






## International Trends

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK), 2002  
 Spellings Inquiry (USA), 2006

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2005  
 Bologna Declaration and Process, 2007

OECD – Assessing Higher Education Learning Outcomes Project (AHELO), 2009

Rise in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) est  
 ISSOTL, 2004



## Hargreaves and Christou


Course/unit accreditation

Self-regulatory

Implicit

Absence of focus on the discipline (subject)

Janet Hargreaves and Alexa Christou, “An Institutional Perspective on QAA Subject Benchmarking”, *Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, 10(3), 2002, pp187-191



Bradley

*Main Methods for Measuring Quality in Teaching and Learning*

“Fitness for Purpose”  
“Excellence and Standards”




Bradley

“Fitness for Purpose”

Specific to Institutions

Statements about quality of teaching  
focussed at the degree/program level




Bradley

“Excellence and Standards”

Beyond the institution

Can focus on the discipline/subject where the learning is taking place

Advocated “subject benchmarking”, “course-specific statements”



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“...reflecting the judgement of those who are expert in it”





## Recommendation 23, Bradley Review

That the Australian Government commission and appropriately fund work on the development of new quality assurance arrangements for higher education as part of the new framework set out in Recommendation 19. This would involve:

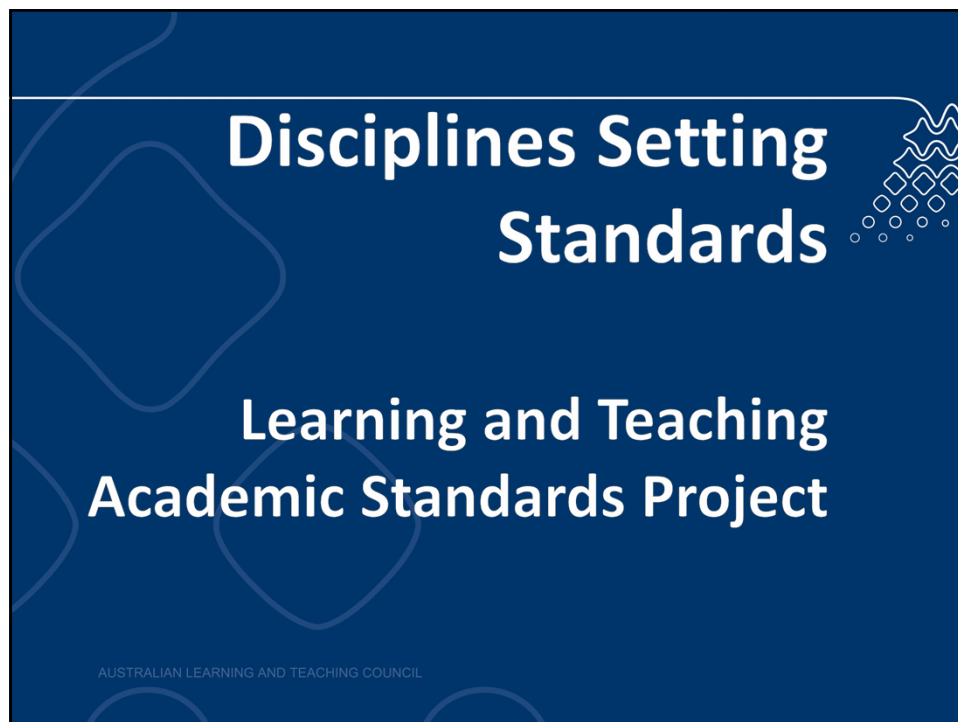
- a set of indicators and instruments to directly assess and compare learning outcomes; and
- a set of formal statements of academic standards by discipline along with processes for applying those standards.

*Bradley Review of Higher Education (p. 137)*

## New Regulatory Framework

### Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA)

Provider standards	Qualification standards	Learning and teaching standards	Research standards	Information standards
National protocols and ESOS Act	Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)	Threshold learning outcomes	Excellence in Research in Australia (ERA)	For the market and regulators



**Disciplines Setting Standards**

**Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project**

AUSTRALIAN LEARNING AND TEACHING COUNCIL

The slide features a dark blue background with white text. The title 'Disciplines Setting Standards' is at the top, followed by the subtitle 'Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project'. At the bottom, the text 'AUSTRALIAN LEARNING AND TEACHING COUNCIL' is visible. There are decorative white lines and a pattern of small circles on the right side.



*After standards*  
The Future of History

**Purpose of the LTAS project.**

*The objectives of the project:*

1. Engage discipline communities and institutions
2. Define the appropriate level of detail and specific criteria
3. Articulate the relationships between program/degree level threshold learning outcomes and existing professional or academic accreditation

The slide has a light blue background with a dark blue header. The header contains the text 'After standards' in a stylized font and 'The Future of History' below it. The main title 'Purpose of the LTAS project.' is in a large, bold, blue font. Below it, the text 'The objectives of the project:' is in a smaller, italicized font. A list of three objectives follows, each starting with a number. The slide is framed by a thin black border.

4. Achieve national agreement on a set of threshold learning outcomes
5. Create a bank of peer-reviewed resources ... [for] developing processes further.
6. Produce a final report comprising six discipline components and a summary report of 'lessons learned' for future implementation.

A working definition of 'academic standards' :

Academic standards are learning outcomes described in terms of discipline-specific knowledge, skills and capabilities expressed as threshold learning outcomes that a graduate of any given discipline (or program) must have achieved.

Disciplines, not institutions, 'own' and define the core (or threshold) attributes of their discipline.

# Alignment

Australian Qualifications Framework  
 National Curriculum  
 European Tuning  
 Latin American Tuning  
 United Kingdom QAA Benchmark Statements  
 Dublin Descriptors

# Threshold Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of a Bachelor degree with a major in **History**, graduates will be able to:

## **Knowledge**

1. Demonstrate an understanding of at least one period or culture of the past.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of conceptual approaches to interpreting the past.
3. Show how History and historians shape the present and the future.

## **Research**

4. Identify and interpret a wide variety of secondary and primary materials.
5. Examine historical issues by undertaking research according to the methodological and ethical conventions of the discipline.

## **Analysis**

6. Analyse historical evidence, scholarship and changing representations of the past.

## **Communication**

7. Construct an evidence-based argument or narrative in audio, digital, oral, visual or written form.

## **Reflection**

8. Identify and reflect critically on the knowledge and skills developed in their study of History.





## What next?

How might discipline-based TLOs be best used?

Quality improvement within institutions  
Internal Audit, Curriculum and Assessment Renewal

Cross-institutional comparisons/benchmarking  
Moderation exercises  
Group of 8 Quality Verification System Trial

As a component of external quality assurance (TEQSA)

“ALTC standard high on aspiration but lacks objectives”, *Australian*, 6 April 2010

“Pilot standard grounded”,  
*Australian*, 13 April 2011

## ALTC Report

In sum, this project **has succeeded beyond expectations** in the level of engagement of the discipline communities that has been achieved. It has **earned acceptance** both as a successful project and for the new quality assurance framework.

It has **credibility, high national visibility** and an extraordinary level of active **stakeholder involvement** at a senior level. This success, however, carries a risk.

**Failure of the new quality assurance framework to follow through on the commitment made by the professional and academic bodies and peak industry groups will create a credibility gap. At risk is the loss of goodwill from major stakeholders which will be essential to their future involvement.**

*After*  
standards  
The Future of History

The image shows the cover of a book titled 'After Standards: The Future of History'. The word 'After' is written in a large, elegant, black script font. Below it, the word 'standards' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, set against a dark blue rectangular background. At the bottom, the subtitle 'The Future of History' is written in a smaller, black sans-serif font.

## The Project

- Discipline must be engaged in formulation and compliance
- Require a community of practice to achieve (Wenger, 2007)
- Opportunity to engage discipline in T&L (Pecorino and Kincaid, 2007, Booth and Hyland 2005)  
Pace (2004): ‘... haphazardly shared folk wisdom ... totally ignorant of the pedagogical discoveries of colleagues teaching in the next classroom’

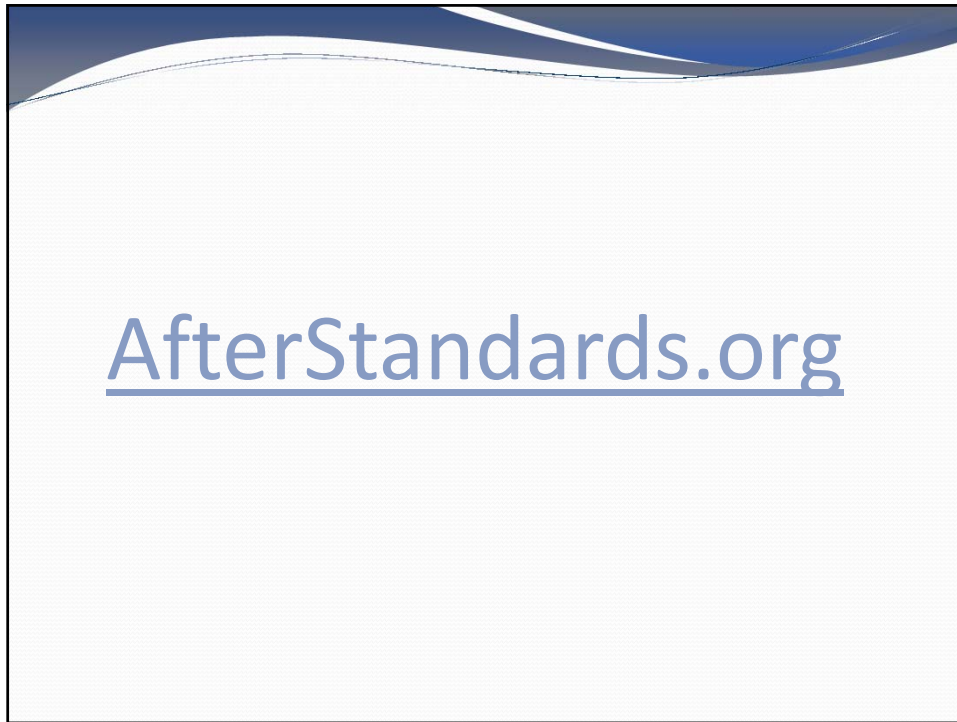
## The Project

- Seek international best practice within the discipline community (Curro and McTaggart, 2003)
- Support: UKHEA History Subject Centre and HISTSOTL
- Discipline audit (Yorke, 1999)
  - National Workshop to drive the process










Evaluation	Comments
Very useful	Excellent - being able to discuss and meet with various colleagues - learnt new things. Excellent overseas speakers.
Very useful	A very worthwhile event. I found a group of passionate professionals and a range of great ideas applicable to every dimension of my wife [sic] - curricular, pedagogic, administrative. I loved the way UNSW shared so fully their single instance of failure. The conference itself was a singular success.
Very useful	Congratulations to all those who put this together.
Very useful	Wandered a bit but useful wrap-up.
Very useful	Much fascinating and stimulating material. The sessions were excellent and all presenters were engaging. I have gained many new ideas that I will try and implement in my teaching. It was also great to have the opportunity to hear what many other historians were/are doing/thinking and working on.
Very useful	Not enough time on many sessions. Wanted to hear more about specific practices of our international colleagues. David pace session best because specific. Wanted UK historians to set out more on UK standards experience.
Very useful	It seems clear solutions to the funding squeeze must be political as well as technical/strategic.
Very useful	I really appreciate the well prepared and on-task presenters. Truly inspiring to spend time with colleagues talking about teaching. I also appreciated the generally optimistic view that participants took - much more productive than gloom and doom and blaming govt.
Very useful	Particularly useful to talk to colleagues from across Australian institutions about these common issues. Fab international guests with great attitudes. Great management, Sean.
Very useful	Very useful to meet with others and to discover what is happening. A feeling that we will be able to respond more positively to the difficult times that are here.
Somewhat useful	A well focused conference, discussing important issues. Unfortunately, I could not attend for all sessions. This is due to pressure of work - which is another leading issue in the lives of historians in Australian Universities.
Very useful	The overall standard of the workshop was excellent. There was a great deal to spur thinking about individual practice and corporate practice. Thanks very much.
Very useful	All of the speakers were excellent. Lunches disappointing. Accommodation disgraceful!
Very useful	Main benefit - starting to talk about how to present a united front as a discipline! We need to keep organised! Overseas speakers were mostly entertaining and interesting.
Very useful	It was very useful - an annual/biannual gathering like this would be incredibly useful.
Somewhat useful	I found the workshops on day 2 very useful. However, I found that the discussions and presentations on days 1 and 3 were very disjointed [unclear] and of very limited use. It would have been better to run the workshops on both days (so that everyone could attend all of them) and then have a smaller discussion of issues until the issues themselves were more clearly defined.
Very useful	Excellent opportunity to reflect on the place of standards in our profession, on our own teaching practice and some state-of-the-art "best practice" on teaching history. I particularly appreciated the input of the international guests, on so many levels.
Very useful	Broad ranging dialogue with historians on teaching and learning was a real pleasure. Also great to continue to engage with national and international perspectives. Best - addressing political and advocacy contexts for change.
Very useful	Excellent mix of practical ideas, debate and strategy-making.
Very useful	Fantastic conference. This has certainly provided me with great ideas about ways to better teach our students and closely consider their learning. As an academic feeling [unclear] tenure, I do find it hard to fully implement this when I am under pressure to research and publish. Great workshop.
Somewhat useful	As is inevitable, the workshop was uneven. It would have helped to have the standards in front of us - but the lack of involvement of many in developing these standards made them a problematic focus. The opportunity to talk about T&L with such a diverse group was excellent but I would have liked more systematic info on what everyone does in their teaching.
Very useful	Mills was fascinating - a rather switched-on character. The session concerning academic-admin interplay was particularly worthwhile. Sean's final-day talk regarding the gateway course was quite sobering.
Somewhat useful	I think this was a useful meeting and good to meet so many colleagues in the context of teaching and learning - which we do spend most of our time on, despite our love of and dedication to research. I do think that the workshop sessions could have been more interactive - ie general discussions among the whole group. The presenters could have distilled the essence of their presentations more efficiently to allow more discussion of the ideas they were offering in the varied contexts from which participants came.
Very useful	Great. One focus to ensure doesn't get lost would be to ensure that practical applications get brainstormed - collected - and housed for ongoing reference. Cheers.
Very useful	Great couple of days. Inspiring and provocative. I hope that I can maintain the momentum (and the exchanges and network born from this) when I'm back at my campus.
Very useful	This was an extremely useful conference. It provided a rare opportunity to combine discussions of our 'big picture' issues that affect our profession with detailed issues of teaching standards and innovation. It was also extremely valuable to meet and discuss these issues with colleagues from the vast majority of Australian universities.
Very useful	It was great to gather together and discuss these vital matters. I gained a whole lot of knowledge from macro to micro: from policy to the classroom. The international guests were uniformly wonderful and informative. Many thanks for inviting them. I did wonder what happened to the survey data. Will it be collated and fed back on the website. I will definitely take my record of this rich gathering back to my colleagues. Congratulations to the organisers.
Very useful	I only attended the Friday sessions. Even within these few, there was a diversity of topics and approaches, with many of the issues raised holding a great deal of resonance for me. I feel inspired to take these ideas back to my own teaching and my discipline and to follow up on the opportunities for collaboration.
Very useful	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.
Very useful	Excellent.
Very useful	Would be great to have something like this every year and if more people could attend (would have loved for more of my colleagues to hear this). One suggestion - it has been very hard to get away during term time - would be better if future workshops could be scheduled in between semesters rather than in term time.
Very useful	We'll feed back to our history dept; a) on the standards issue; b) lots of great teaching and learning hints. And both will help us individually (in our teaching) and collectively (in continuing to develop our curriculum). Thanks.

## Feedback

- *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*

## Deliverables, Phases 1 & 2

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



1. Compliance Working Party

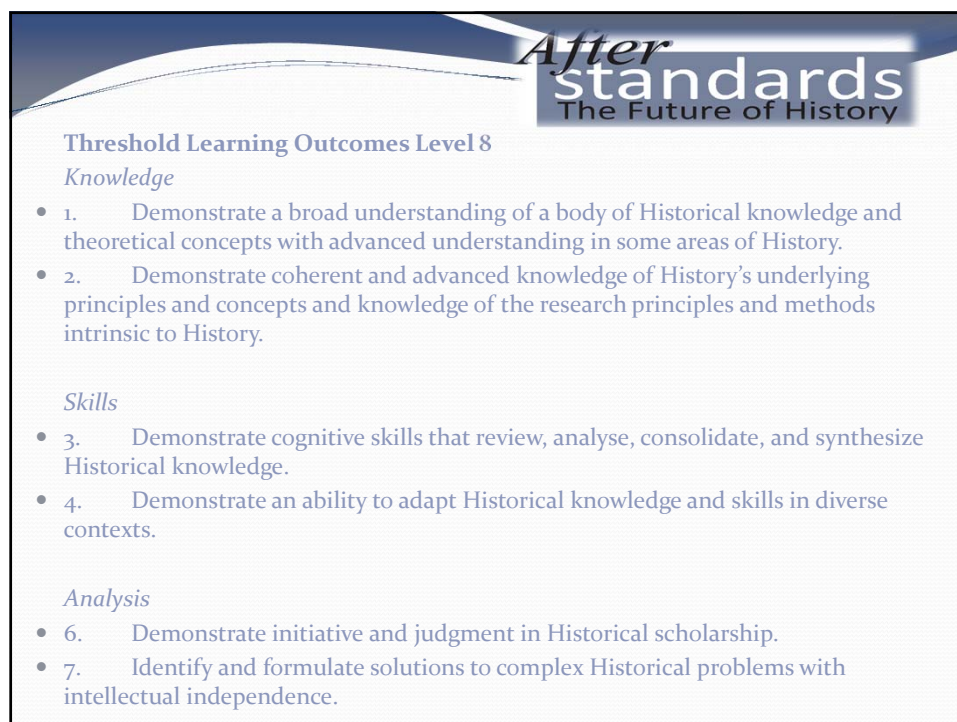
2. AQF 8/9 Working Party

3. Fields of Education/Cluster Funding Working Party

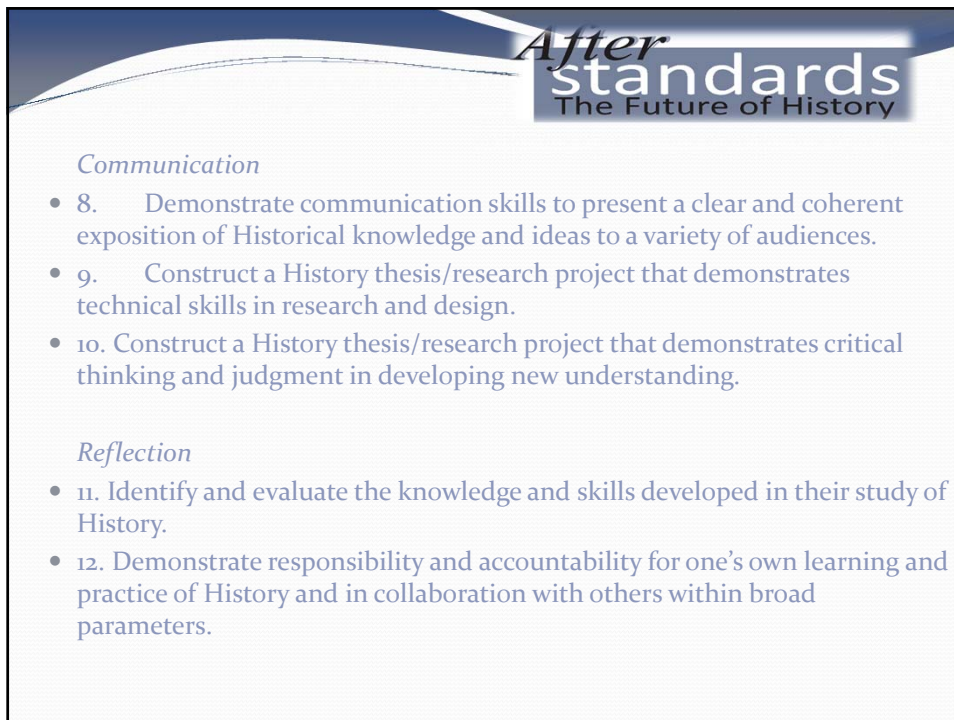
## Unplanned consequences

- New T&L position on the Executive of the Australian Historical Association
- Initial discussions with the Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations
- Greater bilateral interaction on teaching and learning matters between History Departments









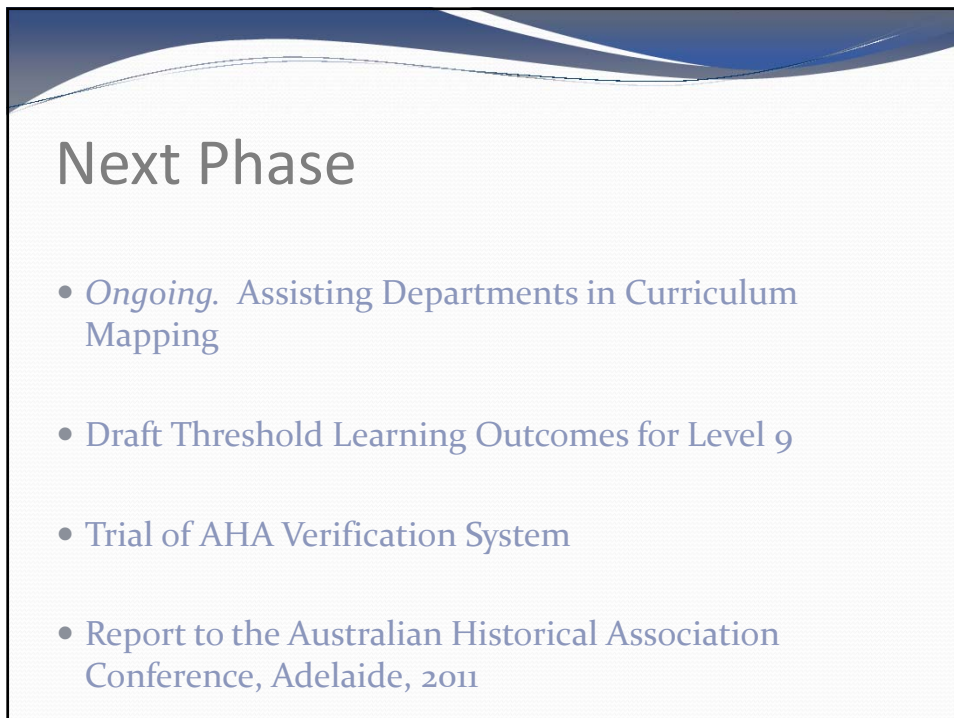
*After standards*  
The Future of History

*Communication*

- 8. Demonstrate communication skills to present a clear and coherent exposition of Historical knowledge and ideas to a variety of audiences.
- 9. Construct a History thesis/research project that demonstrates technical skills in research and design.
- 10. Construct a History thesis/research project that demonstrates critical thinking and judgment in developing new understanding.

*Reflection*

- 11. Identify and evaluate the knowledge and skills developed in their study of History.
- 12. Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for one's own learning and practice of History and in collaboration with others within broad parameters.



## Next Phase

- *Ongoing.* Assisting Departments in Curriculum Mapping
- Draft Threshold Learning Outcomes for Level 9
- Trial of AHA Verification System
- Report to the Australian Historical Association Conference, Adelaide, 2011