

Achievement Matters: External Peer Review of Accounting Learning Standards

Project stakeholders

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Participants	Adelaide University, Curtin university, Deakin University, Griffith University, Monash University, RMIT University, Southern Cross University, Southern Queensland University, University of Western Australia and University of Western Sydney
Funders	Australian Business Deans Council, CPA Australia, Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council

Project overview

Accounting is the first discipline seeking to collaboratively develop and implement a national model of expert peer review for benchmarking learning outcomes against nationally-agreed threshold learning outcomes developed under the ALTC 2010 *Learning and Teaching Academic Standards* project.² Assessment tasks and specifications, chosen to evidence two threshold learning outcomes, will be peer reviewed by recent accounting graduates and professional bodies as well as by two senior academics from ten participating universities. Following calibration activities, random samples of completed student work will also be double-blind reviewed by academic peers. To support quality enhancement, a face-to-face debriefing activity follows. These calibration and debriefing activities are repeated with coursework masters students. After the pilot cycle, invitations to participate will be extended to all other Australian accounting degree providers, including private and TAFE providers.

Project intended outcomes

1. External peer-reviewed evidence of accounting academic standards in all types of higher education providers, benchmarked against the accounting threshold learning outcomes
2. A model process for obtaining and using blind external peer review evidence that captures inputs (i.e. assessment specifications) as well as outputs (i.e. completed student work)
3. Professional learning and capacity building.

These outcomes will: serve quality assurance purposes (locally, nationally and internationally); support quality enhancement (locally and nationally); produce a model that is inclusive, reliable, and is likely to be adopted by other business disciplines; provide valuable professional development for experienced academics and, if mirrored locally, for early career academics.

Project rationale

This project demonstrates to key stakeholders, such as employers and professional bodies who have a stake in the quality of graduates, that Australian accounting higher education providers wish to self-regulate by going beyond current learning and teaching performance indicators and proposed tests of generic outcomes to obtain evidence of disciplinary-specific learning outcomes.

Project cycles

	Participants	Degree	Collection	Learning outcomes
1 (pilot)	10 universities	1 Bachelor 1 Master	Sem 1 2011 Sem 2 2011	Judgement, Written Communication Judgement, Written Communication
2	Expanded provider set	Bachelor + Master	Sem 1 2012	Relevant degrees and learning outcomes subjected to peer review will depend on calibration progress
3	Expanded provider set	Bachelor + Master	Sem 2 2012	As above
4	Expanded provider set	Bachelor + Master	Sem 1 2013	As above

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² Published in March 2011, the *Learning and Teaching Academic Standards for Accounting* identifies five threshold learning outcomes (i.e. Judgement, Knowledge, Application, Self-Management, Communication and Teamwork). See <http://abdc.edu.au/> and http://www.altc.edu.au/system/files/altc_standards_ACCOUNTING_090211.pdf.