Recognising and rewarding teaching: Australian teaching criteria and standards and expert peer review

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Rewarding and recognising teaching

Context and Impetus

“supporting staff by rewarding and recognising teaching activities is **central** to obtaining an **excellent student experience**” (Cashmore et al, 2013, p 5)

Progress on development of teaching criteria and ways in which they are measured and presented **BUT**

- limited embedding in systems and policies
- substantial variation in different types of universities and within the disciplinary communities

Increasing numbers of ‘teaching focused’ academic appointments (eg 125% increase in Australia)

Not being reflected in promotions outcomes, particularly at the higher levels, contributing to persistent scepticism from staff
Senior National Teaching Fellowship program (2015-16)

Recognising and rewarding teaching: Australian teaching criteria and standards and expert peer review
Three complementary areas of activity under the unifying theme of rewarding and recognising excellent teaching.
1. Extend and embed the outcomes of the Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS) project [http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/](http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/)
   1. Universities
   2. Higher Education Private Providers
   3. VET

2. Investigate the feasibility of a sector-developed and endorsed Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTTS). This will provide an external standard against which individuals and institutions can benchmark teacher quality.

3. Investigate and trial a process of peer review that will apply teaching criteria and standards and model how to assess teaching excellence and quality.
1. Extend the AUTCAS (1)

To date

- Developed 7 indicative teaching criteria, with evidence and standards for each promotion level
- Extensive consultation and review of criteria, framework
- Worked with over 20 Australian universities involving institutional teams in academic development, HR, policy and promotion panels to consider their criteria, evidence, standards, policies and strategies
- Case studies of university uses of the framework
- Developed web resources for use by institutions and individuals [http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/](http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/)
- AUTCAS criteria and standards resonate internationally
1. Extend the AUTCAS (2)

To follow

• Follow-up with universities involved in the AUTCAS project and provide ongoing support
• Contact and support other universities that want to explore its usefulness for them
• Explore and support interest in the Framework for the private providers of HE and vocational education providers
• Explore interest in other sectors eg. New Zealand SE Asia
• Promote outcomes with HE institutions and organisations
• ......
2. Investigate feasibility ‘Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards’ (APTTTS)

To date and to follow

- Seeking participation in discussions from national and local membership bodies and representatives
- Consultation with HEA, Ako Aotearoa
- Develop background papers and outline different models for discussion and feedback
- Reference group with wide representation
- Wide circulation and consultation with institutions, organisations, individuals
- Present final document for consideration and endorsement
3. Investigate and trial external peer review of teaching portfolios

To date and to follow

• Seek participation in discussions from national and local membership bodies and representatives including Ako Aotearoa
• Develop background papers and outline different models for discussion and feedback
• Establish Reference Group with wide representation
• Wide circulation and consultation with institutions, organisations, individuals
• Establish and trial a sustainable model and process that identifies and trains experts in teaching to review and make assessments of teaching portfolios against institutional and/or external criteria
Why a teaching criteria and standards framework?

“supporting staff by rewarding and recognising teaching activities is central to obtaining an excellent student experience” (Cashmore et al, 2013, p 5)
Value of a university-wide teacher framework

- A tool for universities to clarify expectations and set their own teaching criteria and indicative standards
- Customised and adapted by each university
- Consideration of minimum standards for each criterion and link to subsequent levels and for setting minimum standard for promotion (research & teaching, teaching focused and research focused).
- Indicative and illustrative framework encourages consideration of institutional responses and requirements.
- Addresses the Higher Education Standards (Draft)
Teacher Criteria Framework

- Practical, flexible guide for institutions and teachers
- Underpinned by principles of quality teaching
- Seven criteria, each with:
  - examples of practice
  - indicative expectations of performance
  - sources of evidence
- Alignment with the UK Professional Standards Framework

NOTE: An individual teacher is NOT expected to excel in every one of the 7 criteria. A teacher should address each criterion, but will be stronger in some than others.
Value of framework for teachers

• To clarify expectations for different levels of appointment (teachers and supervisors)
• To plan for career development – identify gaps and opportunities
• To guide performance review and professional development planning
• To apply for positions in other universities, overseas universities.
• To prepare an application for promotion
• To identify a broader range and sources of evidence
• To evaluate personal effectiveness
• Other….
The AUTCAS framework for promotional levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion 1: Design and planning of learning activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning, development and preparation of learning activities, learning resources and materials, for a unit, course or degree program, including coordination, involvement or leadership in curriculum design and development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lecturer (A)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Planned learning activities designed to develop the students' learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sound knowledge of the unit content and material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit outline that clearly details learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of unit materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer review of unit materials by unit/course coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>For relevant items in the student survey, average or above average scores for all units taught</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate teaching techniques are used by the teacher to enhance my learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher is well prepared.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher effectively used learning technologies to support my learning</td>
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**Indicative Evidence**
- Unit/course outline and materials
Broad sources of evidence used to improve and assess teaching quality

1. Peers
2. Self
3. Student reactions
4. Student learning

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The Website

Australian University Teaching Criteria & Standards Framework

What is it?
A framework that provides universities and their academic staff with a practical and flexible guide for clarifying what constitutes quality teaching and how it can be evidenced. Five Western Australian universities led this national project with the explicit aim of recognising the ways in which quality teaching can be identified, supported and ultimately rewarded.

Why this website?
The primary purpose is to enable dissemination of the outcomes of the project, the framework and documents that support its use. The framework itself provides indicative criteria and performance standards that can be adapted by different institutions to suit their own teaching criteria and standards.

What does it offer?
Documents that support the use of the framework, including: instructions on the intended use of the framework, explanation of the principles of quality teaching that underpin the framework, useful guides and resources, and tips and strategies for career planning and collecting evidence, as well as external resources and project information.

http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au
The Framework
The Resources

About the resources

To support users of the framework we have conducted an extensive review of higher education websites and resources on quality teaching. Given the multitude of resources available, we assessed them for quality and relevance, and have compiled associated bibliographies of exemplars and guides to good practice that demonstrate the indicative criteria and evidence outlined in the framework.

In this section of the website you will find descriptions and links to useful guides and resources that illustrate good practice (organised by criterion), tips and strategies for career planning and collecting evidence, links to related projects and other useful resources.
The Exemplars

Exemplar 1 – Associate Professor Leon Wolff, Faculty of Law, Bond University

Associate Professor Leon Wolff was awarded a Citation by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council for his innovative use of narrative methodology to create an authentic, inquiry-based learning experience for first-year law students. In his application for the award, he reflects on how he developed curricula and resources that reflect innovative design, a command of the discipline of law and pedagogical principles such as a student-centred approach.

Personal reflection

“...my approach to narrative method takes seriously the central pedagogical principle that students should be at the centre of their learning experience (Biggs & Tang, 2007). My curriculum and assessment design, for example, does not position the teacher as the master story-teller; instead, students are at the forefront of the narrative. They are the lawyers. They are the ones assisting the clients with their legal issues. Students are the beneficiaries of the narrative. They are the ones who possess knowledge of the design of the legal system and the skills of research, analysis, writing, problem-solving and critique, and they are the ones who prepare the legal opinions. The development of such a curriculum requires imagination and legal expertise.”

View Leon’s full application

The Case Studies

- University of Western Australia (UWA)
- Edith Cowan University (ECU)
- Curtin University (Curtin)
- University of South Australia (UniSA)
- Australian Catholic University (ACU)
- Notre Dame University (NDU)
# The AUTCAS Project team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor Denise Chalmers</th>
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Website
http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au

Thank you