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Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE

PRESTON CAMPUS

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Dear Colleague

Re: Call for Comment (Number 1, March 2013): Draft Standards for Course Design and Learning Outcomes

Following are a few comments. I have also taken the liberty of making up some suggestions in 'track changes' on the attached documents. -

- Q1. *Do you broadly support the proposed format for the standards? If not, why?*
Q2. *Do you support the inclusion of Reference Points as proposed? If not, why?*
Q3. *Do you wish to make any suggestions in relation to the format of the standards?*

The format and reference points seem like a reasonable idea.

Course Design (Coursework)

- Q4. *Do you broadly support the proposed standards for Course design? If not, why?*

Some standard statements are very broad. Some statements require editing to reduce confusion or to assist in specificity.

- Q5. *Do you wish to make any suggestions in relation to the specific content of the standards?*

See Attached and below

Point 6 seems to suggest that every learning outcome should be taught and assessed in every subject. This doesn't take into account the development of student capabilities across a course of study or that some subjects and the curriculum and assessment therein may not be relevant to all learning outcomes for a course.

Learning Outcomes (Coursework)

Q6 Do you broadly support the proposed standards for Learning Outcomes? If not, why?

Some standard statements are very broad. Some statements require editing to reduce confusion or to assist in specificity.

Q7 Do you wish to make any suggestions in relation to the specific content of the standards?

Point 7: Perhaps reword to

Learning outcomes for each course of study and the methods for assessment of those outcomes are informed by periodic reviews (at least every 5 years), which are informed by external accrediting, industry and disciplinary authorities that are relevant to the course of study.

Point 9 is poorly worded. The intent seems to be that a student's mark should accurately reflect the quality of the work, so that a student isn't given a HD for work that is only at a credit level standard. There should be something in this statement about grades being linked to specific criteria which student work needs to meet in order to be awarded a specific grade.

Yours sincerely

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Course Design (Coursework)

1. The provider ~~utilises~~ uses defined processes for designing and assuring the quality of the design of each course of study and the qualifications to which it leads.
 2. Processes for course design are approved and overseen by the provider's peak academic governing body.
 3. The provider assures Course design encompasses the rationale for the course of study, course structure, modes of delivery, learning outcomes, methods of assessment, entry requirements and pathways, programmed student workload, articulation arrangements, exit pathways, pathways to further study and any compulsory requirements for completion and that these features of all courses of study are documented and publically accessible in a current version.
 4. The nature and scope of the course and the expectations for student learning are consistent with the qualification to be awarded and informed by the *Australian Qualifications Framework*.
 5. The content of each course of study:
 - a. is drawn from current knowledge and scholarship in relevant academic disciplines
 - b. includes study of the underlying theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the academic disciplines and the field of study, and
 - c. encompasses relevant emerging concepts that are informed by recent scholarship, current research findings and advances in practice (where practice is applicable to the field of study).
 6. Each course of study is designed to enable equivalent student learning outcomes regardless of a student's place or mode of study.
 7. The peak academic governing body of the provider oversees periodic (at least every 5 years) review and improvement of the design of each course of study.
- Comment [N1]:** By whom? Should it be something like:
The provider uses acceptable education design processes for curriculum development to the identified qualification standard. Or delete based on point 3.
- Comment [N2]:** ?? is this needed? NSAs will generally have one academic board or committee for HE
- Comment [N3]:** You could effectively Delete 1 and include this specificity
- Comment [N4]:** Could also delete 1 and just have revised 3 and 4
- Comment [N5]:** Needs editing. Isn't b implicit in a and c?

Reference Points

- i. *Australian Qualifications Framework (January 2013)*.
- ii. The requirements for professional accreditation of the course of study and registration of graduates where applicable.



Learning Outcomes (Coursework)

1. The learning outcomes to be achieved on completion of a course of study are specified for each course of study.
2. The learning outcomes for each course of study are consistent with the qualification awarded, are comparable with those for courses of study that lead to the same or a similar qualification in Australia and are informed by international comparators.
3. The learning outcomes for each course of study are informed by:
 - a. the mastery of specific disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary knowledge and skills that characterise the field of study
 - b. the generic skills and attributes required of graduates
 - c. the application of generic skills and attributes in the context of the field of study including the communication skills required, and
 - d. the requirements of employment related to the field of study.
4. The relationship between the overall learning outcomes for each course of study and the learning outcomes for units that contribute to the course of study is demonstrable.
5. The specified learning outcomes for each course of study are available to the staff and students who are involved and are publically accessible in a current version.
6. The assessment of student learning, whether at unit level, course level, or in combination, encompasses all specified learning outcomes for each course of study.
7. Learning outcomes for each course of study and the methods for assessment of those outcomes are informed by periodic reviews (at least every 5 years), which take account of external reference points that are relevant to the course of study.
8. Methods of assessment are consistent with the types of learning outcomes being assessed and are capable of validly and reliably confirming that specified learning outcomes are achieved.
9. The grades awarded to students reflect the level of their attainment.
10. The grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for selected units within courses of study is referenced periodically (at least every 5 years) against the grading of students' achievement in comparable units or courses in other Australian institutions.

Comment [N1]: Mastery is a problematic term. Its associated with CBE which isn't a problem in itself but assumes too much of an undergraduate degree.

Comment [N2]: These are all related and could be tightened. Why separate out 'communication skills' any one of a number of 'generic or employability' skills could have been pulled out here? Maybe edit and make one grouping.

Comment [N3]: Unrealistic?

Comment [N4]: This is too loose and too long.

Comment [N5]: Why not just say, 'Strategies for external benchmarking of assessment and grading are in place'.

Reference Points

- i. *Australian Qualifications Framework (January 2013)*.
- ii. Learning outcomes statements developed for the field of study by Office for Learning and Teaching discipline communities or other disciplinary or professional bodies.
- iii. The requirements for professional accreditation of the course of study and registration of graduates where applicable.