutions (in NSW, ACT and Queensland). Further, to these markers of success, the networking opportunities provided by the workshops provided some practical take-aways for delegates in addition to what we had hoped to achieve.

The Reference Group has been kept up to date on developments and materials were distributed to members for advice and confirmation during the Phase. All Reference Group members were invited to attend the National Workshop where a face-to-face meeting was scheduled but unfortunately none of the Group were able to attend with four of the group overseas or otherwise engaged. The project leaders conducted one-on-one meetings with four of the reference groups members during this period.

3. The two working parties on AQF 8 and 9 and Compliance were formed from nominations by delegates led by a member of the project team. The AQF group and the Compliance group have already completed draft documents for the consideration of the discipline community. The Compliance group prepared a list of "Interim Recommendations" for the Discipline Community that called for the Australian Historical Association to take a Leadership Role in Standards Verification for History. The AQF working party has provided two options for AQF Level 8 standards that are currently being discussed within the discipline community. From the floor of the workshop the delegates called for a third working party on the impact of Cluster Funding/Field of Education coding on Teaching and Learning in History. This working party is chaired by a member of the discipline community who is not a member of the project team and aims to present the community with a discussion paper later in the year.

4. The international guests pitched during the workshop for Australian collaboration on a number of research projects. I have been informed by the international guests that a number of conversations have begun and that these will hopefully lead to research collaborations.

The next Phase — Phase 3

Despite the fact the Project is in the early stages of Phase 3, the momentum generated is already producing results. The collaborative website (www.afterstandards.org) is operational. The working parties are progressing and already producing material for discussion by the community.

2. Review of Progress

2.1 Major achievements against schedule/ project brief

As noted, the project has enjoyed great success during this Phase. The National Workshop has created the desired momentum to continue the work of the project across the discipline community.

The traction the project has secured in the Discipline Community has been strong. The engagement of the Australian Historical Association with the project and its aims has been excellent and provides great hopes for the AHA taking a leadership role in this area which will sustain the work of the project beyond 2012.

2.2 Lessons learnt

- (i) Our budgeting was inadequate in some areas. See 2.4
- (ii) We needed to make our deadlines for information from the community firmer but at the same time appreciate that some of our information requests were difficult for busy colleagues to deliver in a timely fashion.
- (iii) Find alternative methods of providing foundational information that maintains opportunities for practical work in workshops

2.3 Challenges met

The organisation of a workshop involving representation by all the institutional stakeholders (minus four) and eight international guests was the major challenge of this Phase. That it was achieved so successfully is a strong endorsement of the project team and the willingness of the discipline community to engage in collegial undertakings.

The project has unquestionably been hampered by the demise of the ALTC and the continuing wait for the establishment of TEQSA. When conceived the project had assumed that it would be responding to concrete plans for a national academic standards compliance and audit regime when the project was first conceived. The failure of government to deliver on TEQSA's creation and the doubts raised about the LTAS Academic Standards project by Denise Bradley in the Australian in the weeks leading up to the national workshop were unhelpful. It is the opinion of the project that in at least one case an institution backed out of sending a delegate to the conference because of assumptions they had made in the light of the ALTC's demise and the public discussion of the LTAS project in the Australian. As a consequence we tried to turn these challenges into positives by exploring ways in which the discipline could get "in front of the game" and by showing how a number of approaches to best practice in curriculum design and in quality in teaching and learning would leave colleagues well prepared to meet whatever challenges arose. For example the workshop spent time on curriculum mapping which will be of significant relevance for colleagues regardless of what form an academic standards environment might take.

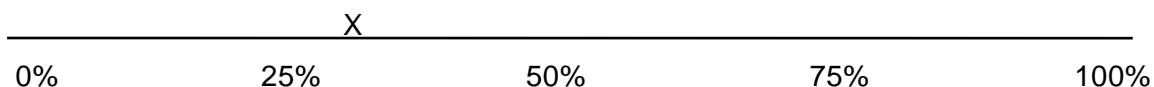
2.4 Indicate if and how these challenges will impact on the outcomes, the timeline or the budget? Please specify.

The challenges identified may impact on the Project outcomes but at this stage we remain hopeful that this will not be the case and that the strong community of practice being developed will give the discipline community the ability and flexibility to deal with the new environment when TEQSA's approach on academic standards is announced.

There are currently no challenges to the Timeline. Indeed the work of the Working Parties formed by the National Workshop are ahead of schedule and will allow the project to share drafts of these parties work with the Discipline Community at the AHA meeting in Launceston in July.

The project does have a budget challenge. The level of engagement from across the discipline community has provided far more work than anticipated for the Project Officer. Further, the time constraints facing individual colleagues and departments amongst the delegates participating in the project has meant that the project has had to take back some work it had been expected individuals/institutions would complete. Further, the budget incorrectly stated the actual cost of teaching relief outlined. Consequently we sought to make a number of cost savings around the national workshop. These savings were substantial (and some cases unforeseen – eg price reductions in international travel) and will be used to boost the hours of the project officer and the teaching relief for Project Team members.

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?

Delegates completed feedback forms for each workshop they attended and then an overall evaluation of the three days.

3.2 What have you learnt from these processes thus far?

The Workshop evaluations reinforced what we had concluded were the strengths and weaknesses of the Workshop. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The biggest issue was that the level of background knowledge held by the applicants around the central themes of the Workshop was found to be very much lacking and so more time than anticipated had to be spent in bringing delegates up to speed on issues and developments. The practical hands-on elements of the workshop were reduced as a consequence and colleagues expressed some disappointment that they were unable to spend more time exploring the practical components. We are attempting to explore how we can use the project worksite to provide more of these types of opportunities.

4. Events

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

Date/s of the event	Event title, Location (city only)	Brief description of the purpose of the event	Number of participants	Number of Higher Education institutions represented	Number of other institutions represented
27-29 April	After Standards National Workshop , Sydney	To provide a face-to-face gathering that would provide the crucial organising opportunity for the project and engage the discipline community	61	25	2

Provide details of events planned over the next six months. If you would like to publicise forthcoming events on the ALTC website please go to <http://www.altc.edu.au/submit-event>

There are a number of events in which the project is involved over the next six months:

1. The project team is conducting a Plenary Session at the Australian Historical Association Conference in Launceston in July
2. The project team is briefing the Heads of History at their annual meeting in Launceston in July
3. The project leader is briefing the Executive of the AHA at their meeting in Launceston in July
4. The project has had a paper accepted for presentation at the ISSOTL Conference in Milwaukee in October 2011.

5. Certification

Certification by Project Leader

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

Project Leader:

Signature: Date:

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

I acknowledge submission of the Progress Report

Full name :

Position:

Signature: Date:

Please send report via email: projects@altc.edu.au