



Association for Academic Language and Learning

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## RESPONSE TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION STANDARDS PANEL – CALL FOR COMMENT

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From the Association for Academic Language and Learning (AALL)

July 10<sup>th</sup> 2013

### Background

Academic language and learning educators employed across the Australian University sector provide language, oral and written communication, and numeracy support for research students (local and international) through faculty programs, extra curricula workshop programs, individual consultations, writing circles, the development of learning resources, and on-line support. The comments in this document are informed by this work, in conjunction with the reference points provided by:

- The *Good Practice Principles for English Language Proficiency for International Students in Australian Universities* (GPP) (2008)<sup>i</sup>;
- The *English Language Standards in Higher Education* (ELSHE) (2010)<sup>ii</sup> which were derived from the GPP and which apply to **all** students (domestic and international);
- The best practice principles for research training which were generated by the Australian Council Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies *Workshop to Explore Approaches to Quality Doctoral Research Training in Our Region, 15 – 16 February 2012*<sup>iii</sup>.

AALL has sought input from across its 300 strong membership in the development of this response.

### Comments Draft Standards for Research Training

**Q.3** AALL broadly supports the proposed Standards for Research Training.

**Q.4** AALL suggests the following inclusions and clarifications:

- Point 1(a): to include “an adequate level of English language proficiency” immediately after the wording “the preparedness of the candidate,...”.
- Point 3: what are the resource implications of requiring two supervisors in the case of Honours and Masters by Research students?
- Point 6: the intention of the words “present” and “publish” may be better represented as “communicate research findings in oral and written form to a standard appropriate to the AQF level of study”.
- We propose formal recognition of the "probation period" requirement for doctoral candidates, culminating in a formal confirmation of candidature upon the meeting of certain requirements.
- Reference points also include the GPP and ELSHE.

## Comments Draft Standards for Learning Outcomes (Research Training)

**Q.6.** AALL suggests clarification of the following points:

- Point 3(b): the inclusion of “the capacity to conduct research ... in collaboration” raises some questions. What are the implications for achieving this in the context of different disciplinary practices (e.g. team based versus individual research)? How is it envisaged that this capacity would be demonstrated?
- Point 3(d): is demonstration of publication skills realistic or desirable for all students (e.g. Honours and Masters by Research students)?

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<http://aall.org.au>

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<sup>i</sup><http://www.innovation.gov.au/HigherEducation/ResourcesAndPublications/HigherEducationPublications/OtherPublications/Pages/GoodPracticePrinciples.aspx>

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.aall.org.au/sites/default/files/FinalEnglishLanguageStandardsMay2012.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.innovation.gov.au/Research/ResearchWorkforceIssues/Documents/DoctoralResearchTraininginOurRegion.pdf>