

*After*  
**standards**  
The Future of History

**Session 1**  
Introduction,  
History's Standards and  
the Landscape

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**Delegates**

ACU	La Trobe	Sydney
Adelaide	Macquarie	UNE
ADFA	Melbourne	UNSW
Avondale	Monash	Wollongong
CQU	Murdoch	USQ
CSU	Newcastle	UWA
Deakin	Notre Dame	UWS
ECU	Queensland	Victoria
Griffith	Southern Cross	

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**Apologies**

Flinders  
James Cook  
Tasmania  
Marilyn Lake (President – AHA)

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**Speed Networking**  
**15 Minutes**

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**Regarding your attendance ...**

1. I was ready willing and able to attend
2. I was dragooned! Why am I here?
3. A little from Option 1 and little from Option 2

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How well do you understand the *Quality Assurance* landscape in the Australian Tertiary Education Sector?

1. I have a deep understanding
2. I have a limited understanding
3. I have no understanding

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### The 'Education Revolution', Quality and Reform in Higher Education

Australian Universities Quality Assurance Agency (AUQA) Reviews, 2003

Australian Government, *Review of Higher Education* (Bradley Report), 2008

AUQA, *Setting and Monitoring Academic Standards for Higher Education*, 2009

Australian Government, *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System*, 2009

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### 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

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### Hargreaves and Christou

Course 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

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### Bradley

*Main Methods for Measuring Quality in Teaching and Learning*

**"Fitness for Purpose"**  
**"Excellence and Standards"**

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### Bradley

"Fitness for Purpose"

Specific to Institutions

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

Utilitarian – what you do with the degree

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### 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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**Bradley**

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

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**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

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**Disciplines Setting Standards**

**Learning and Teaching Academic Standards Project**

AUSTRALIAN LEARNING AND TEACHING COUNCIL

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**ALTC Discipline Scholar: Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities**

**Professor Iain Hay — Flinders**

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**Purpose of the LTAS project.**

*The objectives of the project:*

1. Engage discipline communities and institutions in the standards-setting agenda
2. Define the appropriate level of detail and specific criteria for program/degree learning outcomes on a discipline-by-discipline basis
3. Articulate the relationships between program/degree level threshold learning outcomes and existing professional or academic accreditation standards and express that relationship in an academic standards framework

4. Achieve national agreement on a set of threshold learning outcomes for the disciplines
5. Create a bank of peer-reviewed resources (for inclusion in a repository) for reference by both TESQA and institutions in developing their 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.

### History Discipline Reference

Chair	Prof Iain Hay	ALTC/Flinders
President (or nominee), peak discipline body	Prof Marnie Hughes-Warrington	Monash
DASSH nominee	A/Prof Deborah Gare	UND (Fremantle)
Discipline expert	Prof Stuart Macintyre	Melbourne
Discipline expert	A/Prof Adrian Jones	La Trobe
Discipline expert	A/Prof Sean Brawley	UNSW
Recent graduate	Louise Douglas	National Museum
Discipline expert - jurisdiction outside Australia	Prof Alan Booth	Nottingham
Relevant employer representative	Helen Withnell	Australian War Memorial

- ### Were you supportive of the Standards process?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Indifferent
  4. Was not aware of it


### 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:
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.
  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.
  6. Analyse historical evidence, scholarship and changing representations of the past.
  7. Construct an evidence-based argument or narrative in audio, digital, oral, visual or written form.
  8. Identify and reflect critically on the knowledge and skills developed in their study of History.

Are you happy with the final TLOs for History?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Ambivalent/Undecided



### 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 Accreditation System Trial

As a component of external quality assurance (TEQSA)

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

**“THE AUSTRALIAN LEARNING AND TEACHING COUNCIL’S ACADEMIC STANDARDS PROJECT HAS NOT LIVED UP TO ITS NAME, PRODUCING ASPIRATIONAL STATEMENTS TOO BROAD TO SERVE AS TRUE STANDARDS, ACCORDING TO HIGHER EDUCATION COMMENTATOR RICHARD JAMES.”**

**“RICHARD HENRY, WHO CHAIRS THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLORS (ACADEMIC) GROUP FOR UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA, SAID HE BELIEVED TEQSA WOULD NOT ADOPT THE ALTC LEARNING OUTCOMES. HE ALSO DOUBTED THE ALTC PROJECT WOULD BE ROLLED OUT ACROSS ALL DISCIPLINES.”**

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

“The new Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency is unlikely to adopt a contentious pilot project on academic standards”

“Professor Bradley said while the agency was evaluating the ALTC results, she suspected they lacked the rigor to be applied across the sector”

“My view is that the process has been very useful for a start but that we will need more focussed outcome statements”

TEQSA Standards Discussion Paper next month

“We are trying to come to grips with some very difficult concepts and trying to suggest approaches which will lead to the possibility of making judgements about the appropriateness of learning outcomes ... We are trying to avoid approaches which will constrain innovation and diversity”

### 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.

