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## Workshop A2: Progression

Session 4: Designing the past

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## UK History benchmarking

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### UK History benchmarking: progression (1)

- Departments should show how their programmes are designed to provide students with the means to gain in insight, competence and performance over 3/4 years.

*Issue: Do we consider value added to and from undergraduate programmes as well, perhaps, as starting planning from the post-graduate level?*

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### UK History benchmarking: progression (2)

- Some programmes may give students 9 terms or 6 semesters of doing the same kind of thing with a variety of subject matter but with growing competence.

*Issue: We need to decide what things to include and on the notion of growing competence.*

- Others may attach particular skills and attributes to particular courses and describe how students shall move through them.

*Issue: These really need articulating in relation to course units.*

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### UK History benchmarking: progression (3)

- There is no fixed order of progression from one type of course [unit] to another. In principle, there is no reason why survey courses should be more strongly represented in Year 1.

*Issue: Invites questioning of a popular approach.*

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## Teaching history research at Berkeley

### Teaching history research at Berkeley (1)

#### **The Practice of History (Lower division elective unit)**

*Its objectives are to help students understand:*

- what constitutes primary source evidence
- where evidence can be located and how it is validated
- how evidence is placed into context, what questions can be asked of it, and what interpretations are possible as a result of such interrogation
- how master historians have used evidence and written.

The unit is also designed to help students develop formal citation skills and understand established protocols for academic honesty.

### Teaching history research at Berkeley (2)

#### **History proseminars (A suite of upper division course units)**

- Organized around themes, times and places - major history students must take one.
- They seek to develop the historiographical or methodological skills necessary to complete the required senior thesis.
- Students may be required to use primary material in the assessed coursework they prepare.

### Teaching history research at Berkeley (3)

#### **History Research seminars (Capstone, upper division units)**

- Also organized around themes, times and places and history majors must take one.
- Working independently, students undertake an original research project (30-40 pages) using primary sources and placing their findings in historiographical context.

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## Indiana skills progression

### Indiana progression in skills

*Key skills that history undergraduates need to acquire as they move through their programmes of study relate to:*

- Assignments/evaluation
- Nature of historical discipline & analysis
- Dealing with evidence: primary sources
- Dealing with evidence: secondary sources
- Dealing with evidence: textbooks
- Argumentation
- Research
- Writing for History

### Indiana argumentation 100-level

*Expected thinking:*

- *Students will be* expected to recognize broad arguments about historical change based on and supported by course materials.

*Bottlenecks & difficulties:*

- Uncertainty of what a historical argument really is and what historians mean by evidence and examples to support a claim.

### Indiana argumentation 200-level

*Expected thinking:*

- Students should be able to produce arguments based on primary and secondary documents.
- Students will recognize the different elements behind the construction of historical explanations/conceptual frameworks/interpretations/arguments.
- Evaluate which argument is a more plausible one.

*Bottlenecks & difficulties*

- Not knowing what information to extract from primary and secondary sources.
- Recognizing what they could and could not argue according to the available evidence.

### Indiana argumentation 300-level

*Expected thinking:*

- Produce explanations based on evidence to address historical problems
- Imagine counter-arguments.
- Develop their own voice when constructing arguments

*Bottlenecks & difficulties*

- Thinking there is one "correct" answer to the historical problem studied.
- Not having the confidence to recognize what they could and could not argue themselves according to the available evidence.
- Trying to accommodate different views in constructing an argument, even if they are contradictory or do not fit together.
- Finding their position amidst possible arguments.

### Indiana argumentation 400-level

*Expected thinking:*

- Develop an argument based on original research

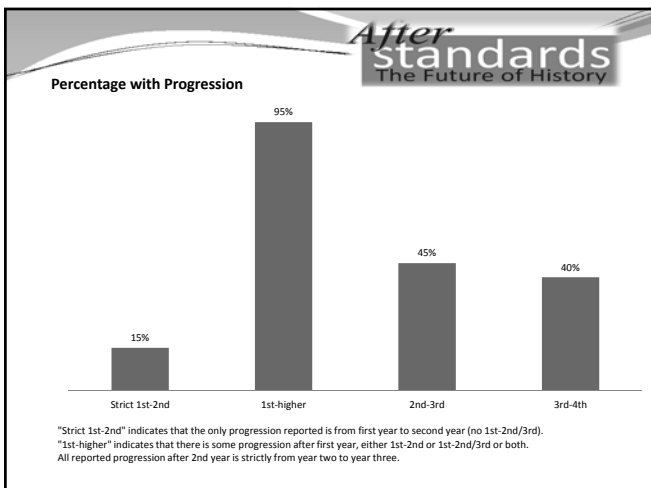
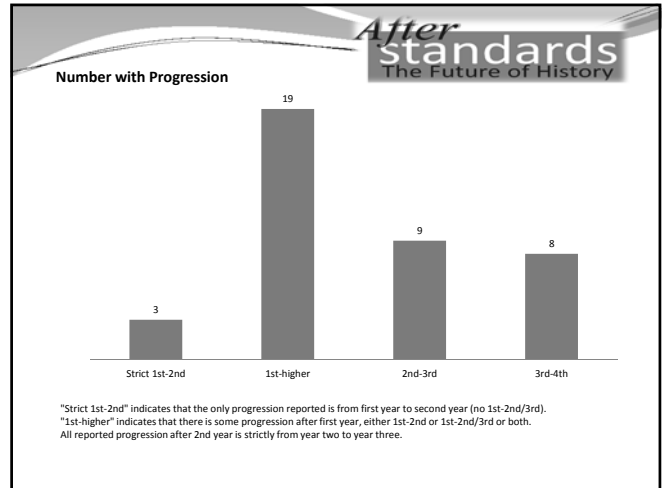
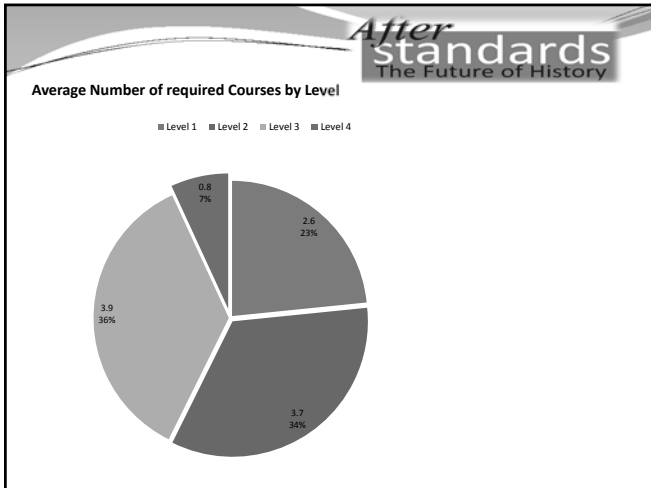
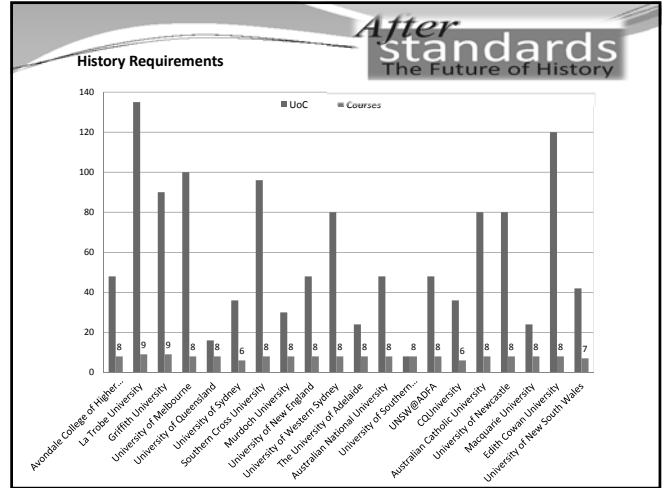
*Bottlenecks & difficulties*

- Thinking that their role is to collect information, not to necessarily provide an argument for the historical problem studied.
- Reflecting and evaluating their arguments in the light of other possible arguments.
- Evaluating their work.

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## Questionnaire results

Progression in Australian History programs



### Discussion

- How would you characterise progression at your institution?
- What is progression based on (skills, content, etc.)?
- How does progression at your institution compare with the examples?
- What are the strengths / drawbacks of the examples given?
- What are the strengths / drawbacks of the approach at your institution?

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## General issues

### General issues arising (1)

- The linked concept of differentiation is useful. In this context, it concerns the differences in terms of academic challenge that are incorporated from level to level within programmes, both with regard to the type of demands they make on students and the degree of change they bring

### General issues arising (2)

- For whom should progression statements be formulated?
- QA processes to demonstrate how value is added and to what extent.
- Teaching teams with regard to achieving reasonable consistency of practice.
- Students and prospective students so they know what is expected of them.

### General issues arising (3)

- To what learning and teaching dimensions should the notion of progression apply?
- Can include the other main components of UK history benchmarking:
  - - *Content* (eg. from breadth to depth)
  - - *Teaching & learning* (eg. towards greater independence)
  - - *Assessment & learning* (eg. from examinations to coursework)
  - - *Skills* (eg. From extracting evidence from primary sources to critically evaluating its use)