

Developing University Teaching Criteria and Standards: An Australian strategic priority project

Project team

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Abstract

There is widespread recognition of the need to generate a cultural shift in attitudes towards recognising and rewarding teaching and teachers in universities. Quality teaching and quality teachers need to be endorsed, recognised and rewarded by university leaders if student learning outcomes are to be optimised. The *Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards* project was designed with a dual purpose: to provide a conceptual framework for quality teaching and to serve as a guide to the development, review and recognition of quality teaching practices within institutions. Five Western Australian universities led a national project to develop and disseminate the quality teaching criteria and standards framework, with the explicit aim of recognising the ways in which quality teaching can be identified, supported and ultimately rewarded.

The framework is underpinned by carefully researched definitions and principles of quality teaching, expressed through seven teaching criteria. Selection of the criteria was informed by an extensive review of the literature, scans of the Australian, New Zealand and selected US teaching criteria, and referenced to the UK Higher Education Authority (HEA) Professional Standards Framework. The organising principle of the framework is alignment with academic appointment and promotional levels. For each criterion, and level of appointment, the framework suggests indicative performance standards, examples of practice and sources of evidence that academics can use to demonstrate their level of achievement.

The project team members each trialled the Framework in their own universities and then sought feedback from university leaders from across Australia and New Zealand and where possible, encouraged its use in determining each university's performance management and promotions criteria and standards. To date, the framework has been trialled and reviewed by over twenty Australian universities. Feedback from early users and adopters indicates that the framework has been a catalyst for discussion and policy review.

This presentation will report on how the framework was developed, highlight examples of different ways in which it has been used, and demonstrate the website and resources which illustrate the types of evidence and the ways it can be presented to build a case for demonstrating quality teaching.