‘Engaging colleagues and students with standards’

Graham Hendry – Institute for Teaching and Learning
Mark Freeman – Business
Stephen Robertson – Arts and Social Sciences
Judy Anderson – Education and Social Work
Susan McGrath-Champ – Business

Introductions
- ‘Fitness-for-purpose’ → ‘standards’
- Internal → external
“The academic standards intended to be achieved by students and the standards actually achieved by students in the course of study are benchmarked against similar accredited courses of study.”

*How are we going to demonstrate this?*

I’m worried about ensuring we are AQF compliant by 1 Jan 2015
Provider standards

› Provider ensures AQF awards meet the AQF specifications (1.1)

› Robust internal processes for design and approval (1.2)
  
  - take account of external standards and requirements (e.g. published discipline standards, professional accreditation, comparable standards)
  
  - provide for appropriate development of key graduate attributes including English language proficiency.

› Intended & achieved academic standards externally benchmarked (5.5)

› Provider can demonstrate graduates have attained key graduate attributes including an appropriate level of English language proficiency (5.6)

Source: ComLaw 4 Jan 2012
Teaching standards ≠ learning standards

“TEQSA is not the only custodian of standards, nor are higher education institutions. This responsibility is distributed and shared more widely, including with disciplinary communities and professional associations” (Principal 3)

“Institutional standards for teaching and learning will differ but all institutions must meet or surpass national standards” (Principle 5)

DEEWR (2011)
Disciplinary groups

- Architecture
- Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
- Building and Construction
- Business, Management and Economics
- Creative and Performing Arts
- Education
- Engineering and ICT
- Health
- Law
- Science

Sector wide approaches

- Quality Verification System - Group of Eight initiative. Individual unis publish results (e.g. USyd)
Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

**Geography**

**History**
- Work on implementation is being conducted as the ‘After Standards: Engaging and Embedding History’s Standards using International Best Practice to Inform Curriculum Renewal’ project being led by Dr Sean Brawley (UNSW). Details at [http://afterstandards.omeka.net/](http://afterstandards.omeka.net/)

**Political science**
- Standards developed during 2010 and approved by Australian Political Science Association Executive in April 2011.

**Sociology**
- Standards being developed for formal approval late 2012. November 2011 draft available at:
A Standards Based Major
Refocusing the History Major

Associate Professor Stephen Robertson
Department of History, SOPHI, FASS
Developed Threshold Learning Outcomes for History at AQF Level 7

- ‘minimum discipline knowledge, discipline-specific skills and professional capabilities, including attitudes and professional values expected of a graduate from a specified level of program in a specified discipline area’.

- a standards implementation process grounded in disciplinary expertise

- Denise Bradley: lack ‘rigour’
The Australian Historical Association Accreditation Trial

- Mapped learning outcomes against TLOs, audited assessment tasks in terms of how well they met a TLO, taking the five lowest passes (not range of grades as in QVS) from three final year units at three institutions
  - One institution without a capstone; a second with a capstone that was not one
  - Only one of nine units met standard (and did so with minimum possible score)
  - Failure to fail

- You cannot retrofit an existing curriculum with standards and assume it will be compliant;
  - standards will not be met unless a curriculum is designed with them in mind

- A purpose designed capstone course is the best place to consider standards acquisition/compliance;
  - students need to be prepared for the capstone in their first two years of study
Go8 Quality Verification System

How does it work

- Review the appropriateness and comparative quality of the specified learning outcomes, assessment tasks, assessment criteria and assessment processes set for samples of final year subjects

- Report on the appropriateness of the grades awarded to stratified random samples of student work in these subjects: verification of all merit grades

- Reviewers conducted by Level D and above academics from Go8
History and the Pilot Program (semester 1, 2011)

› The lack of final year units

› Only one assessment task submitted
  - Only one required? “[T]he review must cover a minimum of 25 percent of final year assessment requirements”
  - What is an appropriate assessment – and what will not be verified? Exams

› Unarticulated standards
  - No external accreditation to rely on
  - “QVS External Reviewers will draw upon their academic experience and judgment to review the materials provided to them”
  - Did not use the LTAS History TLOs

› No context for individual units; no verification of the major

› No public reports by other institutions (other than Adelaide); no public report by Go8
Refocusing the History Major

› A Faculty-wide process
› Framed disciplinary outcomes, based on the LTAS TLOs, omitting two and incorporating descriptors
› Introduced final year units: capstones
› Prepared students for the capstone: progression in assessment
Which one of the following is the best approach to capturing graduate outcomes:

1. Capstone unit of study in the major
2. Capstone unit of study in the degree
3. Capstone assessment task
4. No single capstone – collect assessment results across degree/major

Why is this best the approach?
Assessment @ SYDNEY policy

Do I have to write an essay?

I’m going to be a maths teacher ...

\[ 3x^2 + 7xy = x(3x + 7y) \]

The X factor
Semester 1, 2010

› 26 students

› Week 2, students provided with 2 exemplar essays (a credit and a distinction) and a marking rubric

› Week 3, students discussed their decisions in small groups; followed by teacher-led discussion
### Criteria and Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Does not meet criteria</th>
<th>Meets criteria in a satisfactory way</th>
<th>Meets criteria in an exemplary way</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of reading and using the assessment rubric to assess 2 student essays</td>
<td>Assessment rubric not completed for 2 student essays</td>
<td>Assessment rubric submitted with evidence the papers were read and assessed against these criteria</td>
<td>Assessment rubric submitted with evidence the papers were read, assessed against these criteria; with decisions supported by arguments for decisions made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of the introduction</td>
<td>Unclear description of the topic or issue Relevance of the issue not addressed or not clearly explained</td>
<td>Clear description of the topic or issue Relevance of the issue discussed in relation to senior secondary students</td>
<td>Clear identification of the topic or issue from other issues in mathematics Relevance of the issue discussed with reference to the literature and its impact on senior secondary students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justification of choice of topic/issue from a personal perspective</td>
<td>Little or unclear reference to personal experiences to justify choice of the issue</td>
<td>Reference to personal experiences to justify choice of the issue</td>
<td>Evidence of critical reflection on personal experiences to justify choice of the issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequacy and relevance of material consulted</td>
<td>Limited reference to the literature – fewer than 6 references Little analysis of sources Little interpretation of claims</td>
<td>Reference made to the literature to support claims and advice to teachers – at least 6 references Summaries provided of relevant sources Evidence of understanding of the claims</td>
<td>Extensive reference made to relevant literature that goes beyond those provided – greater than 8 references Critical evaluation of sources and links made between sources Carefully argued paper that interprets and critiques claims and evidence Conclusion presents a critical synthesis if the main ideas with possible suggestions for future research in the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill in analysis and evaluation of sources</td>
<td>No conclusion or little attempt made to summarise the main points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of claims and evidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness of conclusions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical advice for teachers including teaching ideas</td>
<td>Limited practical advice</td>
<td>Practical advice that would support teachers in relation to this issue or topic</td>
<td>Extensive and innovative practical advice for teachers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distribution of students’ individual grades for essays A, B and C – Class 2 Semester 2 2010

Judy Anderson & Graham Hendry (2011). Helping students understand the standards of work expected: What do students learn from a marking class?
What did you learn from assessing the two papers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of comments</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of the task and/or the criteria and standards</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>What the task was about. What makes a good essay and what doesn’t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure, format and style</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>The importance of signposting. Each paragraph should begin with an idea which you then discuss ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment process</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assessing is hard!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing quality</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>The writing quality, the detail of explanations were quite different and I could see how they varied in communicating points to the reader.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of the literature</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>... drawing in the literature and research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content of the papers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A lot about maths anxiety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall comments ...

› Excellent task

› More units should do this

› Very helpful

› Useful and relevant
Outcomes

› A lively and engaging class!!

› Greater understanding of the task, the assessment criteria, and the standards

› Improved writing skills (for at least some students!)

› Evidence about my teaching and the students’ learning
Challenges and Advice

- Finding previous exemplar essays to use
- Obtaining permission from those students
- TIME
What are the challenges of adopting exemplars to engage students with the standards of performance (e.g., pass, credit, distinction)?

Are there solutions to these challenges?
SYDNEY TEACHING SYMPOSIUM 2012
Standards Based Assessment

Susan McGrath-Champ
Work and Organisational Studies
Program learning outcome (re Team Working):

- ‘Our Masters programs develop each graduate to be a capable team leader in work-related contexts leading to students who are able to influence others to work collaboratively to address complex and unfamiliar problems within one or more fields of business practice. (Assured in capstone unit)’

Unit learning outcomes (elective Unit in MHRM & IR + other degrees):

- #3 ‘Identify the challenges associated with managing employees in international, global and cross-cultural contexts.

- #4 ‘Work effectively, respectfully, ethically and professionally with people of diverse ethnic, cultural, gender and other backgrounds and/or different organisational roles.’
Teaching and learning activities

› **Team formation:**
  - Transparent subject-relevant criteria to allocate student assets fairly

› **Team function:**
  - Team contract,
  - Rotating team leader each week,
  - Immediate feedback technology
  - Quick (in-class) marking turn around – Scantron

› **Preparation for team and individual assets:**
  - Individual readings
  - Individual guided mini-lecture
  - Podcasts (individual)
  - Practice at teamwork
    - ‘Exploring & valuing diversity’ exercise
    - giving SPARK feedback
    - commenting on critical reflective journal entries.
Assessments

Team | Individual
--- | ---
TRAT | IRAT
Applic Ex | Applic Ex
CR Jnl | CR Jnl
TOTAL | TOTAL
10% | 20%
20% | 20%
30% | 30%
30% | 70%

Collated individual test results: screened within 10 min of finish of text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Possible</th>
<th>Median Score</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Lowest Score</th>
<th>Highest Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question Count</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests Scored</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quiz No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A (130, 87%) B (1, 1%) C (10, 7%) D (9, 6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A (48, 32%) B (1, 1%) C (35, 23%) D (66, 44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A (135, 90%) B (2, 1%) C (2, 1%) D (11, 7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A (10, 7%) B (4, 3%) C (102, 68%) D (34, 23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A (113, 75%) B (4, 3%) C (22, 15%) D (11, 7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A (39, 26%) B (21, 14%) C (10, 7%) D (80, 53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A (5, 3%) B (55, 37%) C (14, 9%) D (76, 51%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF TEAM

1. Being punctual for team activities

2. Encouraging and allowing all team members to contribute/participate

3. Actively listening to others in the team

4. Understanding what is required

5. Level of enthusiasm

6. Effective informal coordination and formal coordination responsibilities (as possible to date)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Reflective Jnl (Joint)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+ TBL Readiness Tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Introduced Team Application Exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deleted final exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Introduced Final Application Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introducing SPARK (self/peer assmt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summative Readiness Tests:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Devised interpretive &amp; causal questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Amended Reflective Jnl to be individually assessed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SPARK $\rightarrow$ formative + summative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Team Application Exercises:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Articulated marking criteria to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Team Application Exercises:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment of individual team presenters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Italic*: Component introduced

*Non-italic*: Component amended
Next steps

› **Preparation**
  
  Upgrade introductory quasi lectures/mini overviews

› Review of compulsory readings for RAT

› **Assessment**
  
  - **Observations of rotating team spokesperson/coordinator** – to assess individual contribution to leadership and team functioning
  
  - **Considering deployment of ‘proficient’ Teamwork Standards criteria**
  
  - anonymity of ‘opt in’ mechanism for SPARK summative (end of semester)
What are the challenges of adopting the ‘Teamwork standards’ (last page on handout 2) for assessing group work?

Are there solutions to these challenges?
Team-based learning

› http://www.teambasedlearning.org/