A case for the use of standards in recognising, evaluating and rewarding university teaching: A discussion paper

The attached paper outlines a rationale for the establishment of an Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework for use in evaluation, reward and recognition procedures for university teaching. It forms part of my OLT National Senior Teaching Fellowship program on *Recognising and rewarding teaching: Australian teaching standards and expert peer review*. The goal of the program is to contribute to the capacity of tertiary institutions, and the sector, to reward and recognise teaching through teaching criteria and evidence of teaching excellence.

There are three parts to the Fellowship program

1. To extend and embed the outcomes of the Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS) project (uniteachingcrtieria.edu.au).
2. To investigate the feasibility of a sector-developed, and endorsed, Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) to provide a credible, external standard against which individuals and institutions can benchmark teacher quality.
3. To investigate and trial a process of peer review that will apply teaching criteria and standards and model how to assess teaching excellence and quality.

This discussion paper has been developed to address the second part of the program, namely: To investigate the feasibility of a sector-developed and endorsed Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS). It forms part of a widening circle of consultation, seeking feedback and critique from individuals and key stakeholders in Australian tertiary education. Your feedback and comments on the attached paper and on the specific questions on the APPTS at the end of the paper will contribute to the Australian higher education sector's engagement in strategies and processes that enhance students' experiences of learning at Australian universities and tertiary education institutions.

This first version is for limited circulation. It seeks feedback and critique from colleagues who hold key institutional or national roles. The aim is to test the argument and, subsequently, draft the framework.

I also welcome any queries and informal feedback on the other two areas of activity of my Fellowship.

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This paper presents a case for the development of an Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework with the purpose of generating a national discussion towards a shared understanding of quality teaching in tertiary education across Australia. An APTTS framework would provide an endorsed external professional standard against which Australian institutions and individuals could review and benchmark quality tertiary teaching. This discussion paper explores the literature on national teacher standards and their influence on the sector and institutional and individual practices. It further explores ways in which standards criteria and evidence can be used to recognise and reward quality teaching. It is argued that it is critical to have a shared understanding of excellent teaching to maintain our standing as a world-class higher education system that provides a distinctive and high quality learning experience for students.

The context

The global tertiary education sector is experiencing significant changes and challenges with uncertain funding models, an increasingly diverse student cohort and a dynamic workforce (European Commission, 2013). In Australia, as elsewhere, providers of tertiary education are expanding rapidly with not-for-profit, and for-profit private providers actively competing with the public university providers for students. In this context, there is a need to ensure that teaching in all institutions is of the highest quality. Unfortunately, this is not typically the case. The European Commission, for example, asserts that while "quality teaching should be a priority in the higher education institutions, … the research indicates that a real commitment to quality teaching is not universal, is sporadic at best and frequently reliant on the enlightened commitment of a few individuals" (European Commission, 2013, p.14). While there are outstanding examples of whole-of-institution support for up-skilling teachers, and recognition and reward of effective teaching, it is more typical to find pockets of good practice within institutions. Yet, even these achievements vary over time, with leadership changes and evolving priorities. Evidence of sustained commitment to supporting and enhancing teaching quality remains elusive in the higher education sector. Even so, quality tertiary teaching remains a significant political objective. For example, the European Commission high-level group for the modernisation of higher education "has put quality teaching and learning at the top of its agenda. This group argues that improvements to the quality of teaching and learning in higher education can bring about a 'sea change' for Europe's future" (2013, p.4) and proposes establishing a European Academy for Teaching and Learning led by stakeholders, and inspired by the demonstration of good practices. Its aim is to change the culture and attitudes towards professionalising teaching and to provide funding for quality teaching programs. Further, in response to concerns about the quality of teaching in higher education, the German federal government committed two billion Euros over 10 years (2011-2020) to the 'Quality Pact for Teaching' (2010) to support institutions to pursue quality teaching and learning. Funding is available to 186 higher education institutions across Germany to improve study conditions and the quality of teaching in higher education.

While countries such as the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand have demonstrated long-term commitment to raising the status of teaching through recognising and rewarding teaching as one of four scholarships in which universities engage (Boyer, 1990; Chalmers, 2011, Probert, 2013), teaching is still perceived to have less prestige than research (Blackmore, 2015) and it does not contribute on a par with research for promotion and career progression

(Cashmore et al, 2013; Chalmers, 2011; Locke, 2014; Probert, 2013). This is a challenge for all institutions that assert a public commitment to providing their students with an excellent student experience that is not backed by rewarding and recognising excellent teaching and teachers (Cashmore et al., 2013) because it has been found that an excellent student experience and the recognition and reward of teaching are directly linked (Cashmore et al, 2013; Locke, 2014).A program of research, carried out in UK universities from 2008-2013, documented some progress in rewarding and recognising teaching (Cashmore et al, 2013), for example, universities had increasingly documented teaching criteria and specified the evidence required to demonstrate achievement of each criterion. However, substantial variation was evident in different types of universities and within and between disciplinary communities. Studies found that limited progress had been made towards embedding teaching criteria and establishing standards that resulted in real changes in practice and so contributed to persistent scepticism among university teachers that their teaching contributions would be recognised and rewarded with career progression (Cashmore et al, 2013; Locke, 2014).

The unevenness and trends noted in the UK are also evident in Australia (Chalmers, 2007; 2008; Chalmers & Thompson, 2008; Chalmers, 2011; Chalmers et al, 2014), where significant advances have been made by many institutions in the provision of clear teaching criteria and in the elaboration and specification of evidence required for performance review and promotion. However, the extent to which the expected performance standards are detailed, embedded and enacted in policy, processes and systems remains highly variable (Chalmers et al, 2014). While policies in Australian and UK universities increasingly state that promotion for teaching excellence is possible, institutional and disciplinary cultures continue to view research expertise as dominant in academic conceptions of excellence, including educational excellence (Chalmers, 2011; Blackmore, 2015; Probert, 2013; 2014). There have been two broad responses to recognise and reward excellent teaching. The first is to establish teacher standards and the second has been to develop processes of recognition and reward. While they are linked, each will be discussed separately.

Professional teacher standards

Teacher standards are seen by policy makers and educators as a way to professionalize the work of educators and as a lever for system-wide improvements in teaching and learning. They can be voluntarily developed and applied or they can be compulsory and regulated by an external agency.

Higher education teacher standards

In 2006, the United Kingdom developed the Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for higher education. The process of developing the first (UUK, 2005) and second (Law, 2011) versions involved extensive consultation with the sector including the Higher Education Academy (HEA), Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE), Scottish Funding Council, Department for Employment and Learning, National Union of Students, Universities UK, Higher Education Funding Council of Wales (HEFCW), and the Higher Education Guild, institutions, and individuals. It built on the existing program accreditation system of the Higher Education Academy and was intended to provide an "agreed reference point to enable higher education institutions to develop criteria appropriate for their own priorities" (UUK, 2005, p1). It was developed for institutions to apply to their professional development programmes and activities to demonstrate that professional

standards for teaching and supporting learning were being met (UUK, 2005). The HEA's role was not to be a regulatory role for the assurance of standards. Rather, it was for enhancement and support and to enable universities and academics to have ownership of their own processes.

While the UKPSF took some time to gain influence beyond the accreditation of professional development programs and the fellowship scheme, they have become more influential in institutional policy and practice and individuals' understanding of teaching over time (Brooks, et al, 2014; SEDA, 2013). The Higher Education Academy (HEA) accredits educational institutions' professional development programs for teachers, providing external confirmation that their professional development programs are aligned with the UKPSF. HEA accredited institutions have the authority to award HEA Fellowships to eligible staff in recognition of their achievements in teaching and supporting learning in higher education (HEA, 2011).

The UKPSF use the term 'standards' to refer to nationally agreed statements of expectations for practice that encompass the wide variety of roles and responsibilities that contributes to and informs the learning experience of students. The 'framework of standards' describes the totality of these statements covering practice that supports student learning (UUK, 2004). The UKPSF can be used by those who seek recognition for different levels of accomplishment under any one of four descriptors that may relate to an individual's career stage or role. The titles of Associate fellow, Fellow, Senior fellow or Principal may be conferred if judged by peers (who themselves have been accredited by the HEA to make judgments) to meet the standards for that descriptor.

It could be argued that the UKPSF has gone some way to achieve the purpose of standards, namely: to professionalize the work of educators and to contribute to system-wide improvements in teaching and learning. The Standards are voluntarily used by the institutions and individuals, and their attainment is externally judged by accreditation of professional development programs or peer review.

School teacher standards

The adoption of teacher standards in education is not new, there have been national teacher standards for school teachers for many years (Sinnema, Meyer & Aitken, 2016). Examples include the Australian National Teaching Standards, New Zealand's Practicing Teacher Criteria and the England's Teachers' Standards, Scotland's Standards for Registration and the USA's TASC Model core teaching standards.

School teacher standards may differ from the point of entry into the profession. For example, New Zealand's Graduating Teacher Standards (2007) form the baseline for the subsequent Practicing Teacher Criteria. In contrast, the Australian National Professional Standards for Teachers (2013) identify different levels of proficiency depending on the experience and stage of career as (a) Graduate, (b) Proficient, (c) Highly Accomplished and (d) Lead. Teacher standards can serve as a threshold for certification or registration, as with, for example, the USA's National Board Certification (NBPTS). In summary, most countries have a system of teacher registration or certification that requires evidence of meeting threshold standards. The Australian Teacher Standards inform the design of teacher training courses and are used for performance review to guide career progression and professional development (AITSL, 2016). Sinnema et al (2016) argue

for a single level for national teacher standards that are applicable to all teachers regardless of career stage, including graduates entering the profession. Their argument is that a progression of standards where new graduate standards are less than experienced teacher standards is not defensible when students' learning is at stake (p 5).

Standards in a regulatory environment

The Australian higher education regulatory environment ensures that quality assurance in teaching and learning is administered by TEQSA, which accredits and evaluates the performance of all higher education providers against the Higher Education Standards (HES). These were revised in 2015 and will take effect from 1 January 2017. The revised Higher Education Standards Framework identifies teaching and staffing, curriculum, student learning and assessment standards and recommends benchmarking and the utilisation of external reference points to support institutional evidence of meeting the standards. TEQSA recently produced guidance notes on *Scholarship* and *Staffing, learning resources and educational support* to guide institutions on meeting the HES. The Boyer model of scholarship (Boyer, 1990) has been referred to as a framework for higher education providers to consider scholarship and the Australian Universities Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS) framework which specifies scholarly activities in the criteria, has been referenced in the TEQSA Guidance notes for *Staffing, learning resources and educational support* (TEQSA, 2016). These highlight the critical importance of the scholarship of teaching in informing course design and pedagogical practices. Higher education providers are expected to demonstrate how they meet the HES by ensuring their teachers and academics are active in scholarship that informs their teaching and ensuring they are engaging their students with advanced knowledge and inquiry and its application to practice. While institutions will be able to demonstrate in multiple ways that they meet the standards, the absence of an Australian tertiary teacher standards framework which encapsulates criteria for the scholarship of teaching makes it more difficult for Australian institutions and individuals to review and benchmark how they are meeting the these HES standards.

An Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework developed and endorsed by the many stakeholders in the sector can provide an external reference point for institutions and individuals to review and benchmark their teacher standards which will facilitate institutions' articulation of the ways in which they support and meet the HES. A sector initiated and developed APTTS will demonstrate ownership of and responsibility for agreed criteria and standards of teaching quality.

Reward and recognition of excellent teaching

The reward and recognition of teaching has been a national focus in Australia since the Federal Government's move to establish national teaching awards in 1997. These were expanded to include citation awards in 2006. Further initiatives to support the enhancement of teaching and learning in universities included significant federal funding for grants and fellowships organised through bodies such as the AUTC, Carrick Institute, ALTC, and OLT. While these federal government initiatives have been well received, and led to many changes in teaching and support for students, there have been limited changes in the practices of institutional reward and recognition of teaching, particularly in the career progression and promotion of excellent teachers. In brief, it has long been argued that there is a need for better recognition and reward of teaching in Australia, including the possibility of

the accreditation of tertiary teachers against external standards. However, this is an empty argument without an agreed Australian tertiary teacher standards framework.

There have been several reports (e.g. Chalmers et al, 2014; Coates, et al, 2012; James et al, 2015), and general agreement within the Australian higher education sector on the need for a process and mechanism to promote the professionalisation and status of teaching in higher education through some form of recognition and accreditation. Indeed, the recent uptake of the HEA accreditation and recognition process by some Australian universities may be seen as a response to the absence of an Australian framework. New Zealand identified a similar gap in a report for Ako Aotearoa which investigated the establishment of a peer review and accreditation scheme for tertiary teachers in New Zealand (Suddaby & Holmes, 2012). To date, seven Australian universities have established an agreement with the HEA to accredit their professional development programs or through an individual assessment process to achieve recognition as fellows of the HEA. A number of other institutions have funded individuals to access mentoring and assessment against the UKPSF via the ANU (efs.anu.edu.au). The copyright to the UKPSF is held by the HEA as is the accreditation and assignment of the recognition as fellows of the HEA.

The Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards (AUTCAS) Framework project (Chalmers et al, 2014, 2015) developed an exemplar framework for institutions to use to develop their own teaching criteria and standards, setting expectations for each level of appointment and indicators to guide the collection of evidence used to substantiate claims for performance and promotion. The framework has been highly influential, with over 25 Australian institutions having drawn on it to inform their criteria, performance development and management processes and expectations. Internationally it has been used by tertiary institutions in Europe, Africa, South and North America and Asia demonstrating its utility in different cultures and contexts (Chalmers, 2016). The AUTCAS project was designed to support institutions in their endeavours to better recognise and reward excellent teaching through clarifying performance expectations for the different career levels, thus making explicit the standards for individuals and their supervisors, and the promotion panels and external reviewers. Because so many Australian institutions have engaged with the AUTCAS framework, there is a growing consensus across the sector on the expectations of excellent teachers at the different levels of appointment. A sector developed and endorsed standards framework would allow institutions to map and benchmark their institutional criteria to an Australian external standard.

Reports and initiatives that highlight the need for a more systematic approach to the reward and recognition of excellent teaching in higher education include:
- Two OLT commissioned strategic priority projects (Chalmers *et al* (2014; 2015) and James et al (2015) on Professionalising the Academic Workforce (2012), both recommending the need for agreed external standards and reference points for greater recognition of teaching.
- Two OLT commissioned reports on teaching-focused roles and their implications in the importance of recognising and rewarding teaching by universities and the tertiary sector (Probert 2013, 2014). Probert noted the increasing interest across the tertiary sector in the adoption of 'standards' for teaching and supporting learning in higher education, just as there is more interest in standards more widely (Probert, 2015).

- Several reports and articles arguing for the need for systematic reward and recognition of teachers, and teaching more broadly in Australia (e.g. Chalmers & Hunt, 2016; Chalmers, 2007; 2008, 2010).

Professional recognition schemes in tertiary education include the Australasian Higher Education Research and Development Association (HERDSA) Fellowship which has approximately eighty registered Fellows and Associate Fellows. To achieve recognition, applicants develop a teaching portfolio which is reviewed in a similar process to that practiced by the HEA. In contrast, other associations recognise contributions and achievements through awarding Fellowships by the elected members, for example, the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) which confers membership through nomination by peers for scholarly distinction in research or the advancement of social sciences.

In New Zealand, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, Ako Aotearoa, considered a report in 2012 on, "*An accreditation scheme for tertiary teachers in New Zealand: Key information draft discussion document*" (Suddaby & Holmes, 2012). The report's objective was to promote discussion about the establishment of a voluntary accreditation scheme for tertiary teachers to better recognise excellent teaching. This comprehensive report considered the need to professionalise tertiary teaching, the nature of professionalism in the context of tertiary teaching, and different models of recognition and accreditation in the tertiary sector. The report concluded that Ako Aotearoa would be a credible location for such a scheme (personal communication, Peter Coolbear, August, 2014). In 2016, Ako Aotearoa, tested the sector's appetite for accrediting and recognising teaching against standards, in a year-long initiative in three tertiary institutions. It was designed to explore the UK professional standards framework (UKPSF), and HEA recognition and accreditation. The Auckland University of Technology (AUT, 2016) led an initiative to integrate the UKPSF with the Ako Aronui framework. The UKPSF key dimensions provided the basis, contextualised with Maori philosophies, worldviews and values. This speaks to the importance of establishing distinctive national standards that are relevant to local objectives and cultures. It also shows the need for synergies with international standards to facilitate benchmarking and transferability.

The importance for a national standards framework to reflect the national context is supported by James et al. who argued for the need for tertiary teacher standards that take "*into consideration Australia's unique cultural, institutional and policy context would better serve the needs of the Australian higher education sector*" (James et al, 2015, p 23). Currently, Australia does not have a professional tertiary teacher standards framework. So the question is: Should we? , If so how might it encompass the distinctiveness of Australian higher education in an international context?

Formal and informal conversations with university executives, executives of membership organisations such as HERDSA, and the OLT Fellowship Network and representative organisations such as Universities Australia (UA), CADAD and ACODE have expressed interest in the concept of Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards as a key step in establishing a national benchmark against which teaching quality can be assessed in an Australian context so that it is externally recognised and contribute to institutional rewards in institutions and across the sector.

> *A nationally-recognised framework of standards provides the opportunity for effective national and international benchmarking at both an institutional and individual level. At the individual level teaching staff will readily be able to evaluate their own teaching performance and goals against the standards. A standards framework allows individual staff to plan a career development pathway when these standards are integrated into promotion criteria. At the institutional level such a standards framework provides the basis of comparison with similar institutions and also the basis from which to improve quality and to recognise excellence.* (James et al, 2015, p 28)

In summary, there is broad agreement on the need for, and the value of, an Australian Professional Tertiary Teaching Standards framework to facilitate the reward and recognition of excellent teachers, by building the capacity and capability of individuals and institutions. However, standards in education are not universally accepted as desirable, with claims that they lead to reductionism that destroys professional autonomy and reflection (Sinnema et al, 2016). Further, it is contested, this can lead to performativity, where teachers become compelled to demonstrate standards of practice that are observable and measurable but narrow and shallow in their interpretation of effectiveness. This risks impeding teachers' professional learning and practice and stifling the overall educational improvements intended by their use (Beck, 2009). Such critiques fail to distinguish between 'process' and 'product'. The 'product' of standards can be applied in ways that facilitate or inhibit educational improvements and teacher creativity. In short, it is not standards that are the problem, it is the way that they are used that matters. The cautionary notes are important, but they are not an argument against standards per se. Rather, the implication of such critiques is that standards should be developed with an understanding of the complexity of teaching. Further, the implication is that processes for the assessment of achievement against the standards should recognise complexity, diversity and local contexts.

Defining tertiary teaching standards

The fundamental design and structural organisers of teacher standards have remained largely unchanged and noticeably similar across jurisdictions. Typical domains or dimensions that serve as organisers include: professional knowledge and understanding; professional skills and abilities; professional values and personal commitment and; professional relationships (see Sinnema et al, 2016, p14-15).

School teacher standards

The current Australian Professional Standards for Teaching (2015), are comprised of seven standards which outline what teachers should know and be able to do. The Standards are grouped under three domains: (1) Professional Knowledge; (2) Professional Practice; and (3) Professional Engagement but are understood as interconnected, interdependent and overlapping. Within each of the seven standards, focus areas provide further illustration of teaching knowledge, practice and professional engagement with a further 36 subcategories.

The New Zealand Teaching Standards for fully certified practicing teachers are organised under two domains: (1) Professional relationships and professional values; and (2) Professional knowledge in practice with four overarching statements and twelve criteria grouped under these domains.

The United Kingdom Teachers' Standards (2012) has two parts: (1) Teaching and Personal; and (2) Professional Conduct. There are eight criteria under the domain of Teaching and under the domain of Personal and Professional Conduct there are three statements about demonstrating high standards of personal and professional conduct.

Tertiary teaching standards

The UKPSF (2011) is comprised of three dimensions: (1) Areas of Activity; (2) Core Knowledge and (3) Professional Values. There are five elements under Areas of Activity; six elements under Core Knowledge and four elements under Professional Values.

While not national standards, the Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards framework has been used by over 25 Australian universities and several international universities to inform the development of their teaching criteria and standards to support the career development and progression of teachers. The criteria for the AUTCAS were informed by an extensive review of the literature, and institutional and teaching award criteria which drew out 27 principles of quality teaching. These were further distilled to a list of ten and categorised under the domains of Environment, Professional Practice, and Attributes and Capabilities (Chalmers et al, 2014). The project team adapted Henard and Roseveare's definition of quality teaching as it suscinctly encompased the elements identified in the literature (Chalmers et al, 2014).

> *Quality teaching is the informed use of pedagogical practices in a values-driven culture, resulting in appropriate learning outcomes for students. It requires elements of the following:*
>
> - *Environment - which supports teaching, provides services and support for students and staff, and engages in a wider cultural context.*
>
> - *Professional Practices - which include the effective design of curriculum and course content, a variety of learning experiences based on evidence of how students learn, soliciting and using feedback and effective assessment of learning outcomes.*
>
> - *Attributes and Capabilities - Inclusive of personal, relational and professional qualities.*   (Adapted from Henard & Roseveare, 2012, p.7)

It is proposed that these three domains serve as the structural organisers for the APTTS.

Determining criteria for the APTTS

The criteria for Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards need to encompass the principles and findings of the well-researched evidence on effective teaching practice that contributes to student learning. "It is obvious that we must develop and use the Scholarship of Teaching and not let opinions (statements without evidence), fads, or favourite methods dominate the debates about what makes the difference to student learning" (Hattie, 2015, p90).

Chickering and Gamson's "Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education" was first published in 1987 and then elaborated in 1991. This seminal work drew from fifty years of research in undergraduate education and which continues to be reaffirmed to the current day (e.g. Elton, 1998; Gibbs, 2010; Hattie, 2015; McKeachie 2007; Pascarella & Terenzini , 2005). Hattie's (2015) meta-analysis of over a 1000 research studies demonstrates the significant impact that teachers' personal and professional qualities have on students' learning confirming the principles identified by Chickering and Gamson.

The seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education (Chickering & Gamson, 1987) are:
1. Encourage contact between students and faculty
2. Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students
3. Encourage active learning
4. Give prompt feedback
5. Emphasize time on task
6. Communicate high expectations
7. Respect diverse talents and ways of learning

More recently there has been attention on the critical role of a well-designed, coherent curriculum (Gibbs, 2010; Blackmore & Kandiko, 2012). While there are institutional practices and quality processes both within institutions and external to them to review and accredit the quality of curriculum, teachers need to have a sound understanding of curriculum design and course planning to contribute to the overall design of the curriculum, and to effectively plan for their students' learning of the approved curriculum that is contextualised in real-world environments.

The importance of connecting what is being taught in programs of study to real world environments has long been recognised. When done well it "encourages high order thinking; facilitates the acquisition of a depth of knowledge in a field or a discipline; demonstrates connectedness to the world; requires substantive conversation and collaboration between students, and; provides social support for student achievement" (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993, p. 10). There has been extensive engagement by the Australian higher education sector to promote real world learning illustrated by the *National strategy on work integrated learning in university education* (2015) led by the Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN) as well as by individual institutions with commitments to integrate workplace learning with theory in a purposefully designed curriculum. The importance of connecting to real world environments is further emphasised in the recent work of Geoff Scott's (2016) Fellowship project on 'Assuring the quality of achievement standards and their valid assessment in Australian higher education'. Teachers need to have the skills and capacity to situate their courses and plan for learning that engages in real world environments.

An APTTS must reflect Australia's unique environmental and cultural context because teaching and learning quality cannot be separated from the context or environment in which it takes place. Australia has one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse populations in the world. The Australian population can now trace their origins from over 120 countries. Cultural, linguistic and religious diversity is an inevitable outcome of this history. Accordingly, teachers in Australian higher education need the disposition and capacity for culturally responsive teaching practices in order to

develop cultural competence, which includes the ability to critically reflect on one's own culture and professional paradigms in order to understand its cultural limitations and effect positive change (Universities Australia, 2011). Other factors that influence tertiary teaching in Australia include geographic and environmental diversity, which shape the Australian economy and capability to sustain and develop its population. Gender, socio-economic diversity and geographical remoteness are powerful influences on opportunity and access to university. International education is yet another feature of Australian higher education with significant numbers of international students studying in Australian tertiary institutions.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples of Australia are the inheritors of the oldest continuous cultural traditions in the world and remain the traditional owners and custodians of Australia. In particular, Australian higher educators have a responsibility to develop indigenous cultural competence for themselves and their students. This involves developing knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Australian cultures, histories and contemporary realities and awareness of Indigenous protocols, combined with the proficiency to engage and work effectively in Indigenous contexts congruent to the expectations of Indigenous Australian peoples (Universities Australia, 2011). This uniquely Australian environment requires that the educational standards be responsive to the current and future challenges and opportunities that such diversity presents.

Proposing an Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework for critique

The APTTS is presented as an Australian standards framework that represents the qualities and elements expected of a teacher in the Australian tertiary education context. Drawing on the definition, principles, literature and research on teaching that positively impacts on student learning and engagement, the following framework is presented for critique and comment as a draft Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework. The name of the framework itself is also presented for critique and comment. You are invited to consider and respond to the draft APTTS framework and respond to the questions that follow.

Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards Framework (Draft)

Environment (inclusive of support for students and engagement in a wider cultural context)

1. Establish effective, inclusive learning environments that recognise, support and embrace student diversity
2. Incorporate indigenous knowledges and perspectives into programs and practices according to a culturally competent pedagogical framework
3. Design learning experiences related to real world issues and environment

Professional Practice (inclusive of the effective design of curriculum and course content, a variety of learning experiences based on evidence of how students learn, soliciting and using feedback and effective assessment of learning outcomes.)

4. Conceptualise, plan and implement an appropriate learning program that demonstrates relevant disciplinary knowledge and expertise
5. Set and communicate expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge students
6. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of learning and effective teaching practices
7. Design effective assessment, providing timely and consequential feedback
8. Systematically and critically evaluate practice and engage in continuing professional development

Attributes and Capabilities (Inclusive of personal, relational and professional qualities)

9. Demonstrate professional qualities including the application of fair and ethical professional behaviours, preparation and prioritisation, contributing positively to membership and leadership roles
10. Demonstrate personal qualities of enthusiasm, resilience, self-management, self-reflection and interest in students
11. Establish and encourage collegial and respectful relationships with and between students and colleagues, working constructively with others
12. Contribute to professional, industry and related fields of practice that enhance teaching

Questions to consider in your critique and comments

1. Do you consider it worthwhile working towards a distinctive Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework?
2. Critique and comment on the draft name of Australian Professional Tertiary Teacher Standards (APTTS) framework.
3. Do the three categories of (1) Environment, (2) Professional practice and (3) Attributes and capabilities provide a useful distinction to categories the criteria? Suggest others, comment.
4. Do the 12 criteria adequately incorporate the qualities that tertiary teachers should be able to demonstrate? Suggest others, comment.
5. Can you suggest edits or comments on the framework wording to improve/simplify it?
6. Can you suggest ways to strengthen the rationale?
7. Other comments?

Please send your responses for this first round of feedback to denise.chalmers@uwa.edu.au by the **11 November.** Further rounds and widening circles of consultation will follow.

Process of consultation

It is intended to circulate this document through a process of widening circles, seeking feedback and critique from individuals and key stakeholders in Australian tertiary education. This is the first version for limited circulation seeking feedback and critique from individuals who hold key institutional or national roles to test the argument and the draft framework. It is intended that a revised version will be circulated to the following organisations to seek further feedback, and potentially, endorsement:

- Institutional peak bodies eg DVC(A) group of Universities Australia and through them, Universities Australia
- University networks (Go8, RUN, IRU etc.)
- Councils of Deans
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council
- Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD)
- Australasian Council on Open, Distance and e-Learning (ACODE)
- Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA).
- OLT Fellows Network
- OLT supported networks including the PEI and disciplinary networks.
- NUHEPs, Australian Council of Private Education and Training (ACEPT), Council of Private Higher Education (COPHE), Higher Education Private Providers Quality Network (HEPP-QN).
- Staff associations including the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU)
- Student organisations including National Union of Students (NUS) and Council of International Students Australia (CISA).
- Higher Education Quality Standards Panel and TEQSA, Department of Education and Training
- International organisations including Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence in New Zealand and the HEA.

Please note: A process of accreditation or peer review is not being suggested at this point in time. While it is recognised that this may be a concern to those considering this proposal, it is premature to progress a particular model or process, without initial agreement on an APTTS. Through a process of consultation, it is anticipated that opinions will be given on whether there should be a process of accreditation and review, and if so what these might be. The development and endorsement of an APPTS does not necessarily require the establishment of such processes.

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