

Investigation into the Provision of Professional Development for University Teaching in Australia: A Discussion Paper

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Acronyms

AAUT	Australian Awards for University Teaching
ACE	Australian College of Educators
AMA	Australian Medical Association
ATN	Australian Technology Network
AUTC	Australian University Teaching Committee
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
AUT	Association of University Teachers (UK)
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
CAPA	Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations
CAUT	Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching
<i>CHE</i>	<i>Chronicle of Higher Education</i>
CPE	Continuing Professional Education
CVCP	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (now Universities UK)
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
Hefce	Higher Education Funding Council for England
Go8	The Group of Eight
HERDSA	Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia
ILT	The Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (UK)
NATFHE	The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (UK)
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
NUS	National Union of Students
SEDA	The Staff and Educational Development Association (UK)
<i>THES</i>	<i>Times Higher Education Supplement</i>

Executive Summary

Summary of findings

This document reports on an investigation into:

1. the current central provision of activities related to professional development for the teaching role of academics in Australian universities; and
2. the attitude of key university stakeholders towards the professionalisation of the teaching role of academics.

A survey of 32 universities shows that the provision of both preparation programs and ongoing support for academic staff for their teaching role is uneven and unsystematic. Almost one-quarter of universities do not conduct any initial teaching preparation programs for their staff. Although two-thirds of the universities responding to the survey offer a formal award in teaching in higher education, academic staff enrolment in these courses is low across the sector. The number of universities reporting any systematic training for sessional staff was very low. While these data cannot be interpreted as a comment on the quality of teaching in Australian universities, they reveal a variable level of formal and informal professional development of teaching within institutions and a reluctance among the majority of university staff, especially sessional staff, to engage in the many programs available in the practice and theory of higher education.

The attitudes of stakeholders in the sector to a more systematic approach to the professionalisation of teaching at the university level were explored through interviews with a representative of peak higher education bodies and with groups of sessional, inexperienced and experienced academic staff in six universities. Most peak body representatives perceived that at best the effectiveness of current forms of teaching education for academics in Australian universities was variable while most focus groups reported that it was ineffective. All focus groups and all but one peak body representative responded that universities should be required to provide some form of teaching education for their academic staff. The perceived ineffectiveness of the current provision was seen to be influenced primarily by heavy workloads and a lack of resources precluding staff from taking and being offered teaching education opportunities.

Based on the results of the survey on current practices in universities, the views of key stakeholders and academic staff, and current developments in university teaching, both in Australia and overseas, a series of recommendations concerning the professionalisation of university teaching is proposed. Some may object that to focus on the professionalisation of the teaching role of academics could lead to a breach of 'the idea of the university' as a place where research informs teaching and vice versa. However, it is widely agreed that while the research role of academic work is professionalised through doctoral study and active engagement in a scholarly community, there is no commensurate rigour in the preparation and ongoing support for the teaching role.

Recommendations

1. All staff new to university teaching should be required to complete either a formal preparation program in university teaching or a portfolio demonstrating their teaching competence as part of their probation requirements.
2. Given the requirements for (a) quality assurance, (b) the need for a form of recognition that is portable, and (c) the need to embed university teaching in a scholarly framework subject to peer review, teaching preparation programs and teaching portfolios should form part of formal award courses.
3. The minimum standard required for professional practice as a university teacher should be that represented by the Graduate Certificate level. Possession of a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education would act as a proxy for teaching expertise just as possession of a Masters/PhD reflects discipline expertise.
4. Graduate Certificates in Higher Education should incorporate assessment of learning outcomes related to both theoretical knowledge about student learning as well as practical skills in facilitating learning.
5. The structure of Graduate Certificate in Higher Education programs should be flexible enough to allow for the needs and characteristics of different institutions and disciplinary fields, both in terms of mode of delivery and of curriculum.
6. Institutions should be specifically funded as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources (mainly in the form of time release) to support **new** staff while they obtain appropriate qualifications in teaching as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education. This would entail the establishment of a national Teaching Quality Fund. Funding to institutions would be based on actual numbers of teaching staff at each institution, individual missions, discipline specialties and staffing profiles. Individual institutions would be responsible and accountable for the dispersal of funds for either formal programs of teaching offered in their own institution, or for enrolment of their staff in another institution's programs.
7. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources (mainly in the form of time release) to support **existing** university teaching staff who do not possess higher education qualifications in teaching to undertake an award course as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education.
8. There should be an expectation that sessional staff undertake a minimal level of teaching preparation before being offered a contract for teaching. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources for this development, including payment of sessional staff for teaching development time.
9. Preparation programs for sessional teaching staff should, as a minimum, represent components of an accredited Graduate Certificate of Higher Education. This would enable staff wishing to complete a Graduate Certificate to do so.

10. Institutions should either provide, or provide access to, further qualifications in higher education building on the Graduate Certificate as part of their overall strategy of ongoing staff development and quality enhancement.
11. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund through their operating grant to provide comprehensive ongoing professional development programs for their teaching staff as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education.
12. Schemes which recognise individuals who have demonstrated high quality teaching, such as the new Fellowship membership scheme of the Higher Education, Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), should be encouraged.
13. Consideration should be given to accrediting Graduate Certificate in Higher Education programs at a national level with a new body, the Australian University Teaching Quality Council, consisting of key stakeholders including practitioners, student representatives and industrial bodies in order to provide a mechanism for benchmarking, peer review and quality assurance.
14. Since professionalisation of university teaching is an incremental process, there should be a staged implementation of these recommendations beginning with the distribution of this Discussion Paper to all stakeholders and following the stages outlined in section 5.2 of this paper.

1. Introduction, aims, rationale and methodology

... the academic profession needs training in much the same way as academics consider that other professions need it and indeed provide it for them. This means that the training itself must be professional, that it should normally lead to recognized academic qualifications, that it should be closely allied to practice, and that – above all – it must be associated with relevant research. (Elton 1987, p.76)

1.1 Introduction

Teaching in higher education as it is currently practised in Australia represents something of an enigma. Over recent years there has been a growing consensus as to what constitutes effective teaching in higher education building on the growing field of higher education research (Biggs 1999; Johnston 1996; Kember 1997; Kreber 2000; Ramsden 1992; Rowland & Barton 1994). There are now numerous guides to teaching in higher education (e.g. Cannon & Newble 2000; Fry et al. 1999; McKeachie 1999; Race 1999) and a growing literature on improving teaching through both staff development (Andresen 1995b; Beaty 1998; Elton 1987; Coffey & Gibbs 2000; Gibbs & Coffey 2000; Land 2001; Webb 1996; Webb & Murphy 2000; Zuber-Skerrit 1992) and the scholarship of teaching (Boyer 1990; Huber & Morreale 2002; Hutchings and Schulman 1999; Schulman 1987). However, despite the central importance of teaching in higher education, and our growing understanding of how to support the development of teaching expertise, the way we prepare and support staff for their teaching role in universities remains largely unsystematic and *ad hoc*.

In a parallel but related development, there is a growing debate around the changing nature of academic work and the concept of professionalisation in both academic work in general (Avis 1999; Nixon 1996; Nixon et al. 1998; O'Neill & Meek 1994; Taylor 1999; Watts 2000) and teaching in particular (Carr 2000; Denning 1999; Downie 1990; Hargreaves 2000; McLean & Blackwell 1997; Sockett 1993; Walker 2001; Warren Piper 1994). The professionalisation of higher education teaching will require the articulation of the professional knowledge base that underpins the practice of university teaching, the ways staff develop this professional knowledge, agreed standards of professional practice and the ways in which attainment of these standards of professional practice can be validated and recognised publicly.

Advancing the idea of the professionalisation of university teaching will depend on debate on this issue being initiated and sustained by the academic community. However, this debate needs to be informed by investigations into both universities' current practices in preparing and supporting their staff for their teaching role, and the attitudes of academic staff to the professionalisation of university teaching and the role of teaching in the context of academic work.

1.2 Aims and rationale of the project

This document reports on an investigation into:

1. the current central provision of activities related to professional development for the teaching role of academics in Australian universities; and
2. the attitudes of key university stakeholders towards the professionalisation of the teaching role of academics.

The last ten years have seen an increasing concern with the standard of teaching in Australian higher education, consequent on the need to provide quality assurance in an increasingly competitive and international environment. Although a number of institutions have instituted formal preparation programs for new teaching staff, and others offer non-credit seminars for enhancing teaching, and/or Graduate Certificate award programs in higher education, anecdotal evidence suggests that participation in such programs is small. This reflects both the existing recognition and reward systems for teaching in universities as well as the lack of accepted ways of demonstrating professional competence in teaching. While initiatives like the AAUT and AUTC have enhanced the status of university teaching, and have showcased the accomplishments of some individuals, there is no systemic approach to the professionalisation of teaching in higher education. That is to say, no agency has emerged to determine standards of professional practice, to validate the quality of professional development and support provided to teaching staff, or to establish a way of recognising the attainment of professional competence.

The professionalisation of teaching in higher education has been the topic of a number of inquiries into the sector and has been under consideration by the peak Australian professional association for teaching development in higher education, HERDSA, for a number of years. It has been the subject of specific recommendations of a large and widely referenced CAUT project (Ramsden et al.1995), the West Report *Learning for life: The review of higher education financing and policy* (Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy 1997), and more recently the second Discussion paper in the Crossroads series, *Striving for Quality* (2002b). Thus far, no organisation has assumed the role of progressing the recommendations emanating from these reports and implementing this agenda.

In light of the changing context for the higher education sector worldwide, and as the Australian sector prepares its responses to the National Quality Framework and the Federal Government's proposed major reform process, it is imperative that the sector and the Federal Government urgently address the issue of the professionalisation of university teaching.

The nature of the professionalisation of teaching is taken up in the next section. In brief, we use the term to describe university teaching as akin to other professions, in its requirements for explicit, minimum standards for professional practice, the establishment of recognised standards and the provision of adequate preparation and ongoing professional development for professional practice. Throughout this report, academic or staff development is taken to refer to the development of university teaching.

1.3 Methodology

In this research the authors chose to use survey and interview techniques to gather quantitative and qualitative data. Both types of data were sought to capture a sense of prevalence of stakeholder opinions and teaching development opportunities as well as the richness and diversity of beliefs and perceptions of stakeholders. This approach was used to gather data that would at the very least allow the authors to develop descriptions of the current central provision of teaching development in universities, and stakeholder perceptions of that provision, as well as potentially generate grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967).

The authors drafted both the survey and semi-structured interview questions. To validate these questions they were sent to four experts in the field, including a DEST representative, describing the project and asking for feedback on the questions. Three individuals responded with suggestions for clarifying the wording of some of the questions. Their suggestions were incorporated into the survey instrument and the interview schedule.

At commencement of the project, 34 of the 38 Australian universities were believed to have central teaching development units¹. Directors/senior managers of those units were sent the survey instrument and asked to provide information on the central provision of teaching development opportunities in their university (refer to Appendix 1 for this instrument). 33² responses were received, sometimes after a follow up telephone call. The data from the survey is summarised in chapter 3.

In addition the views of key stakeholders with regard to the provision, effectiveness and possible models of teaching development were sought through interviews and focus groups (refer to Appendix 2 for the interview and focus group schedules). Interviews were requested with representatives of peak bodies including the Presidents of NTEU, NUS, CAPA, HERDSA, the chairs or executive directors of AVCC, ACE³, AUTC, AUQA⁴ and a representative of DEST⁵ (Higher Education). Interviews were held with representatives of six of the nine representatives of these bodies, AUTC, AVCC, CAPA, HERDSA, NTEU and NUS. A written response from the Executive Director of AUQA is also quoted where relevant.

Focus groups were held with experienced, inexperienced and sessional teachers in a broadly representative sample of the higher education sector. This sample included universities from the ATN and the Go8 groups as well as a regional university and a new university. There was no attempt to mirror the proportions of staff in particular categories (i.e. sessional staff), or different levels of staff, nor were focus group staff controlled for gender representation (coincidentally, the majority of staff interviewed

¹ Also referred to as educational/ academic and professional development units.

² Including a response from a university to say that it no longer had a central teaching development unit.

³ The Australian Council for Education did not take part in the interviews for this project but suggested that it might be useful to explore their experiences of validation in the secondary sector, notwithstanding the fundamental differences in pedagogical approach between the two sectors.

⁴ The Executive Director of AUQA found it difficult to give an 'official' response to our interview questions and chose instead to respond with several statements from which quotes have been drawn where relevant.

⁵ The DEST representative felt unable to give an 'official' position on the topics in the interview schedule given that DEST was conducting a review to elucidate the views of the higher education sector.

were female). Staff came from a wide variety of disciplines. The 13 focus groups consisted of six groups of experienced academics, four groups of inexperienced academics (conceived as having taught in universities for less than three years), two groups of inexperienced and part-time academics, and one group of sessional academics. Group sizes ranged from two to 15 with a total of 59 academics involved in the focus groups.

All of the interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and the tapes transcribed. Not all of the stakeholders answered all of the questions asked. Each author summarised and analysed the transcriptions of the interviews and focus groups that s/he held. Stakeholder responses were summarised in terms of responses to each question. Summaries for the focus groups indicated whether the members of the group came to a consensus for each question or if members disagreed in their responses to the question. All transcripts were also analysed for themes and patterns of responses between the transcripts. Quotes were extracted to support the themes. The transcripts were also analysed for quotes that countered the themes. Peak body representatives were sent the chapter in which they were quoted and asked to validate their responses.

2. Changing Contexts

The attitude that exists within academia that one doesn't train to teach will not be possible in the future. University teaching is quite different from school teaching. If academics are to enjoy the freedom to develop their own courses and control their examination and assessment methods, they must be properly qualified to do so. (Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy 1997, p.57)

It is ironic that academics – the professionals who nurture all other professionals in every field of endeavour – continue to eschew professional qualifications for themselves. (Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy 1997, p.147)

2.1 New imperatives

The arguments for professionalisation of the teaching role have never been stronger.

- As the university sector increases in size, a larger student body is inevitably more diverse, and this requires greater attention to understanding ways of enhancing the learning of individuals with varying degrees of prior knowledge, skills, and preparation for tertiary study, rather than teaching to an assumed-knowledge 'elite'. International students now contribute to 'the business of borderless education' in Australia, making education the country's fifth highest income earner. Continuation of this situation is critical not only to the country as a whole, but increasingly to the financial situation of individual universities, which receive a high proportion of their funding from their 'profit making' international enrolments. Since the majority of our students are in taught programs, rather than research programs, enhancing the quality of teaching is essential to the maintenance of Australia's competitive position in the international student market.
- This expansion of the student cohort is also characterised by a wider spread in the age range of students, with a greater proportion of 'adult students', defined here as non-school-leavers, generally over 24, the 'earner-learners' of *The Business of Borderless Education* report (Cunningham et al. 2000). Their needs are less for the socialisation and maturation necessary for school-leavers, and more for the qualifications and skills per se, and although they need more flexibility in terms of time and convenience, they also demand face-to-face contact with fellow students and teachers (Cunningham et al. 2000).
- A theoretical basis for post-school learning and teaching emerged only with the massification of higher education beginning in the late 1960s; a distinct pedagogy of higher education penetrated the discourse of the university only in the 1980s. There now exists a rich research-based literature in tertiary student learning, effective teaching, and the development of teaching practice (see, for example, Laurillard 1993; Biggs 1999; Prosser & Trigwell 1998; Ramsden 1992). In spite

of these developments, this literature is not widely known by the majority of academics.

- As the higher education sector began to reflect greater institutional differentiation, and economics emerged as a dominant ideology, some in the sector began to realise that a re-thinking of the role of universities in society was in order. Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990) proposed a disaggregation of academic work, into the scholarship of discovery, of integration, application and teaching. This work was carried on by Glassick et al. (1997) and others, and has resulted in a major reassessment in some institutions of the ways in which they recognise achievement and promote staff.
- A further factor in imperatives driving change in teacher preparation and continuing professional development is the advent of new technologies, and their application to the administrative and teaching functions within universities. Every aspect of the teaching function, from tutorial allocations to multimedia lecture presentations, to online resources and communication with students, now requires at least minimal skills in new technologies, and more importantly, an understanding of the pedagogical implications of 'digital delivery'. Hence teachers must learn not only the 'how' of operating technical equipment and software, but also how to facilitate learning in a digital environment. In the light of this imperative, it is somewhat perplexing that in the 2000 report to DEST of their online initiatives, only 10 universities report offering workshops in online delivery, only six offer educational development workshops related to online delivery, and six offer technical assistance to staff (Bell et al. 2002, p.22). (It is unclear from the report if the same six universities are offering all forms of support.)
- As a consequence of both the new technologies, and the disaggregation or 'unbundling' of academic work (Coaldrake & Stedman 1998), the lone teacher approach to curriculum development, delivery and assessment is rapidly disappearing from universities. Collaborative team work involves liaison with specialist curriculum designers, instructional designers, graphic designers, programmers, and a host of learning support staff such as librarians, technicians and learning skills advisers, all of whom contribute to teaching quality, and to the complexity of teaching practice (Coaldrake & Stedman 1998). This requires a radical rethink of the professional knowledge related to university teaching, and how this knowledge should be disseminated to university staff.
- Structural change in the funding of the university sector, combined with management decisions on increasing 'flexibility' in staffing appointments, has also resulted in greater separation of "the production of knowledge (research) and its distribution (teaching)" (Rowland et al. 1998, p.134). This separation is contestable, and is regarded by many academics, such as Rowland et al. and the academics in Dunkin's (1994) survey, as inappropriate. In McInnes' (1999) survey, 73 per cent of academics reported an interest in both teaching and research. However, 42 per cent recorded a greater interest in research, and only 21 per cent overall were primarily interested in teaching, and only 15 per cent in the 'older' universities. Furthermore, most studies of the higher education sector reveal a clear perception that teaching is not valued as much as research (Ramsden

et al. 1995). Good teaching, in Dunkin's words (1994, p.86) "lacks universal currency...in the scholarly community" while researching has such a currency (i.e. publication), and financial reward for the institution via the research quantum. Increasing concentration on research or teaching activities in individual staff is a reality, and it reflects the figures of research inactivity by many staff. Ramsden (1998), for example, reports that 80 per cent of publications are produced by 40 per cent of staff in Australian universities and that 50 per cent are produced by 14 per cent of staff. The Crossroads Overview Discussion paper (Table d5. *Diversity and performance of Australian universities – research*) suggests even fewer academics engage in publishable research (DEST 2002a). Of the 82,009 FTE staff in 2000, only 19,031 actual persons produced a DEST-eligible publication. (Nevertheless it should be noted that DEST criteria until 2001 automatically disqualified a number of the new interdisciplinary and vocational areas, where 'publication' is in community service domains or is in media that lie outside the criteria, such as electronic non-refereed articles. The new area of Creative Industries is particularly disadvantaged in this respect.)

- At the same time, casualisation of the academic workforce has proceeded apace: 78 per cent of new employment growth in the sector is casual, according to NTEU figures (*Campus Review*, May 1-7 2002, p.3). Whether this casualisation reflects a university's mission to connect university learning to professional practice through the employment of practising professionals who can bring 'relevance' to curricula, or a management response to shrinking budgets and more 'flexible' staffing arrangements which can react to market changes from year to year, is irrelevant to this report. This casualisation is of concern. First, part-time staff are more likely to be hired for their vocational currency than for their teaching skills. Second, the ability of sessional staff to engage in teacher education is problematic because such staff are rarely able to attend workshops, seminars and programs designed for a full-time cohort, and few universities (as this report demonstrates) have a systematic and compensated program of professional development for sessional and part-time staff. Third, since they are often hired in response to unexpected student numbers, in an *ad hoc* manner, quality control measures are not as rigorous (*THES*, May 17 2002, p.20). This increasing casualisation suggests the need for new approaches to ensuring teaching quality, and the adoption of models other than the traditional 'teaching development workshop', which may be more appropriate to a full-time permanent staff cohort.
- Increasing demands for public accountability in higher education have led to the creation of the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). AUQA will not set arbitrary absolute criteria with respect to the evaluation of teaching but will expect each institution to describe and justify the way it sets its own standards (for example by reference to external benchmarks) and to have mechanisms for achieving those standards and monitoring their achievement (AUQA 2002). This clearly calls for the introduction of a more systematic and open approach to the way university staff are prepared for their teaching role and the way achievement of minimal professional standards for teaching can be validated.
- Yet another factor driving a focus on teaching quality is the 'vocationalisation of the curriculum' (Elliott 1998, p.162). As universities increasingly incorporate job relevant skills into degree programs, and students increasingly prefer programs

with immediate job prospects, curriculum change is demanding less ‘theoretical’ discipline background, with the implication that a teacher in this setting is less the ‘expert’ implied by research than an integrator and applier of scholarship. The curriculum accordingly requires a different pedagogical approach, one characterised more by an active ‘learning by doing’, with more workplace-based education. Equally, postgraduate enrolments in CPE programs have boomed with the demand for practice-orientated curricula, with ‘industry-practitioner’ teaching staff in consequent demand. Again, this requires a re-orientation of the professional development of academic staff towards an action learning approach.

- A further imperative is the rise of private tertiary providers, at this stage mainly in the US, which verify the quality of their teaching by insisting that potential employees undertake a training program before a contract is offered, and at their own expense (Cunningham et al. 2000). Such providers (e.g. DeVry, University of Phoenix) attract a different clientele from that in state institutions, and student satisfaction with teaching is promoted as a competitive advantage to the institution.

These changing contexts increase the pressure on the system and on individual staff to ensure the quality of teaching in universities.

With demands for ‘increased productivity’ in the Crossroads Discussion Paper, academics will come under pressure for more accountability in relation to their use of time, even though that time is decreasingly paid from the public purse. Other sectors such as telecommunications and technology companies are moving increasingly towards a ‘knowledge management approach’ to their staff development, in which HR/performance management is linked to continuing employment and remuneration through the routine identification of skills gaps, recommendations for appropriate training, and tracking an individual’s progress to professional learning goals. This move, coupled with universities themselves seeking to track their students’ every achievement through digital portfolios of curricular and non-curricular achievements, suggests it will be difficult for universities to justify current informal methods of professional development and lack of certification with respect to teaching competence. Tertiary academics must have sufficient knowledge of teaching as a professional activity, including knowing the discourse of teaching and learning, to be able to respond at an individual level to the demands that will be placed on them.

These changing contexts and subsequent pressures make it imperative that the sector and national government commence the urgent task of professionalisation of university teaching. As is demonstrated in the next section, the process has stalled in Australia for over a decade, and has flickered intermittently overseas.

2.2 The professionalisation of teaching in higher education

(They) are independent and very hard to manage. They are intelligent, altruistic in their own fashion. They are almost obsessive about the ethics and responsibilities of their profession – they don't like anyone from within the profession looking over their shoulder, and they will not tolerate anyone from outside looking over their shoulder. (Bachelard 2002)

This observation was made not of tertiary teachers, but of doctors. It parallels the long-held belief that academics by nature are resistant to organisation that is not related to their disciplinary affiliation (Becher & Trowler 2001), and to any suggestion of 'inspection' of their teaching role in universities. By contrast, it is acknowledged that academics readily proffer their research to peer scrutiny through refereed publication.

The first issue is whether teaching qualifies as a 'profession' at all. Imposed regimes of professionalisation have a checkered history. Sociological studies of the professions regularly attempt to define how a profession is constructed over time.

However, there appears to be general agreement that ideally, if not in fact, a profession is characterised by dedication to the community as a whole, 'the public interest', even before an individual's dedication to the profession, or their own interests as a practitioner in it (Australian Council of Professions, quoted in ACE, 2001; Boreham, Pemberton & Wilson 1976). For ACE (2001, p.4), this is represented by the ideal of maximising the potential of the individual student in all spheres of his or her life. To be a member of a 'profession' implies a high level pre-entry formal qualification, and a degree of autonomy in practice balanced by considerations of public responsibility and objectivity in dealing with 'clients'. A profession also rests on the increasingly contested notion of "the claims made by most professionals that they are the possessors of complex and esoteric knowledge which is beyond the understanding of the untrained individual" (Boreham, Pemberton & Wilson 1976, p.1), and the attitudes and values deemed critical in the profession.

In higher education, this "complex and esoteric knowledge" has conventionally been represented by expert knowledge at the doctoral level of a discipline area such as Physics or Literature. Hence the doctorate became a proxy for teaching quality. Knowledge of teaching and learning as a discrete knowledge domain has attracted little cachet. Yet for society at large, this teaching is the most 'visible' role of a university. Only in recent years has there been some argument about the role of academics as 'dual professionals' (Warren Piper 1994; Anderson 1996), with knowledge of both a discipline and the educational processes of conveying that discipline. Indeed, in his chapter in Boreham, Pemberton & Wilson (1976, p.75), *The Professions in Australia*, Jones states:

If it is the dual role of the academic as teacher and researcher which largely determines the high status of academics, there is often in practice considerable tension between research and teaching. (...) teaching ability probably can be acquired without any formal training ("teaching methods" are often no more than manipulative "management" techniques in any case)...

Such provocative observations are less likely to be made publicly than they were 25 years ago, but the attitude lingers on (see Illing & Madden 2002). Pemberton and

Boreham (1976) also refer to the “semi-profession” of teaching, to explain the lower regard in which ‘teaching’ and ‘teacher’ are held. Certainly, many academics perceive that the reward system in universities privileges research over teaching: 91 per cent of McInnes’ (1999) academics believed this to be the case, though 95 per cent believed teaching **should** be rewarded.

Given the criterion of an entry-level qualification as a pre-condition of a defined profession, it is clear that one of the reasons for the slow emergence of tertiary teaching as a second professional role for discipline specialists is the lack of a widely recognised and nationally accepted teaching qualification. The McInnes (1999) survey reports that only one-third of academics had some form of initial training for their teaching role, and only one-quarter had undertaken some form of professional development for teaching in the past two years. Of these, 86 per cent rated this training as ‘very or fairly helpful’.

This lack of initial training is problematic not only because it renders entrants to tertiary teaching dependent on their own experience of university teaching. It also detracts from the worth of the activity itself. As Pemberton and Boreham (1976) indicate, socialisation into a profession occurs through the period and process of gaining formal qualifications. And as we will see below, only in the last decade, in the main, and only for a few, have formal qualifications in tertiary education been available. Indeed, higher education as at least a sub-discipline of education has itself only emerged as a result of the massification of higher education in the 1970s, and the work undertaken by early informal educators such as Malcolm Knowles (1970) into adult learning, and its distinctive difference from school-age learning.

The issue of standards is a critical one in any move to professionalise teaching at universities. Who determines standards? By what authority? Who enforces them? What ‘penalties’ should apply for failure in standards? Are there minimal standards for entry-level professionals, and ‘accomplished’ standards for ‘good’ ‘experienced’ teachers, as ACE (2001, p.2) suggests?

Most professions arrogate the right to determine entry standards to a self-regulating body, usually via a rigorous certification of a pre-entry award program, followed by a period of experience and Continuing Professional Education (CPE). Such a body speaks publicly on behalf of the profession, with a voice made credible over a period of time. It also assumes responsibility for excluding from practice, members who through incompetence or a breach of the ethics expected in the profession, bring the profession into disrepute.

Similarly, the issue of registration is critical. Other professions such as medicine and accountancy, and in some states such as Queensland, secondary school teaching, require registration for employment and insurance purposes. Indeed, the 2002 crisis in medical insurance has prompted renewed calls for more stringency in maintaining registration of doctors through demonstration of competence. The Australian Medical Association (AMA) of Queensland has announced that surgeons identified as inept should be excluded from surgery. It was important for the AMA to do this itself, said the Queensland President Bill Glasson, “or essentially someone else will get your house in order for you, maybe not to your liking” (*The Courier Mail*, May 4 2002, p.3). This argument has often been made to university teachers as well, though with little effect thus far.

However, there has been no Australian support for a register of national higher education teachers, and this issue is seen as distinct from the matter of accreditation, and “not an issue in this debate” (Report of HERDSA Workshop on the Accreditation of University Teaching 1997).

Other professional groups are similarly conscious that demands for accountability require a new professionalisation of their roles. The Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP) has responded to calls for accountability in the secondary sector by trialling accreditation for principals, with a view to introducing it throughout the sector by 2007 (*The Courier Mail*, May 4 2002, p. 4). The scheme would require principals to undertake a range of professional development activities, such as postgraduate study, mentoring, conferences, and professional reading, over 12 months, after which candidates would be assessed by a panel of Education Queensland and university academics for the QASSP, which would accredit its own members. Accreditation would not be linked to promotion or pay, but would rather give credibility to applications for promotion. (However, it is not clear how this will occur: as all principals progressively gain accreditation, presumably there is less advantage to gaining accreditation.) Funding for the scheme would come from Education Queensland, the QASSP, and applicants. In New South Wales, an Institute of Teachers will move to establish standards of practice for teaching at beginning and experienced levels, and an accreditation process (*The Weekend Australian* June 8-9 2002, p.11). Similar moves are underway in Victoria for school and VET teaching (*Campus Review*, May 29 – June 4 2002, p.8).

Attempts to pursue professionalisation of higher education teaching have had a long history in Australia as in the UK (see Anderson 1996). The Williams Report (1979) had urged a national scheme as a condition of service in 1979, and while the AVCC established a working party into the notion, nothing eventuated. However, as O’Neill and Meek (1994, p.97) note:

... the self-regulation of professions has as much to do with the politics of knowledge as with anything else. This is especially so for the academic profession, with its stake in controlling knowledge production and dissemination.

It might further be noted that university academics’ control of the production and dissemination of knowledge has been severely eroded by new loci of knowledge in the eight years since that observation was made, and by new technologies of dissemination. As O’Neill and Meek observe, increasing casualisation in employment in universities also militates against a professional academic role.

It would therefore seem timely to review possible pathways to professionalisation of university teaching.

2.3 Recent developments in Australia and overseas

Australian developments

In his arguments for professionalisation of the academic development role through the mid-1990s, Andresen (1995a, p.7) suggests that a professional society needs first to establish the matters on which its members will ‘exercise their own knowledge, skills

and judgements on behalf of their clients without interference from outside control', in other words, to 'mark out their territory'. It should then assert its authority as the peak body for judgements in that domain, including contributing to public policy. A professional society should also have a shared discourse or language in which its members can research, and reflect on their practice, and it should assume accountability for the good reputation of its members through judgement on the abilities of individual members.

Although Andresen himself was arguing for a professional association of academic developers, the same general argument could be applied to staff teaching in universities. Andresen argues for a Code of Practice as a starting point. It is instructive that it was the AVCC, not a staff body, that first developed a Draft Code of Practice for University Teaching in 1991. This sought to gain sector-wide policy decisions on promotion through teaching, regular and routine assessment of teachers by Heads of Department, and external reviews, as well as the introduction of formal teaching qualifications. Responses appear to have been unfavourable to sector-wide agreement.

The AVCC's *Guidelines for Effective University Teaching* (1993) provided a very clear statement with respect to what constitutes effective teaching:

University teaching is a profession and a scholarly activity which draws on a high level of competence and expertise in the discipline and/or relevant professional experience together with highly developed communication and interpersonal skills.

As professionals, university teachers need to be appropriate role models and exhibit to their students a commitment to scholarly values, to life long learning, to professional and personal growth through critical reflection and self-evaluation, to accountability for their own professional activities, and to a responsible and ethical practice of their profession.

The AVCC made it clear that institutions have a responsibility to support this professional approach to teaching. In particular they suggested that institutions should provide "*professional development programs, personnel or units to assist all staff in defining and enhancing their teaching role and, in particular, programs aimed at the induction of staff new to teaching, including formal courses leading to certification*". However, these were only guidelines and while the AVCC recommended that "*each institution develop, within the framework set by these Guidelines, its own set of guidelines which reflect institutional ethos and priorities*", it is clear that the provision of and participation in these programs is less than that which would be considered satisfactory for quality assurance across the sector. However, in its submission to the Review of Higher Education in 2002, AVCC clearly rejected the notion of the accreditation of university teachers (*Campus Review* October 2-8 2002, p.2), seemingly because accreditation might encourage 'teaching only' positions in universities. Since such positions already exist *de facto* in the high proportion of sessional staff in universities, and research inactive academics, this argument seems disingenuous.

The increased interest in the quality of higher education in the 1990's included consideration of the role played by the adequate preparation of academic staff for their teaching role. The Higher Education Council's report *Higher Education: Achieving Quality* (Higher Education Council 1992) noted that:

Many universities are now developing formal programs in tertiary teaching for new academic staff... The provision of such training should not be seen as an imposition upon staff, but rather as an enabling device; it will encourage them to perform at the highest possible standard as teachers, just as the years of research training of most academics enable them to undertake high quality research during their academic careers. (p.38)

Formal programs were devised with the prospect that academics would respond to an award program consistent with the university ethos of study leading to a qualification, and a recognition that higher education was in itself a worthy field of scholarship and research. The National Staff Development Fund which followed the Dawkins' reforms of the 1980's was designed to contribute to teaching quality, but funds were primarily directed to funding release for staff to obtain research degrees, especially in the 'new' universities.

Better recognition of good teaching was the focus of a 1995 CAUT funded project *Recognising and Rewarding Good Teaching in Australian Higher Education* (Ramsden et al. 1995). The report concluded that, amongst other things, "...universities need to provide explicit criteria of good teaching, based on up to date knowledge, and must establish clear standards for teaching at different levels of appointment. Minimum standards of competence in teaching for appointments to academic positions are desirable" p.vi. A key to the recognition and improvement of good teaching was seen to be the development of a more professional approach to university teaching including a qualification in university teaching.

The report contained nineteen recommendations including that universities should:

- articulate more explicit criteria and standards of good teaching;
- establish minimum standards of teaching performance, linked to these criteria for all levels of appointment;
- expect all newly-appointed academic staff to become qualified as university teachers as a condition of confirmation or promotion; and
- accelerate progress towards a profession of university teaching.

These recommendations embody a number of key ideas, in particular the notions of standards, qualifications and professionalism. Furthermore, the report recognised the need for a more coherent national approach to university teaching and argued that "*a consistent national policy for greater valuing of university teaching, which allows for institutional diversity, is desirable*" p.viii.

Prompted by the general interest in teaching quality in universities and the outcomes of the CAUT Project (Ramsden et al. 1995), Griffith Institute of Higher Education conducted a 1996 symposium on *Preparing University Teachers in Australia and New Zealand*. Murdoch University conducted a project entitled *A Competency Framework for Effective Teaching* (Barrett et al. 1997) which had the clear aim of embedding Murdoch's own goals for teaching, and its criteria for appointment and promotion with principles of good teaching and resulted in the development of five core competency strands for university teaching and four additional teacher leadership competency strands. For each of the strands the project identified both explicit descriptions of competencies and indicators by which attainment of the competencies could be

recognised. However, it is not clear that this framework has been taken up and implemented widely.

Interest groups with an existing or potential brief in university teaching development have attempted to raise the issue of standards and/or accreditation with more or less enthusiasm for the past decade. Staff developers and higher education researchers have been at the forefront of the discussion (see Baume & Baume 1997; O'Neill & Meek 1994).

The specific issue of recognising the attainment of teaching competence was taken up by the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA). Following a workshop with key stakeholders, HERDSA issued a discussion paper *The Accreditation of University Teachers: A HERDSA Discussion Paper* (HERDSA 1997). Arguments in favour of accreditation canvassed by HERDSA included:

- the urgency for addressing the issue before it is imposed by an external body;
- the increasing need for portability of qualifications across institutions;
- the apparent hypocrisy of imposing criteria and standards on students while not accepting them for academic's professional practice;
- the increasing need to demonstrate accountability and provide quality assurance with respect to teaching and student learning outcomes;
- the protection of professional status; and
- its potential to improve the overall quality of student learning outcomes.

Arguments put forward against accreditation included:

- the lack of any outside pressure for accreditation;
- the irrelevance of generic programs in teacher training divorced from the disciplinary context of academic work; and
- the diverse nature of teaching in higher education.

In addition to these arguments against accreditation was added the widely held notion that any form of "teacher training" for university academics would be demeaning for individuals considered to be experts in their specialist field of knowledge and that any move to promote the teaching role of academics would potentially erode the research ethos of universities.

The HERDSA discussion paper argued that any accreditation scheme had to recognise the need to:

- get support from all the key stakeholders including the NTEU, AVCC, NUS and CAPA;
- allow for multiple pathways to accreditation to accommodate different disciplinary contexts and different academic roles;
- build on the extensive existing work already in place in universities in the area of preparing and supporting academic staff for their teaching role;
- build on the extensive knowledge that now exists about the development of teaching expertise and particularly the need for staff to develop their own

approach to professional practice rather than simply applying a set of externally imposed prescriptions and techniques; and

- incorporate an acceptable way to recognise the professional expertise of existing staff.

HERDSA's position in 1997 was definite in that any scheme should be developmental and voluntary; be flexible in terms of pathways and routes; be portable; and should recognise the diversity of individuals, career stages, and disciplines. Its *Discussion Document* defines accreditation as "the formal acknowledgement of professional status achieved by individual university teachers" (HERDSA 1997, p.14). The implied register was not to be considered 'exclusive' or exclusionary; multiple pathways were to be promoted; and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) was to be incorporated into any scheme. The document also canvassed which body might take responsibility for accreditation, nominating HERDSA itself, and concluding then that "it is unlikely that it could be the accrediting body" (HERDSA 1997, p.18), and suggesting a revamped NTEU or a new society or a new national accrediting agency, and dismissing the potential of an AVCC-sponsored scheme. It also canvassed four models: 1) individuals apply for accreditation to a body which directly validates their individual ability; 2) a body recognises 'pathways' such as award schemes or portfolios, and the pathway is validated by the body, thus validating the individual; 3) only programs are accredited, not individuals; 4) self-accreditation without monitoring or formal processes. The *Discussion Document* gave mild endorsement to the establishment of a national committee of stakeholders, and a variation of the second model.

Following the HERDSA discussion paper, Curtin University of Technology undertook an ATN-funded project to identify and develop "appropriate pathways for the accreditation of teaching at the University" (Curtin, 1998, p.1). While enthusiasm for accreditation was found to range from muted to enthusiastic, it was generally perceived to be a 'Good Thing' for promoting quality and demonstrating a commitment to quality outside the University. It was also found that accreditation processes should begin with new staff, and should allow for flexibility in its attainment, most especially in terms of demonstration of competence by experienced teachers, peer appraisal, and mandated CPE. A suite of evidence was suggested, based on Inputs (graduate certificates, workshop programs, portfolios); Outputs (student evaluations, drop-out rates, peer review); and Formal reviews (performance review, course review). There is no evidence that the project has been progressed in the ATN universities.

CUTSD funded an ATN-based project, the compilation of a Resource Kit 'Judging University Teaching', published in 2000; this Kit lists a selection of resources on the characteristics of effective teaching; what to consider in promotion based on teaching performance; the criteria for evaluating Teaching and Learning Grants and Teaching Awards; the processes involved in Program Approval; and Performance Management. There is no consideration of formal professional development programs in teaching. An embryonic discussion paper *Generic Attributes of Good Teaching* was circulated at one ATN university in 2002.

The 1998 Australian Review of Higher Education known as the West Report (Review Committee on Higher Education Financing and Policy 1997), addressed the issue of the quality of teaching and contained a specific recommendation (Recommendation 24) related to the preparation of university staff for their teaching role:

That the Government should entrust to the Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development (CUTSD) the task of promoting an enhanced teaching culture in higher education institutions to balance the established research culture. With the assistance of additional public funding, in particular CUTSD would:

- *commission research into learning and teaching practices in higher education that promote the development of graduates who have a respect for scholarship and learning and appetite for intellectual growth and development;*
- *encourage institutions to adopt a code of quality for scholarly teaching; and*
- *encourage institutions generally to appoint new teaching staff on probation until they have completed a qualification in teacher training.*

Notwithstanding the excellent work carried out by CUTSD and its successor the AUTC to raise the status and profile of teaching generally, there has been little progress in the area of requiring academic staff, particularly those new to teaching, to undertake some form of formal education in tertiary teaching. Certainly no additional public funds were made available for such an initiative.

Most recently, the Australian College of Educators, historically associated with school teaching, has released a *Draft Standards of Professional Practice for Accomplished Teaching in Australian Classrooms* (ACE 2001). ACE has begun the process of engaging Australian teachers in a national discussion on standards. These broad descriptors of teaching excellence are readily transferable to the tertiary context. ACE has indicated that while it is focused on the school sector, given contemporary moves towards national rather than state equivalence in teaching, it is also interested in extending its brief to the tertiary sector. The importance of this move should not be underestimated: Queensland has a registration body, and in 2001, the Victorian Institute of Teaching was established by the state government authority to cover registration of school teachers. The most recent discussion paper from ACE, *Building a Learning Profession* (Ingvarson 2002), outlines what a framework of professional standards and a national body with the responsibility for assessing teaching performance against those standards would look like.

In the current review of higher education in Australia, the discussion paper entitled *Striving for Quality: Learning, Teaching and Scholarship* specifically addressed the issue of what it termed the “professionalising higher education teaching”. The discussion paper notes that “there is currently no widely accepted form of formal education or preparation to become a teacher in higher education” and points out the irony of this situation

....given that many students would probably believe that the most influential ingredient in the quality of their learning experience is the quality of teaching provided. Given substantial public expenditure in universities, the broader community might expect that those who teach at university, like those who teach in schools or TAFE institutions, are professionally trained.
(DEST 2002, p.52)

While not advocating any particular model of professional development for university academics the Discussion Paper does provide some support for a model involving formal accreditation.

Professional development for academics is not generally accredited. It is possible that this adversely influences the uptake of such development activities, as staff would seem less motivated to engage in professional development without direct personal reward. (DEST 2002, p.53)

Striving for Quality goes on to pose a number of questions including:

- *Should Australia establish a national approach to the accreditation of higher education teaching, requiring all academic teachers to complete a teacher preparation course of some kind? If so, what sort of approach would be most appropriate?*
 - *A one year course, a one semester course or competency-based training?*
 - *A UK approach with a central government body created to accredit suitable courses and subsequently accredit teachers?*
 - *A professional body for higher education teachers such as that recently announced in New South Wales for school teachers (Institute of Teachers) that would act as a 'gatekeeper'?*
- *What can be done to ensure that teachers in all higher education institutions have the expertise and skills to perform as teachers?*
- *Should probation and/or promotion for academics with a teaching load within higher education institutions be made conditional on completion of an appropriate teacher preparation course or in-service professional development?*

Irrespective of the outcomes of the current review, as in the case of the previous Williams and West reports, a key issue will be who will take responsibility for advancing this agenda. The lack of a professional body to take responsibility for university teaching standards and the assessment of teaching performance represents a serious obstacle to initiatives related to teaching quality in universities being progressed and implemented.

International developments

International efforts in the professionalisation of tertiary teaching through programmatic means have been characterised by conflicting evidence of the efficacy of formal programs (Weimer & Lenze 1997, quoted by Gibbs & Coffey 2000) or accreditation through bureaucratic interference i.e. the imposition of mandated accreditation (Luby, 1999). Gibbs & Coffey (2000) also differentiate between the micro-level classroom behavioural skills engendered in US training programs, with their emphasis on checklists, and the reflective practitioner model favoured in the UK, with an emphasis on peer review and reflective journals. In the UK, they conclude, while many developers were adamant that they had to give new teachers what they needed to survive in the first months of teaching, the real purpose of most developers was to establish a 'discourse of teaching', to deconstruct what the teaching process might involve, and to shift teachers from a teacher to a learner-centred view (*cf* Trigwell et al. 1994).

Gibbs & Coffey (2000, 2001) have outlined the early stages of a major international research project conducted via the Open University into the efficacy of university teaching development on student perceptions of teaching quality. Early indications from

widely varying programs in 10 countries including Australia have produced inconclusive results, but those programs focussing on student-centred learning, rather than teaching skills, have supported other research which indicates that student-centred teaching facilitates a deep approach to learning by students. The authors also noted high attrition and low numbers in most university teacher training programs, a world-wide phenomenon in university teaching programs.

In the UK, the Staff and Education Development Association (SEDA) was established in the early 1990s. It has been driven by education developers committed to the promotion of qualities and characteristics of good tertiary teaching. SEDA developed a scheme for the validation of institutional award programs and therefore of the holder of an award, at a 'base level' of certification, with higher levels attained on submission of a personal portfolio demonstrating good practice and value-driven motivation. Its processes can be accessed at <http://www.seda.demon.co.uk/acredmenu.html>. By 1997, it had registered over 60 institutions as providing recognised courses, and almost 750 individual teachers had, or were preparing for accreditation, and it was about to launch an Associate Teacher scheme for part-time or postgraduate tutors.

In 1998, pre-empting predictions of a teacher accreditation scheme in the Dearing Report, the then CVCP produced a consultation paper on 'Accreditation and Teaching in Higher Education' ('The Booth Report'), which in turn produced a flurry of responses, such as that from Birkbeck College (<http://www.bbk.ac.uk/sd/boothres.html>; accessed 20/12/01). Most of these responses applauded the principle of accreditation, but noted with concern 'the resource implications', deplored any move to 'prescriptive competencies', and suggested mentor schemes, associate membership, and full membership tied to probationary periods of employment. Birkbeck also commended programs for new staff, with experienced staff being required to **demonstrate** the outcomes of their teaching.

However, following the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (the Dearing Report) the UK government established a 'rival' to SEDA in 1998, the Institute for Learning and Teaching, with a brief to enhance the status of university teaching, improve the experience of learning, and support innovation. The ILT also develops and maintains professional standards of practice. The Institute works closely with the Learning and Teaching Support Network, which consists of 24 disciplinary Centres and one generic Centre. ILT was to accept cross-accreditation of SEDA-certified staff and programs, and further encourage university funding to certification of staff. It operates on a two-tier membership level of Associate and Full, and membership can proceed through an accredited qualification.

The political climate for ILT has been somewhat acrimonious, with the Association of University Teachers (AUT) in the UK withdrawing its endorsement of the program in 2001, and actively discouraging its members from ILT certification, although rival union NATFHE supports the ILT. By June 2001, ILT reported 11,000 members, with 130 applications per week (*THES*, July 13 2001, p.23). By mid-2002, media reports indicated that ILT was 'cash strapped' (*THES* June 28 2002, p.4) and that it had requested a loan from Hefce since subscriptions were insufficient to cover outlays.

Notwithstanding AUT's opposition, 76 per cent of AUT members surveyed believe a formal accreditation system was desirable, and 85 per cent thought it should be controlled 'by the profession', although only 35 per cent were willing to pay, and only

19 per cent thought ILT was the ‘right body’ (*THES*, January 18 2002, p.3). Luby’s research indicates that one of the perceived difficulties stems from university teachers’ resentment of a focus on their teaching role, as opposed to the totality of their roles as researchers and scholars, and their perception that teaching development consistently ignores disciplinary differences in teaching methods. Luby’s survey indicated a strengthening acceptance of the need for accreditation in order to raise the profile and quality of teaching, particularly in response to the Quality Audit visits in the UK. (This might suggest a similar pattern will develop in Australia as AUQA undertakes its first formal audits.)

There are no apparent links between ILT and the Quality Assurance Agency process, which, until a new ‘light touch’ audit policy was introduced for the 2005-2010 period, has operated a rigorous and expensive assessment of teaching quality at subject level, including student and staff interviews, and observation of classes. University results are published on a 1-5* scale. UK Vice Chancellors are demanding better coordination of the many UK quality assurance agencies, including the ILT, and more efficient use of the £40 million spent on teaching and learning enhancement (*THES*, January 18 2002, p.3).

Internationally, the Teaching and Learning Units set up in the wake of the Carnegie/Boyer ‘Scholarship of Teaching’ movement in the 1990s, are now in decline, as a result of budgetary cuts in universities, and, it must be noted, a continuing resentment against centrally-funded pedagogical services sections. In the US, for example, the University of Nebraska’s 30 year-old T&L Center, one of the oldest in the US, was closed in March 2002 (*CHE* Online edition, March 22, 2002).

The next chapter reports the results of the survey conducted for this report. It covers the nature of preparation and support for academic teaching roles and the activities of academic development units in Australia.

3. A snapshot of current teaching development in Australian universities

Management commitment to the various functions within universities is generally made 'visible' through central facilities. Therefore the focus of this project was on the provision of teaching development by **central** university units. In the authors' experience, what is provided at the faculty/school/department levels in terms of teaching development is variable and generally very minimal. This project has therefore not captured teaching development provided at the faculty, school or departmental level, or the undoubtedly rich professional learning that occurs in any workplace as a result of informal mentoring and 'work talk'.

The present chapter focusses on the responses provided by directors of academic development units to the questionnaire on the activities of their own centres, and other central units involved in other key functions related to teaching quality, eg. student evaluation. Directors report generally on those policies within their institutions designed to support teaching development.

Q1. In your university, how many staff have the teaching development of your university's lecturers/tutors as their primary role? Where are these staff located – central/faculty/mixed, and in what centres? Do any faculties/schools have dedicated education/teaching centres?

In relation to the first two questions (numbers and location of staff whose primary responsibility was teaching development), there is no consistent pattern of resource commitment to teaching development across the sector, or among types of universities. Fifty percent of universities (16) have a central unit responsible for teaching development, compared to nine in 1972 (Moses 1988), and 12 universities have a model which combines central and faculty-based units, although these tend to be clustered "in the richer faculties" such as Medicine and Economics/Business, where Problem-Based Learning projects were being phased in. Only one university has a completely devolved system. Two universities reported that they have no staff dedicated to the professional development of teaching.

However, the strength of commitment of universities to teaching development in terms of staff allocation varies markedly. Staff numbers range from one to 17, with four institutions at the upper end in terms of dedicated staff spread between Go8 universities, ATN and 'new' universities. The vast majority of universities clustered at between four to six staff, mostly academic in classification, together with several administrative support staff. Smaller staff units (one to three persons) were scattered among university 'types', although they tended to characterise regional or outer metropolitan universities.

Q2. Does your university conduct student evaluations of individual university teachers? If so, who administers the system, is it compulsory and who has access to the results?

University policies with regard to student evaluation of teaching reveal a remarkable diversity among the 32 universities.

Four universities conduct no individual teacher evaluation. Of these, three have no standard instrument available to staff, and one reports the availability of an instrument which could be used by staff if requested. Hence the majority have an instrument for evaluation of units and programs, although these are not always standardised cross-institutionally, i.e. various faculties have their own questionnaire. In a small number of universities (six), policy requirements even differed between faculties in respect of the use of a particular instrument, frequency of administration, and use of the results.

The large majority of universities (28) report that they conduct both unit and individual teacher evaluations. Ten universities have compulsory **unit** evaluations on a determined cycle: one requires all staff to conduct a student evaluation once per semester, but in a small number (10), the requirement is for a unit evaluation on a rolling cycle of one to three years, and a **teacher** evaluation (12 institutions) once over a one to three year cycle. There is no indication of what penalties are in place for non-compliance, although at least one institution is considering financial bonuses for faculties meeting the 'target compliance' with Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET). Critically, however, 16 universities, half the respondents, specifically report that teacher evaluation is not required.

In 19 universities, the central staff development unit administers the instrument; in two the evaluation is outsourced, and in eight, another unit such as the Quality Unit administers the instrument and reports the results.

Confidentiality of teacher evaluation results to the academic concerned is the most common pattern. In 19 universities of the 28 which conduct SET, only the staff member concerned has access to the results. In five universities, the results are also sent to a departmental head, or core questions are sent to the Head of School (HOS), with the qualitative comments being confidential to the staff member. In one institution, the department staff must vote on whether the HOS receives a copy of the results. Four institutions specifically report that their results of Student Evaluation of a Unit (SEU) are routinely sent to HOS/Deans. Only three institutions specifically report that online or automatically generated analysis of results are sent to staff with suggested strategies for improvement. Otherwise, staff are at liberty to consult with academic staff developers about how they might improve their practice. Anecdotal evidence suggests almost none do so.

Q3. What links, if any, are made between student evaluations of individual teachers and the improvement of teaching practice?

Most institutions make no explicit link between student evaluations and institutional wide improvement of teaching practice. Twenty-one institutions had no links to improvement in teaching practice at the individual level. Only eight report that the results of evaluations are required for confirmation of tenure, or promotion. In three other institutions, results were required to be presented in Performance Appraisal Reviews, along with a list of actions the teacher had taken to improve the results. In two institutions, the HOS or Dean is responsible for whole-of-faculty improvement as a result of aggregate data from student evaluations where the institution allows this, and where data has revealed "**subjects at risk**", rather than individual teachers who might be underperforming.

Only two institutions report that they also encourage the use of teaching portfolios as an instrument of quality assurance of teaching, and accept portfolios in Performance Appraisal Reviews or applications for promotion. Three institutions explicitly mentioned an online anonymous student feedback mechanism, also confidential to the staff member.

Q4. Does the university provide teaching development support for non-academic staff who are increasingly involved in teaching – eg. library staff, learning skills advisors, IT staff? If so, what form does this take?

This question on programs available for non-academic staff was included because of the increased ‘blurring of distinctions’ between academic and general staff in terms of exposure to students, and contribution to classes and independent learning materials, from staff in the Library and information technology support services in particular. This situation has resulted, in part, from the increased emphasis on generic skills such as information retrieval, information literacy, and computer-based training and educational software programs, and graduate attributes requiring lifelong learning abilities.

Only eight universities deliberately include general staff in their teaching development programs, and this was more often at the level of ‘permission’ rather than invitation. Two additional universities report that their general staff are asking for tertiary teaching skills because of their increased teaching responsibility. In general, Human Resource (HR) units have primary responsibility for **general** staff development, and in some institutions, HR also have primary responsibility for management and leadership programs, including those for senior academic managers. In at least two institutions, HR units assume responsibility for programs to assist coordinators of large units with many sessional staff, since this is interpreted more as a ‘management problem’ than a ‘teaching activity’.

Qs 5/6 What does your university provide in the way of teaching support for new/experienced academic staff?

The next suite of questions related largely to program models used within various universities. Three standard models predominate in Australia: induction programs for staff new to the institution or to teaching; postgraduate formal programs in tertiary teaching; and workshop programs. Questions 5 & 6 are summarised in Table 5.1.

Induction programs and workshop programs

Induction to teaching programs are primarily but not exclusively provided to staff who are new to teaching in the sector. All but four of the thirty-two responding universities provide a central program to introduce academics to their teaching role. However, given that another six universities do not have central units, and are therefore not likely to provide a central introduction to university teaching, it is likely that ten of the 38 Australian Universities (26 per cent) do not provide even an introduction to the elements of university teaching. This is particularly concerning as it is clear that many academics who are new to the university sector have little or no teaching experience and they do not have a teaching qualification.

Seminar and workshop programs are provided for both experienced and inexperienced academics in twenty-nine universities, leaving three responding universities without substantive central provision and another six universities apparently without central provision. University wide provision of workshops targeted towards specific teaching issues such as formative assessment, providing constructive criticism in research supervision etc. is available to academics to assist in their ongoing professional development. While the efficacy of ‘one-off’ workshops has been questioned (Weimer & Lenze 1997, quoted in Gibbs & Coffey 2000), there is increasing evidence that longer term teaching development programs have a positive impact on some aspects of teaching (Coffey & Gibbs 2000).

Graduate Certificates

Formal programs about teaching in higher education are often argued (as reported in Gibbs & Coffey 2000) to act as a disseminating mechanism through which enthusiastic and skilled teachers will permeate a departmental ethos in regard to quality teaching. There is no documented evidence of this occurring, although anecdotally, the present authors note the predominance of graduates amongst Associate Deans (T&L) in their own institutions, or winners of Teaching Excellence awards. However, this correlation is as likely to indicate a pre-existing enthusiasm for teaching leading to enrolment in the Graduate Certificate, rather than ‘conversion’ to teaching evangelism as a result of the program.

Twenty-one Australian universities either provide a graduate certificate in university teaching/higher education for staff or are in the process of developing one. While some universities reported that those enrolling in their graduate certificates were primarily new to teaching, most reported a mix of inexperienced and experienced academic enrolments. The majority of graduate certificates currently in operation were developed during or shortly after the ‘quality rounds’ of the mid 1990’s (Table 5.2). Unlike the situation in the UK, where many university graduate certificates are compulsory for new inexperienced academics (anecdotal evidence), in only two Australian universities is it compulsory for new, inexperienced academics to take these programs.

Q7. If your university has an introduction to teaching program, please complete the following questions.

Question 7 asked a range of questions about “introduction to teaching” programs (refer to appendix 1). While there might be seen to be some overlap between these programs and the more general induction programs for academic staff where they are introduced to university policies and practices regarding teaching and assessment etc, 28 of the 32 responding universities reported that they ran centrally coordinated non-award introduction to teaching programs for their academic staff. A brief summary of these programs is as follows.

- The length of time these programs have been in existence varies from two years through to 34 years with an average of 9.8 years, though clearly these data relate in part to the age of the institution.

- Of the 28 universities offering “introduction to teaching” programs, 25 provided data on the number of academic staff participating in 2001. Across all institutions there was a total of 1,148 individuals with an average participation number of 45.9 staff per institution, though institutional size was clearly a major factor in determining participant numbers.
- The length of the programs varied as did the number of times per year they were offered. Of the 28 universities offering programs, 26 provided data on “contact” hours. This varied from 3 to 49 hours with an average of 23.3 hours.
- Only three (12 per cent) of the 26 institutions reported that they offered their program in a fully online mode in addition to face-to-face mode. Of the other 23 institutions, 10 offered programs in primarily face-to-face mode while 13 reported that they supplemented face-to-face with online learning.
- Seventeen institutions provided data on when their programs were offered to staff. Seven, of the institutions offered the program prior to the start of teaching while 10 reported that the program was undertaken by staff at the same time as they were engaged in teaching.
- Most institutions offered programs more than once over the year. Of the 20 institutions reporting on the frequency with which they offered programs, one offered its program four times per year, two offered it three times, eight offered it twice and nine offered it once a year.
- Not surprisingly for non-award programs, only a few of the programs incorporated formal assessment. Of the 26 institutions providing data on assessment, only four (15 per cent) required the performance of staff participants to be assessed.
- It is of interest that only nine (35 per cent) of 26 institutions incorporated observation of classroom practice in their program.
- The curriculum of nearly all programs was stated to be general, covering the major issues of teaching, learning and assessment. However, three institutions said they put a particular emphasis on online teaching and flexible delivery.
- Nearly all institutions said the curriculum was flexible. Eleven stated the curriculum was determined in part by the interests of individual participants, five said both individuals’ interests and the University’s current strategic needs played a role. Only one institution specifically mentioned responding to outside influences in the higher education sector more generally as a factor in determining the curriculum.

Questions 8 If your university has a formal award on tertiary teaching (eg Graduate Certificate), please complete the following questions.

Question 8 of the survey asked for responses about eleven aspects of the graduate certificates.

Approximately 300 individual staff (i.e. about 75 EFTSU)⁶ were enrolled in 2001 in a Graduate Certificate, representing less than .5 per cent of the total of Full-Time Equivalence (FTE) of 82,233 academic staff in all Australian universities (*Staff 2000: Selected Higher Education Statistics*). When one considers that actual academic staff numbers are much higher, as the DEST data acknowledges, particularly with the increasing numbers of sessional staff, it is apparent that formal award programs attract a miniscule proportion of academic staff. While the number of academic staff engaged in formal study in teaching in higher education may be more than 300 (through enrolment in higher degrees), the numbers are clearly very small when compared with the number of academics teaching in the sector and the number of inexperienced teaching staff entering the sector every year. No data are collected at system or institutional level on numbers of staff who possess formal qualifications in university teaching. It is acknowledged that enrolments in any single year do not necessarily reflect numbers of staff who may already have a qualification in higher education.

Award programs in individual universities enrolled between two and 40 staff in 2001. It must be noted that not all staff enrolling in a graduate certificate finish the program (Ryan, Y. 1996; UWS Report). Anecdotally it is also recognised in the sector that while initial enrolments in programs are often good, if the program is not compulsory, enrolment tends to diminish three to six years after its inception, often to the point where it is no longer viable to run the program (refer to Tables 3.1 and 3.3).

Another concern raised by the data is variation in what constitutes a graduate certificate in teaching in the sector. Programs required anywhere between 200 and 660 hours of work with staff taking between two and four subjects over one or two years. Clearly the sector has yet to try to develop consensus on what constitutes a Graduate Certificate in terms of workload, structure and concordance within the Australian Quality Framework.

The nomenclature of award programs in higher education also merits attention. Graduate Certificates (or Graduate Diplomas) were given 11 different names. Graduate Certificate of:

- Education (Tertiary Education);
- Education (Higher Education);
- Education (Tertiary Teaching);
- Higher Education;
- Tertiary Education;
- Tertiary Teaching;
- University Teaching & Learning;
- University Learning & Teaching;
- Professional Education and Training (HE);
- Higher Education Teaching & Learning; and
- Tertiary Teaching & Learning.

The Graduate Certificates are primarily provided by mixed mode with some courses having an emphasis on the face-to-face mode (e.g. 35 days over four subjects over two

⁶ If these GCs were all equivalent to four standard credit units, this EFTSU equivalent of 75 would be a reliable figure. However, as is noted later, the variation among Graduate Certificates in relation to numbers of units and credit points would suggest it is critical to standardise the GC to a formal measure such as the Australian Qualifications Framework. This would ensure that a valid EFTSU could be calculated.

years). Assessment is a mixture of theory-based and practice-based, with some universities emphasising that they are integrated, and one university reporting that it has no assessment (but later in the survey the respondent says that people submit a teaching portfolio and a research project).

Only three of the graduate certificate programs have teaching observation and feedback as a compulsory part of their program. Most programs use participant survey feedback and approximately 50 per cent reported using university review mechanisms.

Approximately 50 per cent of the programs are structured to develop a specific teaching practice, for example flexible and online teaching (six), assessment of student learning (one), critical inquiry (1), post graduate supervision (three), and internationalisation (two). (some universities reported more than one area). Sixteen universities indicated that they did have the flexibility to respond to new topics/emerging needs through such things as:

- individually negotiated tasks and assessment;
- in response to reviews;
- subject additions (e.g. electives);
- independent studies; and
- changing readings.

All but two universities having a graduate certificate reported that there was articulation to a higher degree. Those two universities said that in theory it could be done but it had not been formally organised. Five universities have Graduate Diplomas in Tertiary Teaching or Higher Education; three universities have Masters in Higher Education (or a similar name), many have Masters in Education but not Higher Education. One university reported the possibility of articulating with a PhD and a Masters. It is noteworthy that there is very little in the sector in the way of further diplomas or degrees that specifically target teaching in Higher Education.

Mentoring

Most respondents provided information on university-wide programs. It must be recognised that the provision of mentoring in faculties is variable, and anecdotally it is recognised that such mentoring rarely specifically incorporates a focus on teaching development. Unfortunately some respondents, while filling in a survey about teaching development provision, reported on mentoring programs that were specific to research development. It is possible that other respondents also made this error. In spite of this, the data (Table 5.1) does show that few universities utilise mentoring programs as opportunities for staff to discuss their teaching.

Teaching development grant writing assistance, teaching excellence awards and teaching development grants

Most universities provide assistance with teaching development grant writing, and recognise and raise the profile of teaching through university-wide teaching excellence awards (27 + one in development) and teaching development grants (21 + one in development).

Other teaching development work

Other work that central teaching development units provide includes: the support of peer review and team teaching; individual consulting; the provision of visiting fellow opportunities; working with project teams; development of materials; and working with committees.

Summary

Some clear conclusions can be drawn from the survey data.

First, the large majority of Australian universities demonstrate their commitment to the improvement of teaching practice through the employment of staff dedicated to academic development, primarily in teaching issues. Only two of the 32 respondent universities make no such provision. Second, the most common model is a central unit, with a smaller number opting for a combined model of central and devolved units, with these devolved units clustered in the so-called “richer faculties”. Commitment in terms of staff numbers engaged in teaching development varies markedly amongst institutions, with higher numbers characterising institutions which had a research interest in higher education as a discipline. There was no discernable pattern of resource commitment among the types of institutions that responded to the survey.

Third, almost all Australian universities report the use of student evaluations as a measure of teaching quality. However, there was no cross-sector standard instrument for student evaluations, and in a few institutions, no standard **internal** instrument. Nor was there necessarily any consistency in policy between or within institutions as regards to compulsion in the use of evaluation instruments: only 10 institutions reported mandatory **unit** evaluations on a rolling cycle, and 12 mandate **teacher** evaluation on a rolling cycle. Several institutions reported inducements to faculties to conduct teaching evaluations, with varying levels of success. Very few institutions or departments mandated reporting of the results of **teaching** evaluations to Deans/HOS, although a larger number mandate disclosure of the results of **unit** evaluations to Deans/HOS. None explicitly linked the results to professional development programs in particular aspects of teaching practice. Individual staff seem to undertake such evaluations primarily for promotional/tenure purposes, where they are a requirement (in only eight institutions). However, another three universities require results for Performance Review purposes. This would appear to have dramatically increased the use of such instruments in these universities. There would appear to be no systemic mechanism for relating an individual’s results to ‘coaching’ or improvement in teaching.

Fourth, although many general staff are now directly involved in teaching activities in Australian universities, few staff development programs have systematically sought to include them in professional development programs for university teaching. The divide between ‘general’ and ‘academic’ staff appears to hold at the formal staff development level, well beyond its factual dissolution.

Fifth, one-quarter of all Australian universities do not conduct any induction or initial preparation programs in teaching for their staff, even, in some cases, where the university has a central unit for staff development. In universities with such provision,

on average approximately 50 staff in each institution attended such induction programs in any year, although it was impossible to gauge what percentage of new staff this represented. Workshop/seminar programs in teaching issues are more common however, and are offered to all academic staff.

Sixth, a full three-quarters of the respondents to this survey offer a formal award, normally a Graduate Certificate/Diploma, in Higher Education/Tertiary Teaching. What is telling in this data was that most of these awards were introduced after the government's 'quality round' recommendations in the mid-1990's, in response to concerns about teaching quality.

Seventh, the take-up of graduate certificates by staff is small, across the sector and in most institutions, with only two institutions mandating enrolment for academics new to the sector. In any one year, it would appear that enrolment in such programs constitutes less than .5 per cent of FTE academic staff in Australia, and would be almost insignificant were **actual** teacher numbers calculable from the DEST data. Further, while staff qualifications are reported at the level of degree, there is no separate reporting of teaching qualifications which might operate as a proxy for quality in teaching.

Finally, the number of universities reporting any systematic training for sessional staff was very low. Some departments offer such training for tutors, but the sector's escalating use of sessional staff to assist flexibility in the staffing profile, and provide more practical and workplace experience to the curriculum, is not matched by its commitment to ensuring appropriate teaching skill levels amongst that staff cohort. This is largely a funding problem, since sessional staff are paid hourly for attendance at meetings and training.

In conclusion, the data here cannot be interpreted as a comment on the quality of teaching in Australian universities. What it suggests however, is that the sector's commitment to the teaching aspect of academic roles is uneven, and unsystematic. The data reveal a variable level of formal and informal professional development of teaching within institutions, and reluctance among the majority of university staff, especially sessional staff, to engage in the many formal and informal programs available in the practice and theory of higher education.

The next chapter explores some of the reasons for that reluctance, and the attitudes of stakeholders in the sector to a more systematic approach to the professionalisation of teaching at university level.

Table 3.1 Snapshot of the provision of teaching development opportunities by central teaching development units in Australian Universities.

Teaching development opportunities	Our university provides this program Y/N	Is this program compulsory for staff Y/N? If yes, do you ensure compliance? (please elaborate)	Is there an award/recognition/external accreditation (please elaborate below)	*What % of your centre's/unit's teaching development work would go into this program?	Are there incentives/time release for staff to do this program?
Introduction to teaching/foundation programs	28 Yes (includes 1 program under review and one university with a program based in one faculty only) 4 No	18 No 10 Yes (includes compulsory for levels A – B/ A-C; expectation in offer; needed for tenure and/or promotion) 4 N/A	11 Yes. (includes certificate of attendance, credit towards Grad. Cert., and 1 uni requires sessional and contract staff to attend to secure future contracts)	19 responses Range 2 – 30% Av = 11.4% Median = 10%	10 Yes (includes time release; sessional staff paid; advance standing for GCHE; required for tenure; promotion recognition and probationary requirements) 18 No or no response (includes 1 comment of that staff don't have to pay fees) 4 N/A
Graduate Certificates	19 Yes 2 – in development 2 – program suspended/discontinued 1- program suspended while under review 1 – under review 7 No	1 Y for levels A-C 1 Y for levels A&B 17 No	All are accredited university programs 2 have SEDA ⁷ accreditation All can be used for promotion, probation, teaching dev. grants and teaching excellence applications.	7 primarily conducted by faculties 12 responses Range 5 – 40% Av = 17.5% Median = 20%	Fees are waived by all universities except 1. Some Grad. Certs. articulate into further degrees. 1 provides time release 4 individual to try to negotiate time release with HOD/HOS
Centrally run seminar/workshop programs	29 Yes 1 - programs on request 1 - annually alternates programs between teaching and research 1 – programs conducted by some central working parties and in faculties	30 No or no response 1 Y for levels A&B 1 Some workshops are compulsory for some people (eg new supervisors – several universities are working towards this requirement for supervisors)	26 No or no response 3 certificate of attend. 1 seminars are credit towards Grad. Cert. 2 PD evidence for portfolios	24 responses Range 5 – 65% Av = 25% Median = 25%	26 No or no response 6 Yes (includes providing lunch; paying sessional staff; linked to funded teaching devt. projects; linked to school induction; and time release)

⁷ Staff and Education Development Association (United Kingdom)

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Mentoring programs	14 Yes 3 in some schools 15 No or no response	2 Yes (includes levels A-B new appt. and probation; some faculties have compulsory requirements) 15 no or no response 15 N/A	1 Y 16 No or no response 15 N/A	Often occurs in the faculties or provided by non teaching devt. centres. 5 TD centres responded – 1, 3, <5, 10 & 18 %	Faculties vary
Assistance with teaching development grant writing	27 Yes 2 if requested 3 No or no response	No university reported this being compulsory	Benefits if successful	Several said minimal, < 1% 12 other responses Range 1 - 5 % Av = 2.9% Median = 2%	If successful, time release, evidence for portfolios for promotion.
Teaching excellence awards	25 Yes 1 - in development 2 - in some schools/faculties 1 – on request 3 – no response	No university reported this being compulsory	Benefits if successful, sometimes \$, public presentations.	11 responses Range 1 – 10% Av = 5.9% Median = 5% Some universities reported providing admin. assistance to another central office.	If successful, there may be time release, evidence for portfolios for promotion.
University teaching development grants	20 Yes 1 in devt. 1 – on request 10 – no or no response	No university reported this being compulsory	Benefits if successful, \$ for time release. 1 Ed devt. and Ed design support	11 responses Range 1 – 50% Av = 10.6% Median = 5%	If successful, there may be time release, evidence for portfolios for promotion.

* Figures were used from any response that indicated >0% of their time was spent on this (eg several central units indicated that they did not conduct the graduate certificate or the mentoring program). Some responses indicated the percentage of one person’s time and didn’t give the number of people in the center so these figures could not be used.

Table 3.2. The length of time that graduate certificates in teaching in higher education have been in operation in the sector.

Years	First	2 nd or 3 rd	4 th or 5 th	6 th – 10 th	> 10
Number		2	5	9	3

*This data includes neither the two programs that are suspended/discontinued nor the 2 programs that are under review/suspended while under review

Table 3.3 Number of students enrolled in graduate certificates in teaching in higher education in 2001

Number of students enrolled	Not known	< 6	6 – 10	11 – 20	> 20
Number of units/universities	1	3	3	7*	6

*One university, which does not conduct its own graduate certificate, supported 12 staff members to enrol in another university's graduate certificate. Hence the total number of universities reported here are 20, not 19.

4. Stakeholder opinions

As detailed in the methodology section (1.3), the views of key Australian higher education stakeholders about the provision of teaching development, effectiveness and models of provision were sought through semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Interviews were requested of representatives of peak bodies including the Presidents of NTEU, NUS, CAPA, HERDSA, the chairs or executive directors of AVCC, ACE, AUTC, AUQA and a representative of DEST (Higher Education). Interviews were held with representatives of six of the nine representatives of these bodies, AUTC, AVCC, CAPA, HERDSA, NTEU and NUS. A written response from the Executive Director of AUQA is also quoted where relevant. Thirteen focus groups were held with experienced, inexperienced and sessional teachers in a representative sample of universities in the sector.

Each of the representatives of the peak bodies were asked to comment on the following questions in terms of new staff, continuing staff and sessional staff. In the focus groups experienced staff were asked to comment on the questions with respect to new, experienced and sessional staff. Sessional and inexperienced staff were asked to respond to the questions in terms of the cohort they represented.

- | | |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Question 1 | How effective do you think current forms of teacher education are? |
| Question 2 | Should universities be required to provide some form of teacher education for their teaching staff? |
| Question 3 | Do you think that teacher education should be compulsory for all teaching staff in universities? |
| Question 4 | Should some form of nationally recognised validation be required for teaching staff? |
| Question 5 | If so, do you think some form of formal regular revalidation should take place as is found in other professions? |
| Question 6 | Which organisation would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation? |
| Question 7 | Are there any other ways in which effective teaching can be recognised? |

Question 1 How effective do you think current forms of teacher education are?

Peak body representatives perceived that at best, effectiveness of current forms of teacher education are variable (four), and at worst, not effective (two). One of the representatives stated that “there was no compelling evidence for ineffectiveness based on student perceptions”. Several representatives referred to the resourcing concerns for academics and institutions, in terms of workloads, the pressure on the sabbatical, and the

lack of central units to provide teaching development opportunities. One representative raised the concern that some staff perceive compulsory 'teacher training courses' as the need for the university to 'tick a box'. The lack of continuing teacher professional education over the life of the academic was perceived by several representatives as problematic.

...so the problem is that a lot of these [teaching education] programs seem to be quite voluntary so we're dealing with teachers having the time and the impetus to be able to participate in these programs which is something that often the best teachers are the ones who participate in those programs and the ones who need it the most don't. [NUS]

...at the moment it is actually quite difficult to make a comment across the sector...I think that makes it really hard to evaluate the efficacy of the programs that are out there because the resource constraint and the limited ability for a staff member to participate under the resource constraints actually can work against some of the good initiatives that are out there. [NTEU]

Universities are engaged in teacher training particularly for new staff. It is clear though that the pressures on universities to do more in this area are strong and that universities will need to demonstrate the effectiveness of current arrangements or Governments will be encouraged to take a more interventionist approach. [AVCC]

The pattern seems to be a discontinuous series of programs for new and experienced staff....Staff development is marginalised in most universities....Data on the usefulness of Grad Certs. is inconsistent and incomplete. [AUTC]

Teaching staff were not convinced of the effectiveness of teacher education in the sector. Seven focus groups (three experienced, two inexperienced and two sessional) perceived that teacher education in their university was not effective; five groups (three experienced and two inexperienced) responded that the provision was effective for some but not for others (primarily because not all academics participated in the opportunities provided) and one inexperienced group of teachers responded that they didn't know what was available, while one of their group said that he was required to attend an introductory teaching program and a graduate certificate in teaching and found "both to be very useful" i.e. effective for him. The following quotes highlight the impact that the lack of teaching education opportunities had on the academics (and their peers/staff) in the focus groups.

I can only speak for computer science. Our poor kids are just dropped in it. It's really is sink or swim.... But we are so desperate for staff, and we're recruiting more and more third years, ... most of our first year classes are now run by third years. [sessional staff]

I have been at [...] for 22 years and in that time I don't think anyone has offered any help or advice to me individually.... In my experience the attitude of the university in developing teaching skills is simply like head in the sand and hope that nothing goes wrong. [experienced staff].

You can't be a lawyer, you can't be an accountant, you can't be really any other profession without actually saying "I've gone along to uni., I've done all those things, I've passed now I want a job in your area" I went into the person that I was tutoring for and said "look, what do I do?" And their response was "it's your tute, do whatever you like". That was my absolute total training for tutorials and for my first lecture I ever gave. [experienced staff]

In my case I was thrown into it here. I had an enormous class, no one told me what to do. I practised on students for three years, nobody told me about content, nobody told me what second years knew and what second years didn't know I would have saved at least one year's worth of students a lot of trauma if somebody had just told me all of those basic things. [experienced].

But what it has done is put it [teaching ideas and concepts] together in a package for me. Put it in a nice clear framework and ... made me actually go out and apply it. So in terms of that it's been effective for me. [inexperienced staff member referring to a compulsory graduate certificate].

I guess ... it's not that effective because not everyone has to do it. [referring to the graduate certificate] [inexperienced staff].

Focus group members raised a number of different concerns about the effectiveness of existing approaches including: responsibility for having a teaching qualification, resourcing, rewards; types of models that might be possible; and was there a need for teaching development?

Responsibility, resourcing and rewards

Workloads, a lack of resources, the meaning of 'teaching quality', rewards, and the responsibility for having a teaching qualification were all key issues for academics in discussing teaching education provision in higher education.

I strongly believe that for new academics and also for new casual staff we should have something in place that actually fits into our workloads in the first semester. It should run hand in hand with our teaching to enhance our skills and I think that is a very important part of being an academic. It is so much a part of it and I think it is imperative that as a university we do that. [inexperienced]

Nobody ever expected a teaching qualification as part of a job but if it is going to be there, whose responsibility is it? And until that's clarified I think this whole resourcing issue is a very murky one because if we are supposed to provide that training for them on the job, we've got no business to be expecting them to do it as an add on extra and studying out of hours and all that sort of thing. [experienced staff]

In terms of how effective the current form is I don't think its very effective at all. One of the reasons is ...there is no recognition in workloads ... and the assumption that one does this in the evenings or in the weekends, I don't think applies to academics because quite frankly that's when we do our research. [experienced staff]

It is fine for governments and deputy vice-chancellors to make these glowing statements about the importance of teaching but it doesn't filter down to the departmental level where a significant amount of your own personal time [is invested in] improving teaching materials and things like this. You do not get a positive response. [experienced]

There's no preparation for part-timers. There needs to be a course before university starts, and people should be paid to come. It's not content we want; it's skills and processes. [inexperienced and part time]

There's no time for a course, everyone's teaching so much. [inexperienced]

Types of models

Many ideas and concerns were raised about the ways in which teaching development might be encouraged, including professional development in PhD programs, taking advantage of synergies with research, the value of ongoing professional development, the emphasis on research success as ‘the’ criterion for promotion, and the value of both discipline-based and university-wide programs.

...when someone did their PhD [in the past] it could take time and during that time they were not just often brought on as a researcher but they were slowly brought on to be a teaching assistant and on the job training they were mentored and in that six or seven years that they were doing their PhD they learned an awful lot about becoming an educator as well as becoming a researcher and of course nowadays we want to whip everyone through in three years and this is not happening. [inexperienced]

You can do better, but the point of doing better in terms of quality is not putting a quality regime in place. It's giving lecturers resources to do their job. If you just get down to a situation where we have got to put an audit mechanism in place for universities then that is just a nonsense. If you want to put in a quality regime be sure that your lecturers can provide quality. [inexperienced]

If teaching is an outcome of research and you are setting up two different systems then you are missing the flow on and the interconnections between research and teaching so therefore you don't need a separate one you need a concurrent and related accreditation. It builds on the research. [inexperienced]

...I am quite concerned about the totality of the job, whatever the job is and it is very complex and you know it is multi-skilled and it is kind of growing and I just wondered how we are picking up the other component, and I know we are talking about teaching here but I actually think it will be better for us if we talk about an academic profession which does a whole lot of things and perhaps puts different emphasis on some of those different points in the career as part of a team and a program, whatever, I think it will be actually much better for us to be thinking about professional development for academics, which could be in leadership or it could be IT, it could be all of those things. Around the key tasks the key functions that academics perform – of which teaching and learning, let's face it, is a huge one. So, I don't think we would lose the emphasis, but I think it would actually make it more realistic....so I think it would be better maybe if we moved perhaps towards professional portfolio or some system that incorporated the range of activities. [experienced]

I've been to a number of those [half day courses] and they're very interesting at the time...but in terms of actually implementing it you actually need the hand holding and the kind of ongoing experience of using it otherwise it's just a bit of an intellectual exercise ... they're all very nice but they don't actually translate into much behaviour change. [experienced staff]

I think one of the problems with it is you are asking people to be a professional what? When I look at the criteria for example if I go for a promotion, one of the things to be counted is the number of papers I have published.... If you want to get good teachers then I suggest you have got to lower research as an entry bar into lecturing at university and that is exactly the opposite of the recent output I have heard from the people here. I don't mind. I actually came here to do research. I did not come here to do teaching. [inexperienced]

So perhaps it is something that needs to be disciplined based across universities rather than institution based trying to come up with one size fits all across different disciplines.
[inexperienced]

But it's a useful thing to have a basic program; it should be mandatory because the networks you get go beyond your discipline areas, and that's important. [experienced]

They pay us for training, but it's a one-day sheep dip. One size fits all. [inexperienced staff].

Recognising ... where people come from and what their particular base line of expertise is and indeed at which point in their career they are, whether they're young, younger, wanting to climb the career ladder or they're perhaps they're older who want to give something back and are wanting to mentor other people and have experience in real classroom... actual experience ... all of those things have got to be recognised There's a great opportunity but there's also a real danger of coming up with a very simplistic solution which will turn off more people than people it will actually help. [experienced]

The idea of formal teacher training, ie: people going and getting Masters of Education or grad certs. in higher education or tertiary teaching is not an issue that I think higher ed staff are so interested in. [experienced]

Need for teaching development?

While many staff members clearly expressed their own need for teaching education, several were not convinced of this need.

When you say we spend most of our time teaching, it's true we do, but I am not a teacher. I'm a historian who teaches because I am thinking and analysing as a historian and imparting that to others If you just talk about it as a teacher it is as if somehow we spend a lot of our time doing something for which a lot of people seem to think we ought to have specific skills or specific training but there is something that seems to me dangerously content void in that approach in that way of representing what it is that I do as an academic teacher.
[experienced]

If they are not so good at teaching well does it matter that they are not spending so much time, they are not attracting the students but are doing more really valuable research because someone else somewhere in the school or centre is likely to be picking up the balance.
[inexperienced]

If I was doing research, my top priority was research, I could let my teaching slip right down, take all the time I want for research and just kick in the minimal amount of teaching which is what some academic staff do and I could be a really bad teacher.... [inexperienced]

Question 2 Should universities be required to provide some form of teacher education for their teaching staff?

All but one of the peak body representatives responded 'Yes' to this question with one of those representatives stating that there should not be an externally imposed requirement placed on universities to do this. The other representative perceived that the usefulness of a teaching qualification was debatable and there needed to be a dedicated staff development unit to offer it.

The perspective of NUS has been that there's a certain value in teaching ... when it comes to at least educating undergraduates, we're talking about needing to have competent teachers....
[NUS]

I think all organisations have a responsibility to provide programs which enhance both staff career development and the organisation's objectives, the productivity if you'd like to talk in management terms. A good organisation always does that. I think universities have forgotten the value of the staff that they have all of whom are incredibly committed and quite loyal to their institution.... [NTEU]

There might be some benefits in the sector itself developing some guidelines. It is something that the sector, through the AVCC, could look at. Maybe this is something that we ought to do as a sector and not have the government force it upon us because that will be the problem.
[AVCC]

...all institutions make reference (explicit or implicit) to the teaching they do, and AUQA will therefore expect to find that procedures are in place to ensure that this is done effectively...attention needs to be paid to the teaching ability of staff both at the time of recruitment and in continuing development. It is therefore difficult to envisage that an institution would be taking its teaching responsibility seriously if it did not provide for staff development in teaching. [AUQA]

Most do, but you should be reporting on best practice in Australia and overseas, and let universities choose their approach....They shouldn't be in the Faculty of Education, because most staff are suspicious of Education faculties, they'd think the course was just sociology of education. You need a dedicated staff development unit to hold a Grad Cert and other staff development. [AUTC]

All of the staff focus groups responded affirmatively to the question. Issues raised around payment of sessional staff, decreasing the potential pool for sessional tutors/demonstrators/ clinicians in some disciplines and the short term nature of some sessional contracts will be explored further in question three.

I think there are two ways of looking at it. You could say that you shouldn't get the job unless you've done some training ... but on the other hand, yes, people who come in new who don't have that need it so whose responsibility is it to acquire it? Should it be something that the individual actually gets because they need it to do the job that they aspire to do or is it the responsibility of the employer? universities should offer something for people with no experience. [inexperienced]

Yeah. I think the uni should at least offer something 'cause otherwise you've got all these people walking around teaching who really don't know what they are doing....People are not going to do a teaching qualification before they go to university. They have already spent at least four to five years studying and having to have something before you go in would just deter everyone. [inexperienced]

Certainly in my case it would have made it a lot easier. I have colleagues who have had less teaching experience than I've had, who feel very uncomfortable they don't know quite how much to deliver. [inexperienced]

I think the university should be required to provide everybody with some form of teacher education. It may not be a formal qualification in teaching but certainly keeping people current with what the trends in education are I think is the university's responsibility. [experienced]

There should be more opportunity for coordination in teams. That's the best form of staff development. I do my learning from my colleagues. [experienced]

All Teaching and Learning units in all universities could cross-credit their programs, so as staff shift they can continue the qualification. [experienced]

Question 3 Do you think that teacher education should be compulsory for all teaching staff in universities?

Representatives from the peak bodies had diametrically opposed views on this issue with three ‘yes’ responses (one respondent excluded sessional staff from this compulsion – available but voluntary and paid), and three ‘no’ responses (one respondent excluded sessional staff from this compulsion i.e. the selection processes need to be changed and ‘proper’ jobs created). One of the yes respondents clarified that the executive would support compulsion but the membership would have a diversity of views. The ‘yes’ respondents expressed concerns about resources, payment for sessional staff and standards of teaching. The ‘no’ respondents raised issues about the diversity of the sector, the need for sector guidelines, and the need for teaching evaluation. One ‘no’ respondent talked about the need for selection criteria for academic positions such that if someone came into a position without teaching experience, they could be required to engage in teaching education and their faculty would be provided with the necessary resources for the staff member to undertake that development.

Well it's not surprising that our membership's view of these issues is as varied as the actual performance on the ground.... people would want to see it reflected in their enterprise bargaining agreements.... [NTEU]

...we'd like these [selection and promotion processes] to be fixed first.... It's that culture of rewarding teaching, because then I think you'd get people taking it a lot more seriously...quite rightly concerned that people are allowing institutions to devalue teaching in the promotions criteria and yet trying to encourage [teaching programs] which seems to be leading to teaching being disaggregated from research and from scholarship and therefore teaching only. [NTEU]

I think you're going to need some sort of continuing education teacher training... then I think that's good to do that with people starting and level A teachers coming in...but I think we're going to have to consider then, how do we apply that to people who have been already in the system and teaching for quite some time. I think ultimately they're going to have to do some form of training so we can at least ... know that how they're teaching... is of the same quality that we're trying to implement in all the new teachers coming through.... Again though my concern, when you bring in something like that, is you must factor in the time that it's going to take, either pay them to go and do a teacher training course or factor it in to their workload. [CAPA]

The AVCC would not think it reasonable for the government to decide this is how you will prepare [university staff for teaching] given a cross discipline differences, the different way universities address things, the different teaching approaches that exist. There is no one standard way of doing it and that would be the worry if the government tried to determine how it should happen. [AVCC]

Most Grad. Certs. are too generic, and don't take enough account of the discipline nature of teaching....Academics are very resistant (to the notion of teaching training) in Australia. [AUTC]

There was significant disagreement within most of the focus groups about making some type of teaching development provision compulsory for staff. Issues of staff who have been employed primarily to do research (e.g. 70 per cent research), the lack of resources for payment for sessional staff/time release for full time staff, the difficulty of finding sessional staff, the types of programs and their length and the value of such programs were raised as reasons for not making teaching development provision compulsory. Reasons given for making teaching development provision compulsory included the need for standards and staff support (especially inexperienced teaching staff), improving staff confidence and morale and that it demonstrated that institutions valued teaching.

Standards/quality

In terms of quality, yes absolutely. They should [provide compulsory teacher education]. There is a responsibility toward the students to be providing people who know what they are doing. One of the things that shocked me as a student coming into the university was how hit and miss it all is. You would expect tertiary education to be presenting you with people who are at least as well trained as in secondary education and perhaps even more so. And it doesn't! You know, you are taught by third year students. [sessional]

I have had some pretty awful teachers at university level. [inexperienced]

... just because somebody is very well educated in the subject area, we can assume that they know how to teach it. [inexperienced]

I just think that when I started I would have liked to have known different methods of teaching... I just think that the students would have been better served and the staff would have been better served and the staff morale [would be better which] I think is important. [sessional]

You wouldn't allow anybody to go in and teach our children without having qualifications. Why would we let them loose on somebody who is at the tertiary level who is going to determine that person's career when they don't have any qualifications? [experienced]

...from my experience as a tutor...it was so hit and miss...you can't help getting the feeling that other peoples' students are getting a more sophisticated experience than you are able to offer yourself. Some training would go a long way towards both bridging that gap and building up your confidence. [sessional]

There is a serious wariness in universities about teaching qualifications and accreditation, although most academics can see there's a contradiction between what they want from a professional group like doctors, and teachers who aren't 'accredited' as teachers. [experienced]

Even Myers trains you for a fortnight before you start, even as a part-timer! [inexperienced and part time]

Difficulties getting staff

We are scraping the bottom of the barrel to get enough warm bodies as it is.... requiring all our staff to be trained reduces the potential pool again. [sessional]

...you know you get sessionals that are last minute and there is no time to actually put them through that type of training before they even start I think it [introduction to teaching]

would be really good but you know who is going to pay them and that kind of stuff?
[inexperienced]

We've got people [prospective staff] who will say to us "what about this graduate certificate? I haven't got time to do that if I'm here to do research". And we've lost very good applicants because of that. I think these people need to learn to teach. That needs to be put in perspective to what their overall role is going to be so if it's a research role ... and as a head of department that's what I would direct for them to do, develop their research, get that underway but too, at the same time begin something in terms of learning about teaching and develop their skills there but that's a lower priority. Three or four years time it might change. [experienced]

We've got some people there that are just essentially teaching and doing a bit of scholarly activity. There are others that are doing 70 per cent research. Now for those that are coming in to teach then it's a priority to do the grad. cert. and we encourage that and I think that's been quite effective cause they bring back to the department a lot of very good ideas and they're able to change programs, change the way in which we teach and they've contributed greatly.
[experienced]

Valuing teaching

Making it mandatory may be the only way to increase the profile of teaching. Sometimes legislation does change culture over a period of time. If your legislators say that from now on university teachers must be able to demonstrate competency, eventually the value of teaching will improve. [experienced]

If you make it compulsory the first time ... you're suggesting to people that you are taking it seriously. First of all that teaching at that level matters, which I think is an important message to give people that are tutoring because you are the bottom of the heap. [sessional]

Provide a real course, not just our one or two day sheep dips. Provide a real semester or semi-semester course and then actually recognise that people have done it. Pay them appropriately.
[sessional]

Here is a good incentive, pay people more highly if they have been trained. [sessional]

Exactly, I mean the scales differentiate that way. You get paid for your PhD. [sessional]

Length of time and timing of programs

It depends what you mean by teacher education and if you mean by that sitting in the classroom doing a formal sort of things that the Dip. Ed. people do, that may not be realistic or feasible... if the notion of teacher education could be construed more broadly so that it provided the relevant kinds of experience with the relevant kinds of supervision plus some pedagogy, I think there are ways of meeting the spirit of that. [experienced]

But we give people six months for sabbatical leave to help them with their research and everybody considers that quite legitimate and the thing one should do. The idea we're talking about now, we shouldn't go much more than two or three weeks [per year] if we're going to talk about teaching, it comes back to continuing to devalue the teaching side. Universities devalue teaching and unless something is done, unless there's some policy brought in that actually starts to change that perception, we're going to be sitting around having the same conversation in ten years time.... [experienced]

I think what drives the best out of us is actually thinking back to those teachers who really inspired us. I really don't think there is much use in having a course before you are actually teaching. It would be a little bit like giving tutors skills in tutoring before there's been any

tutoring. I think one of the advantages of the graduate teaching program and I have noticed from the interaction that the tutors have with each other is the fact is that they are discussing real problems. They are learning while they are doing, they are discussing things with each other, the real problems they are having in the class. If you had to go through this program on how to teach before you were actually teaching I don't think it would be much use. Having all of that at the very beginning without the actual experience and the practice linking it to that I don't think is going to be at all useful. [experienced]

Sanctions

The problem is what are the sanctions if people don't participate? You're not going to sack them, you're not going to have their appointments terminated. [experienced]

[In] psychology ...you do actually lose your registration, so what sanctions are available? That's a genuine question, not a rhetorical one. [experienced]

Value of a Diploma in Higher Education?

I acknowledge that there would be people who come into university who perhaps would benefit from some kind of formal training. I haven't myself yearned for some type of teaching course to be offered by this university. I hope that doesn't mean that I am so hide bound that I can't see my own faults but I have to say if it is going to be a kind of glorified Dip Ed then I think it would have much the same role as a Dip Ed which is the sort of thing you do because you have to do it to be a qualified teacher but it doesn't necessarily make you a better teacher. It may teach somebody the basics if they have never taken the trouble to pay attention to how other people teach but when you have been taught yourself you see what works and you see what doesn't work. You see indifferent teaching and you see good teaching and I guess that some people are going to be better teachers than others with or without a qualification. There is a degree I suppose to which your formal qualification is relevant but beyond that then I think it is very much what your own talents are. [experienced]

I would actually question whether that is a better quality assurance [having teaching development programs] or whether in fact saying you must actually run a student feedback survey and someone other than you will look at the output to determine whether or not you are doing a decent job with your students. That might be a much better way of raising quality. I tell you what that would go down like a lead balloon. [inexperienced]

Lack of resources

I would be interested but given the savage staff cuts in the humanities I am grossly overworked and it annoys me when the university puts on things on Wednesday at short notice. [experienced]

I work with a number of casual tutors and they are extraordinarily committed people but the level of work they are required to do and the complete vacuum in which they are expected to do it. I think the fact that they don't get paid for any sort of supervision or support is really significant. I meet regularly with my tutors but they don't get paid for that. They are doing it in their own time they often have other jobs other commitments and yet they will meet with me for a couple of hours because they desperately want support and supervision in the systems but there is no capacity to pay them apparently, absolutely no induction program. [inexperienced]

...good teaching like any other activity I mean it requires time, all of this requires time and the time is just not there. [experienced]

Question 4 Should some form of nationally recognised validation be required for teaching staff?

Two of the peak body representatives said that they would like to see a nationally recognised validation for teaching staff, with one representative stipulating that national standards would need to be implemented by individual universities and the other saying that sessional staff could be excluded from this validation (i.e. it should not be compulsory for sessional staff). A third representative believed that while there 'should be' nationally recognised validation, there would need to be considerable consultation and discussion to find an appropriate model and therefore a voluntary scheme might be needed initially. One representative suggested that as "nothing is nationally negotiated, it can't be done". One representative stated that there should be no government imposed system and another said that 'accreditation' was not on their agenda.

...clearly NUS isn't the expert to talk about exactly what shape these should take but in terms of general strategies yes. If they're going to be receiving training then there should be a recognition in some form be it a certificate or a diploma.... [NUS]

[with reference to sessional staff] - from the perspective of students, trained staff are fantastic, staff that can teach are fantastic but you also want staff who are happy in what they're doing and have the right skills and have recognised those right skills, that kind of ability is really quite important. [NUS]

I think it is a difficult question. Certainly most of the members would say well when no one is prepared to negotiate on anything nationally they send us back to our institutions to bargain over the bones, we're not giving up anything.... And if they really want to take the issue of teacher registration seriously then one, they have to have some process of effectively talking to the union everywhere, and they have to pay for it.... it would have to be part of a negotiated package for improving quality and improving change in the sector. You can't get that degree of change from any worker unless you are prepared to reward their involvement in the process of change and that means through increasing their salaries and funding any program initiatives that are required to get the thing happening. [NTEU]

It is certainly a peculiarity that academics in HE wish to be seen as professionals in both their research and teaching roles, and yet there is no generally accepted professional recognition of the latter role....There is therefore logic in having a national form of validation to provide recognition in a formal and tangible manner. [AUQA]

Accreditation is not on the AUTC agenda. It was dropped after West....It's unlikely to be accepted. Academics would be unhappy if required to obtain more qualifications. [AUTC]

It's difficult because we're trying to develop an internationally recognised validation process. We've had six years of position/discussion papers, but there is resistance across the system, and a cautious attitude. There is a feeling there should be a validation process but other arguments that professional bodies are moving away from accreditation. There is considerable resistance from research-intensive unis. Because their formal awards in Higher Education, they say, are recognised internationally as awards, so you don't need a national system. Smaller institutions are interested, especially if they're not well known overseas, and especially if they're more teaching oriented. We've costed and evaluated several different models of accreditation. It's a very long and complex process because we're encountering very negative views from some sections of the sector....Calling anything 'accreditation' is a red rag to a bull across the sector. We're saying 'it's a recognition of teaching, not teachers'. [HERDSA]

Five of the thirteen focus groups of academics unanimously expressed a preference for nationally recognised validation while members of the other eight groups had mixed views about it. Members of the groups valued such aspects as scheme portability, not having to explain what the qualification meant, and the sense that this would address issues of what excellence in teaching meant. Concerns raised included a national scheme not addressing the needs of individual institutions and becoming ‘red tape’. Other thoughts raised included teachers having controls over standards in the profession, the multi-faceted role of the academic role, having peer reviewed teaching and the decrease in the opportunity to have an ‘apprenticeship model’ in academia.

Yeah, you really don't want to be doing it here and then go off to Queensland and find that they want you to do it all again. That would be very off putting, I mean people need, it would have to be recognised widely for people. [inexperienced]

Yes, preferably something with international portability as well. [experienced]

Which is particularly useful if you come from a non-vocational discipline if there is any stamp on your forehead that you can get which indicates to people how they can use you without them having to think about it or you having to have the confidence to sell yourself is a very useful thing. [sessional]

What counts and how do I know I'm a good teacher. How can I present it in a way that it's going to be persuasive. [experienced]

My concerns with it being national would be that it might become further and further removed from what it is needed and what is organic ... My experience where we already have some sort of national program [a different profession] and it just becomes another red tape....Now if there was somebody that we could then turn to and say "look we are doing this with our people, do you want to put a stamp of approval on that, fine". If you go the other way round, which is say this body is saying teachers should be doing this thing and then they should be stamped approved and then you get an accreditation ticked to say your university has accredited teachers, I see that going down the path of many others sort of accreditation programs that I have been involved with, that I think is definitely the wrong one to go. [sessional]

For instance, university lecturers do two basic things. They teach and they research. Research is peer reviewed, teaching is not. Perhaps we should be looking at peer reviewed teaching rather than an imposition of an external framework of accreditation which is driven by agendas that universities don't have control of and don't necessarily have enough input in, national agendas which really are not necessarily related to quality but are related to government issues. [inexperienced]

I think it is essential. The profession is open for criticism ... because of its inability to define its own sense of excellence. [inexperienced]

There are no criteria in one's disciplinary place either. I don't think there is any agreement in my own subject on what constitutes minimum competence or even what competencies might be. [experienced]

Our professional qualification is the higher degree and so forth. In a way what you are talking about is a kind of double profession that we have the profession of scholar but because we are teaching other scholars or helping people to become scholars then we have to have some kind of teaching qualification established too....There used to be a quite substantial apprenticeship in the disciplines that I am familiar with because people would be a part-time tutor then a full-time tutor, Level A as it is now called, though more is expected of level A these days. [experienced]

I would prefer a system which the teachers themselves, as professionals, had control over the conditions of entry and the maintenance of standards in the profession. [experienced]

I can't see why a body couldn't be set up that you could get accredited with as a higher education teacher. I don't see any reason why that couldn't happen and it wouldn't necessarily have to cost a million bucks either. You start with something small, you pay a yearly fee of \$50 or \$100 or whatever it is. It makes sense to me that that is a very sensible way to go. It could have several paths in so you can come in with experience or you can come in with a degree or a certificate have a few different ways to get in. [inexperienced]

...vital to certify teaching....It's problematic to demand accreditation, because it's a threat to those who've never pursued professional development in teaching, because they think it 'airy-fairy'....There should be a national body, like the Queensland Board of Teacher Registration. [inexperienced and part time]

Perhaps there's a possibility of setting up discipline based accrediting bodies, like in VET. [experienced]

Question 5 Do you think some form of formal regular revalidation should take place as is found in other professions?

Five of the peak bodies said that this was important for the university teaching profession and four of those added that it needed to be an opportunity, not compulsory. The sixth peak body representative said that there was no comment to be made because it was not practicable.

...having the ability and having the opportunity to update those skills is something that should be available. I mean professional development should be ongoing clearly....from the student's perspective ideally, you need your lecturers and your academics to be able to have up to date skills in those areas but I mean at the end of the day a happy academic and an academic interested in what they're doing is probably enough in some sense so I think if I start to say that I would like academics to have compulsory ongoing development then it gets into an argument of what the role of that academic is. So if we're talking about kind of opportunities for development after the initial kind of accreditation I suppose and providing enough incentives to have that development going, I think that would be enough. [NUS]

You'd have to do some sort of yearly attendance. You would have to demonstrate continual development of your teaching. [HERDSA]

The full spectrum of responses was provided by the focus groups of teaching staff both within and between groups. Four groups agreed that continuing revalidation was important for teaching staff and their students, two groups (sessionals) responded that while these opportunities needed to be available, they needed to be optional and sessional staff needed to be paid, one group thought that while valuable, it was not practical to provide this at a national level and six groups could not come to consensus. The primary concerns expressed by the focus groups whose members were in disagreement were those of a lack of time for academics, lack of recognition of teaching and generally a lack of resources in the sector.

Those groups that did support regular revalidation spoke about the dual nature of the profession, the value of peer review and validation, and the difficulties of validating sessional staff. Several suggestions were made about approaches that could be used.

Anyone in any job in forty years ... can't possibly stay fresh forty years and believe in themselves 100 per cent. Sometimes having to just sharpen your axe every year, to make sure that you are actually current, is actually a useful thing. It shouldn't become draconian but it should be available to actually say, I have been in this profession a number of years, I have got this experience but I will need to upgrade it as I go. I mean, it gets to the whole heart of what do we learn, what do we teach and how do we actually validate both. [experienced]

It should be like a licence that has to be renewed every couple of years. [inexperienced and part time]

The profession

... we've got two professions running side by side if we are teaching, I think and we've got to give attention to that. [inexperienced]

I think it revolves around "are we a profession anyway?" and I think there's a whole issue about "who are we?" I think that there is a real issue around what is an academic's job? ... some of my colleagues have said "it's not my job to evidence quality, it's somebody else's job" So I think there's deeper issues around this question of what we should be providing people and indeed whether it should be compulsory. [experienced]

I do think if we were to say we are a profession and part of our professional responsibility is continuing professional development as many other professions have, there's probably some kind of a point system or something where you have many different ways of accruing the points. It could be attending workshops, it could be undertaking an action learning project, it could be many different possibilities. [experienced]

Peer review/ validation

Peer review is a great way of doing that. Just having your colleagues come in to your classroom and just sit there and talk to you about it. I think everyone is in isolation. I teach - no one knows really what goes on in the actual classroom. I think it'd be a good way of improving everyone's teaching. [inexperienced]

I think probably for too long a lot of teachers haven't been able to access a form of peer validation that helps them feel positive about what they've achieved so they're tending not to see their own achievements in a very positive way. If they got some feedback externally, I think that that would actually help a lot of people understand what they've achieved is quite phenomenal....[experienced]

Approaches that could be used

...still I think you can get some really useful information about the effectiveness of teaching from students. [inexperienced]

I'm suggesting the actual validating could be done ...through the performance management process. But the criteria and guidelines for doing that validation are provided by a national body. [experienced]

I think the other thing we need to do is try to make these activities, if we go down this path, actually scholarly in the sense that they are intellectually challenging ... that they lead to some outcomes which can be made available to peers and [be] peer reviewed. [experienced]

One person, himself a passionate supporter through his Faculty and throughout the university for the Graduate Certificate, and a graduate of the program, argued that every continuing academic should have to present a portfolio of their teaching activities

every five years. The Student Evaluations of Teaching were one useful tool as part of a revalidation process, but a portfolio should also be required to demonstrate how teachers had used the results of the evaluations.

If you're a financial advisor you have to study at weekends and pay for the workshops if you want to get ahead. Maybe we should accept that for teaching too". [experienced]

Sessional staff

[Re sessional staff] I've certainly not got a problem in principle, it's just rather whether it's practical and would be able to be implemented. I support the principle strongly. [experienced]

I mean for us it boiled down to two quite simple questions, the answers aren't easy but the questions are. One is how do you know when these people that we're employing have the skills that are required to [teach] and the second one is, if they don't, ... what do you do about them? And rather than simply say "both of those are too hard" it seems to me we should be making some kind of effort to addressing them.

...we build a different kind of culture for our sessional staff to the point where they feel isolated, they don't feel part of the process, therefore what's the amount of value they'll put into what they do, they judge it according to how isolated they often are. [experienced]

One sessional staff member raised the question *If a sessional staff member teaches three hours a week, how much investment in their teaching should [the university] put into them?*

Other comments

Just offering training and saying you have to have a particular accreditation I don't think is going to get away from the fact that in a year and a half's time people are bored with teaching. They don't like the students very much they don't have very good interpersonal skills I mean it is possible to get the qualification and say yes I've got my piece of paper that says I have done a graduate diploma in higher education or whatever but that is not going to take away from the fact that there are academics that would rather be doing research than teaching and put more effort into that area than another. If we are talking about maintaining standards it would have to be an ongoing process. [inexperienced]

The point is valid; the practicalities are pretty difficult. The Australian Psychological Society has come up with this continuous training development and it is a monster to police. You are supposed to have 20 hours of professional development each two years of which 10 years will be acknowledged, and somebody has got to keep a register of it. You have got to go to certain things that are authorised or accredited by the APS to be acceptable and you have got to get a certificate and you have got to send this in. I haven't bothered, it is only college members at the moment but I can't imagine the difficulty of doing it, the cost of administering it. The idea is nice. [inexperienced]

Question 6 **Which organisation would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation?**

Four of the six peak body representatives argued that a national organisation would have to be newly constituted from within the sector. Such a body, it was argued, would need to be resourced to carry out its role. One peak body representative thought that perhaps HERDSA could do the job and said that there was no funding for a separate body to do the work. The sixth representative thought that the AVCC or AUTC might take on the remit to do this work.

I don't think anyone would trust any of the institutions to do it and I am not even sure that the institutions or any body would trust the government to do it. So I suppose you would have to look at some sort of negotiated outcome between the employers, the NTEU, and the government.[NTEU]

I think you would have to create one. I don't think there is anything that exists now that would be acceptable to the sector and to everybody else.... The environment is such that government or a body like the AVCC could not set standards because it is not what it is about....The only other option is for a group from the sector itself to come together and try to develop [standards]I think to be successful it would have to be its own separate body. If you look around and look at the number of people we are talking about 50,000 people in the sector, enough to enable them to establish their own professional body.... I think it is good idea but it is fraught with difficulties in trying to implement. [AVCC]

There's no funding capacity for an institution like ILT [UK Institute for Learning and Teaching]. [AUTC]

Four of the thirteen focus groups agreed that a separate, representative body would need to be constituted; one focus group thought that the professional bodies related to specific disciplines could take a more active role while another group thought that professional bodies are ineffective; one group suggested the AVCC or AUQA, another HERDSA although not all of the members had heard of HERDSA and those who had heard of it thought that it was not well resourced enough and not well known across universities to take on such responsibilities. Two focus groups had no suggestions and four focus groups were not convinced that an existing organisation could do the work.

Such a group "would have to be able to differentiate between universities with different missions and disciplines. [experienced]

I think peers and other universities could help validate given that they also are in the same time boat as the rest of us. [experienced]

Perhaps the academies should have some input into this as professional bodies of the various disciplines. The Academy of Social Sciences, the Academy of Sciences, these groups maybe should be taking some responsibility in this area. They don't have a lot of resources and their interests lie more in research status and prestige in recognition of research but it is something they should be involved in. I hesitate to put it in the lap of the university administration because they are so much captured and restrained by political agendas in terms of funding so in that sense they are not objective enough but they should have some input. [inexperienced]

...the professional societies are not even recognised by the government as peak bodies. I, for a long time, was president of one and first of all it was run on a shoe string from a bottom drawer. We were never invited to the table on any discussion even when we tried to express interest in projects related to the training of graduate entry for new teachers, revitalising old and overworked ones. We were always referred to various grant schemes which were again limited in scope and the kinds of things you could do. [experienced]

In chemistry for instance the curriculum is benchmarked by an outside organisation namely the Royal Australian Chemical Institute which claims to be the peak professional body for chemists so it goes through all the chemistry departments in Australia and either ticks or doesn't tick the standards of their chemistry curriculum. I am sure there is a fair bit of attention to things like class sizes and ratio of lecturers to students. Another thing that is receiving particular attention in chemistry is the standard of the laboratories that students work in and to a degree this has been driven by occupational health and safety which is of course not something universities have been pushing. This has come from outside organisations so there are quite a lot of things that are pushing in. [experienced]

Question 7 Are there any other ways in which effective teaching can be recognised?

The suggestions raised by the peak body representatives and the focus groups of teaching staff included teaching sabbatical, promotion on the basis of teaching, performance funding for teaching, teaching awards, rewards (financial incentives) for teaching credentials/specialisation, internal competitive teaching grants, teaching improvement grants, awards that encourage the links between teaching and research, mentoring, broad based teaching activities to be recognised, student and peer feedback of teaching, PhD to be used as a form of teaching apprenticeship, explicit statements about what is expected in terms of teaching, changing perspectives such that the teaching of first year introductory courses was prestigious, and funding for research into teaching.

Peak body representative's comments

I think that's where it often falls down where there's still a perception that teaching is just walking into a lecture with a notepad and saying things and that's kind of it and clearly we've moved away from there quite a lot. ...we can recognise excellent teaching in staff and promote excellent teaching in staff. [NUS]

Most institutions have teaching awards and I think that is a good idea. Some of them have money attached to them. I think that in the current environment where people are just so strapped for time and space to think, rewards that also provide time for people would be very useful. Such rewards might include time release to work on a particular project associated with teaching, or to write a textbook, or to attend conferences, especially international ones. [NTEU]

Mentoring should be a normal role of experienced staff; you need structures to enable mentoring to happen. It's a departmental management responsibility, the Head of Department should take this responsibility. [AUTC]

Most but not all universities apply for the National Teaching Awards, but they carry a lot of weight in promotions, and they are very highly regarded in the media and in government, so they are an excellent vehicle for recognising teaching excellence. [AUTC]

Teaching development should be given a higher priority in existing university budgets, you shouldn't be asking for special money for it. [AUTC]

We are developing a Fellowship Scheme which would allow existing HERDSA members to get international standing via a portfolio. It would be peer reviewed. If we got reviewers who recognised people, there'd be more peers available to recognise others. Regular re-validation would be required. [HERDSA]

There should also be funding for research into teaching. The lack of this has resulted in a paucity of evidence that certain kinds of teaching interventions work. [HERDSA]

Focus group comments

Research above teaching

But the professor tells us the teaching stuff is a waste of time. [inexperienced]

The problem is the division between teaching and research. The career advice you get from management is to emphasise research achievement. The institutional structure is simply not focused on teaching. [experienced]

There are no faculty or university-wide criteria for promotion from the teaching stream, although the university pays lip service to the teaching career path....People ask you 'how's the research going?' But no one has ever asked me 'how did the lecture go?' [experienced]

And also I believe there's a confusion amongst the university ... as to what it is that they require of any one individual because the head may say "I want you to do more research", the QA directors say "I want you to focus more on the quality of your program", the Dean may say "I want you to go get more international students", the professor may say "we're changing profession and your program's useless now". So there's a lot of conflicting requirements on a particular person and what will they decide to focus on day to day ...[experienced]

Student/peer feedback

Here the student evaluations are compulsory, and that's good, but I'm not sure it makes any difference. [inexperienced]

Student Evaluations of Teaching should be mandated. And we have to start making some hard decisions about the results. But your SETS are often not good if you challenge the students too much....it's a two-edged sword. [experienced]

I have never had any official feedback on my teaching ability. [sessional]

It would be very nice to have access to the formal structures for teacher evaluation. [sessional]

I get a lot of feedback because I teach in teams and I ask for it. Peer review is really useful, but no one does it from a development perspective any more, only for promotion. [experienced]

Peer review is needed. [experienced]

Approaches to take/not to take

One good idea would be professional associations giving special teaching awards, like the Association of Science Teaching Awards.

There was deep suspicion of Faculty Teaching Awards: They are no motivation (to teach better); the Heads of School have already worked out who's going to get them; there's no point in trying. [experienced]

Performance management may have an impact on improving the quality of teaching, but it's only just beginning. [experienced]

Perhaps there could be something like the Frequent Flyer scheme. A good incentive scheme. You opt in and out of it, but you accumulate points like you do for reward cheap flights. So you do five to six months teaching overseas, and you get points; if you get a T&L grant,once you get 100,000 points you get a sabbatical. [experienced]

Microdiversity is what a uni should be about, but the last two decades have discouraged microdiversity. [experienced]

There has to be time allowed for professional development. [experienced]

Other comments

Several peak body representatives made comment on the dual nature of the academic role and the need to value both research and teaching.

There's obviously I suppose, a level of tension between an academic's first priorities, the university's priorities for that academic as well as students. Academics in my experience, their first priority is to research and supervision ...but clearly there's a very important need for teaching and so I would think I would rate research and teaching equally at least for Australian universities which claim to do both. So they have to be able to value both of those things and academics have to be able to value both of those things.[NUS]

...let's start seeing teaching as an important part of universities and not just research. We have a whole research training scheme that's there to reward people, ... the fact is though we don't really have some reward system that's there for teaching and to put it on par with research in terms of its importance and the role of universities in that sense. [CAPA]

Peak body representatives expressed interest in and concern about how best to provide teaching development opportunities and determine the quality of teaching.

...the core questions are: What actions and what structures will best enhance the activity of teaching, and will best lead to enhanced learning outcomes? [AUQA]

...in an environment where staff are under severe pressure ... in terms of time and money, students are under severe pressure, universities are in a state of crisis, it's all falling apart and so in that sort of environment to be able to set down kind of priorities of research and teaching ... what does it mean for university funding or universities being able to have access to money to provide professional development and then looking at those kinds of scenarios we can look at questions of how those programs should run, should they be compulsory later on in the track, ... all those sorts of things. [NUS]

One of the ways you give importance to teaching, teaching standards, teaching quality I always thought was to have a senior staff teach first year and to actually mentor younger staff through their first year teaching. I don't know of any place that still does that. ...I think financial circumstances are driving universities in such a way that it makes it very difficult to even utilise simple mechanisms without incurring funding implications. The way in which the research performance indicators are used now and the obsession with finding a dollar anywhere, anyplace, under any stone means that if you are a senior staff member you are spending more time searching for additional resources than you are being involved in critical programs to assist junior staff, such as mentoring. [NTEU]

...have a national teacher training standard ...and then let each ... university implement that.... Now what we need is an overarching body that's going to monitor the quality of that teacher training course.... [CAPA]

Now a lot of universities used to do that [have student feedback systems] and some still do but how that information gets used, who gets provided that information needs to be... I think we need to assess how that system is working and perhaps tie that in to this other form of assessment [teacher development]. [CAPA]

Now we've got to start getting that accreditation in place for teaching and the reward system in place for teaching. [CAPA]

...they're [the national body] also a quality control body 'cause they've got to do quality checks on what's been taught at each of the institutions in terms of teacher training ... once you've got that national structure and minimum standard that's created by them, then you've got to make sure that you've got someone on the campuses who's in control of that at each of the institutions. [CAPA]

Summary of Findings

Most peak body representatives perceived that at best the effectiveness of current forms of teacher education in Australian universities was variable while most focus groups reported that it was ineffective. All focus groups and all but one peak body representative responded that universities should be required to provide some form of teacher education for their teaching staff.

The perceived ineffectiveness of the current provision was seen primarily in terms of heavy workloads and a lack of resources precluding staff from taking and being offered teaching education opportunities. Opportunities for teacher education were perceived in very broad terms, not simply in terms of centrally provided 'graduate certificates in higher education'. For some staff, research was their primary motivation for being an academic and they perceived no need to engage with continuing professional development around the teaching component of their academic role.

There was significant disagreement both between peak body representatives and within and between focus groups about: the need for teacher education to be compulsory for all university teaching staff; the value of having a nationally recognised validation for teaching staff; and the need for formal, regular revalidation for university teaching.

Issues of resourcing, workloads, procuring sessional staff, a lack of valuing and recognition of teaching (compared with research), and concerns about the value of 'graduate certificates in higher education' were raised as issues that would need to be addressed in order for teaching staff to be able to engage in and be provided with teaching education opportunities. Concerns about the inconsistency of high quality teaching, a lack of preparation across the sector for teaching responsibilities, low confidence/morale, portability of qualifications and the dual nature of the academic profession were raised in support of compulsory, continuing teacher education for university staff.

Most peak body representatives and the majority of focus groups believed that no current organisation could effectively provide national validation for university teaching. Many of the stakeholders believed that an organisation would need to be newly constituted from within the sector, be representative of the sector and be appropriately resourced to carry out its role. It is noteworthy that Anderson (1996) proposed a "consortium" of the NTEU, AVCC and HERDSA as an appropriate body for this activity.

Other ways mentioned of recognising effective teaching included: teaching being given a higher priority and this to be embedded in university structures of recognition and reward; institutional awards; funding for research into teaching; teaching fellowship schemes; student evaluations; and performance management (appraisal schemes).

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The training that academic staff receive in order to meet the challenges posed by massification, diversity and the move to flexible learning, is scant. The point has often been made that university teaching is perhaps the only remaining profession not to have developed a professional structure. (HERDSA 1997, p.15)

With the exception of the 'oldest profession on the world', university teachers are now members of the only profession in the United Kingdom for which there is no recognised or required course of training. (Dallat & Rae 1993, p.270)

5.1 Conclusions

Australian universities were among the pioneers of staff development for teaching responsibilities of academics, through establishment of central development units as early as the 1970's. Subsequently such units established formal awards in higher education, as well as the provision of workshops/seminars in teaching-related issues.

While it has been assumed that the activities of central teaching development units do improve university teaching quality, little systematic research has been carried out to support that notion and this raises important questions concerning their effectiveness. The Gibbs and Coffey project may provide such evidence. In the absence of this evidence, and decreased availability of funding, individual university support for central units has fluctuated, so they are often marginalised in terms of financial support and dedicated staff (Rowland et al. 1998; Gibbs & Coffey 2000; Coffey 2000). Nevertheless, if universities are to demonstrate their commitment to improving teaching quality, the presence of a dedicated central staff development unit would appear to be critical; AUQA's audit recommendation on establishing such a unit at USQ supports this view. It is significant that currently six universities do not provide support for a central teaching development unit.

There is general agreement among stakeholders that a central unit should have responsibility for development and delivery of formal award programs in higher education, rather than an Education faculty, and for the development and delivery of less formal CPE workshop programs.

However, the views of various stakeholders reported here reflect equivocation on the issue of mandated acquisition of a formal teaching qualification for all university teachers, primarily because of concerns about the practical implications of such a determination, such as funding and staff workloads. There was also some reluctance among academic staff and some sector stakeholders about the concept of mandated teacher qualifications, because of the perception that this requirement would breach the teaching/research nexus essential to 'the idea of the university'. Few of those interviewed conceded that this nexus is routinely broken at the level of the individual academic, especially among sessional staff. Almost all stakeholders strongly supported formal preparation programs for 'new' academics who intended a university career,

although practical problems (funding, time commitment, too few teaching hours to warrant training) were given as pragmatic reasons why sessional staff would be excluded from required preparation programs. Nevertheless, lack of training amongst sessionals given their increasing contribution to undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs was widely perceived as a major problem in ensuring quality of teaching.

While all stakeholders supported the provision of CPE for the teaching role, there was real ambivalence about accreditation to a profession of university teaching.

The authors believe that this ambivalence derives mainly from scepticism that resources would be made available to pursue the professionalisation of teaching in our universities. As is evident in the quotes in Chapter 4, many responses to questions about formal preparation and accreditation related to funding and workloads.

The current context of higher education, outlined briefly in Chapter 1, points inexorably to the necessity for formal preparation for the teaching role, both for those intending a career in academia, and for those teaching more casually in the sector. However, given the ambivalence expressed by many stakeholders, progress towards professionalisation should be a staged process, as outlined below.

The data presented here raise a number of particular issues for academic staff development in Australian universities. In the authors' experience, much of the notional staff development in universities is now in micro-level teaching skills, in using new technologies such as PowerPoint, multimedia software, and web-based learning management systems, except in the formal award programs, where the emphasis has consistently been on pedagogical and contextual studies. Moreover, there is a wide disparity between the approach taken in the US, where Teaching Assistants and doctoral students' training is in teaching practices, and the UK approach which predominantly emphasises reflective practice (following Argyris & Schon 1974), a cycle of self-critique, and professional dialogue, rather than skills. Australian staff developers have followed the UK approach, but accreditation would imply a greater emphasis on skills as well. Ryan, G. (1996) outlines a useful framework for any accrediting body tasked with judging the elements of a formal award program, canvassing an adequate balance of skills and theoretical and contextual studies. Portfolios would clearly play a major role in accreditation of experienced teachers, and much work has already been undertaken in the nature and structure of higher education portfolios (SEDA provides an excellent model). Universities themselves could immediately enhance teaching quality if they were to thoroughly revise promotion criteria to reward staff primarily engaged in teaching.

In many Australian universities, and sector-wide, there are a number of initiatives that support and reward individual's efforts to improve their teaching. Again, there is scattered scepticism about the extent to which these are genuinely intended as a recognition of teaching ability, but nevertheless, they represent 'good practice' in a concerted attempt to enhance quality.

Student feedback on teaching forms a basic component in any teaching quality process, although it represents a partial and simplistic approach. Work towards a standardised core instrument, with the capacity to tailor additional sections of the instrument for individual disciplines and institutions would be useful. Portfolios represent a complementary instrument.

Some universities now open their academic staff development programs to general staff, given the greater inclusion of general-classified staff in direct teaching of students, and this would appear to be good practice. Mentoring has been under-emphasised as a systemic approach to assisting new staff and sessionals, yet has a good deal of potential during any phased-in professionalisation process, and as part of ongoing programs.

A further issue is how to evaluate the effectiveness of either formal or informal staff development in teaching. Student grades are no measure, and the limits of student evaluations are well documented by many of the staff interviewed for this project. Further, post-degree student reflections on the quality of teaching as in the CEQ provide no definitive measure of quality, since students may have been exposed to over 24 teachers in the course of their degree, and their perceptions of overall teaching quality are necessarily general. Moreover, real teaching 'outcomes' may only be evident years after the learning experience. As O'Neill and Meek (1994) observe of any professional activity, 'the work is tricky and the result is somewhat uncertain'. In no profession is this truer than in teaching.

The nexus between teaching development and appraisal is also a major issue. While the research here and overseas argues that there must be a link between accreditation and promotion/rewards, there is less support for the 'penalties' that might be applied under accreditation regimes.

5.2 The pathway of professionalisation in university teaching

It is clear both from the empirical data presented here and the grey data in submissions, media reports and anecdotes that at the current time the profession of university teaching fails to meet many of the traditional criteria for a profession. This is true with respect to: (a) the existence of a professional community establishing its own standards; (b) agreement on what constitutes an appropriate body of professional knowledge and how that knowledge should be developed; (c) the establishment of required induction and ongoing professional learning as a requirement for professional practice; (d) minimum standards for professional practice and standards for advanced practice; and (e) a system for recognising individuals that is able to demonstrate attainment of different standards of professional practice. Agreement to the set of principles described above provides a basis for the further professional development of higher education teaching and the potential for establishing university teaching on a more professional basis. Pursuing this pathway would be to the advantage of academic staff themselves, their students and to society in general to which the profession is ultimately accountable.

Advocating the pathway of professionalisation does, however, involve profound changes in the way that many academics in higher education see themselves and their roles with their institutions and in academia more generally. What is proposed here is founded on the very principles of scholarship and professionalism that universities themselves uphold and espouse, though, as has been noticed by many commentators, universities are sometimes reluctant to implement the very processes they themselves advocate for others.

The development of professionalisation in higher education teaching could be seen as a process and a pathway along which universities are travelling. By the standards of other professions, university teaching is clearly at an early stage to the extent that many

question whether it should be regarded as a profession at all. However, the need to professionalise higher education teaching is recognised by many both within and outside the sector. Higher education is simply too important for it to be regarded in any other way.

It would be useful, therefore, if a model (not simply a prescriptive route) were developed from which a pathway for the professionalisation of higher education teaching could emerge. The following is suggested as a possible model.

Where we are now

- Variable policies and procedures both across and among institutions in relation to the preparation of academic staff for their teaching role.
- No national agreed standards for teaching quality.
- No national agreed formal qualification for teaching in higher education either relation to content, structure, time, outcomes.
- Limited resources available for both initial and continuing professional education for teaching.
- No sector agreement regarding requirement to undertake some form of preparation for university teaching.
- No sense of university teaching as a discrete professional dimension of academic work.

Stage 1

The establishment of a new body, named here as the Australian University Teaching Quality Council, sponsored by MCEETYA and supported by the Commonwealth through a Commonwealth Teaching Quality Fund (TQF) and comprising key stakeholders including practitioners, student representatives and industrial bodies. This body would be tasked with:

- developing a framework for the establishment of nationally agreed standards for the skills, knowledge and values appropriate for beginning and experienced teaching in higher education which takes account of both institutional and disciplinary diversity;
- developing a framework for the harmonization of formal awards in higher education consistent with these standards.

Stage 2

A consultative process across the sector aimed at achieving consensus with respect to both frameworks.

Stage 3

Accrediting institutional awards in higher education against the agreed standards framework of the Australian University Teaching Quality Council.

Stage 4

The introduction of required teaching preparation for all staff new to teaching in the university sector and concurrently ongoing professional development programs for experienced staff, both to take the form of award courses accredited by the Australian University Teaching Quality Council.

5.3 Principles and practices underpinning the professionalisation of university teaching

Principles

University teaching is a professional activity that:

1. is deeply informed by research, scholarship, professional practice and community service;
2. can have a profound effect on both what and how people learn;
3. is based on scholarship, critical reflective practice and peer review;
4. requires a high level of expertise related to :
 - a. disciplinary knowledge;
 - b. knowledge of how people develop knowledge in different disciplines;
 - c. knowledge about how to facilitate the process of people developing knowledge in different disciplines; and
 - d. requires both skills and knowledge which can be learned and further developed through professional learning;
5. is built on values, ethical principles and professional standards which are developed, negotiated and sustained by a community of professionals; and
6. is accountable to its stakeholders including the community, governments and students through explicit quality assurance processes.

Agreement to these principles has profound implications for the way university teaching should be supported.

Practices

University teaching should:

1. be supported and informed by an independent body of professionals responsible for developing standards for both professional practice and professional learning programs;
2. be founded on a systematic program of induction and ongoing professional learning for all staff involved with teaching including those employed on a sessional basis;

3. be linked to a system for recognising that individuals have met the agreed standards for professional practice;
4. be subject to quality assurance processes involving independent assessment with respect to:
 - a) the provision of both initial and ongoing professional learning; and
 - b) the minimum standards required for professional practice;
5. be aligned with both national and institution-wide policies and practices related to teaching, learning and research;
6. adequately resourced;
7. be embedded in the recognition and reward systems, career paths and opportunities for professional learning offered within universities; and
8. involve all staff directly or indirectly involved in teaching including those employed on a sessional basis.

5.4 Recommendations

1. All staff new to university teaching should be required to complete either a formal preparation program in university teaching or a portfolio demonstrating their teaching competence as part of their probation requirements.
2. Given the requirements for (a) quality assurance, (b) the need for a form of recognition that is portable, and (c) the need to embed university teaching in a scholarly framework subject to peer review, preparation programs should form part of formal award courses, which might include a comprehensive peer review of a portfolio.
3. The minimum standard required for professional practice as a university teacher should be that represented by the Graduate Certificate level. Possession of a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education would act as a proxy for teaching expertise just as possession of a Masters/PhD reflects discipline expertise.
4. Graduate Certificates in Higher Education should incorporate assessment of learning outcomes related to both theoretical knowledge about student learning as well as practical skills in facilitating learning.
5. The structure of Graduate Certificate in Higher Education programs should be flexible enough to allow for the needs and characteristics of different institutions and disciplinary fields, both in terms of mode of delivery and of curriculum.
6. Institutions should be specifically funded as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources (mainly in the form of time release) to support **new** staff while they obtain appropriate qualifications in teaching as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education. This would entail the establishment of a national Teaching Quality Fund. Funding to institutions would be based on actual numbers of teaching staff at each institution, individual missions, discipline specialties and staffing profiles. Individual institutions would be responsible and accountable for the dispersal of funds for either formal

programs of teaching offered in their own institution, or for enrolment of their staff in another institution's programs.

7. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources (mainly in the form of time release) to support **existing** university teaching staff who do not possess higher education qualifications in teaching to undertake an award course as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education.
8. There should be an expectation that sessional staff undertake a minimal level of teaching preparation before being offered a contract for teaching. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund as part of their operating grant to provide the necessary resources for this development, including payment of sessional staff for teaching development time.
9. Preparation programs for sessional teaching staff should, as a minimum, represent components of an accredited Graduate Certificate of Higher Education. This would enable staff wishing to complete a Graduate Certificate to do so.
10. Institutions should either provide, or provide access to, further qualifications in higher education building on the Graduate Certificate as part of their overall strategy of ongoing staff development and quality enhancement.
11. Institutions should be specifically funded from the Teaching Quality Fund through their operating grant to provide comprehensive ongoing professional development programs for their teaching staff as part of the overall quality assurance system for Australian higher education.
12. Schemes which recognise individuals who have demonstrated high quality teaching, such as the new Fellowship membership scheme of the Higher Education, Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), should be encouraged.
13. Consideration should be given to accrediting Graduate Certificate in Higher Education programs at a national level with a new body, the Australian University Teaching Quality Council, consisting of key stakeholders including practitioners, student representatives and industrial bodies in order to provide a mechanism for benchmarking, peer review and quality assurance.
14. Since professionalisation of university teaching is an incremental process, there should be a staged implementation of these recommendation beginning with the distribution of this Discussion Paper to all stakeholders and following the stages outlined in section 5.2 of this paper.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Please note: The information gathered using this questionnaire will be confidential. The identity of the university in question will not be made known unless consent is given by the university in question. No reference to a particular university (or a group of universities) will be made in the final publication unless consent has been given by those universities.

Instructions: Please type your responses directly in the Word file and return electronically as an email attachment

1. In your university, how many staff have the teaching development of your university's lecturers/tutors as their primary role? Where are these staff located – central/faculty/mixed, and in what centres? Do any faculties/schools have dedicated education/teaching centres?
2. Does your university conduct student evaluations of individual university teachers? If so, who administers the system, is it compulsory and who has access to the results?
3. What links, if any, are made between student evaluations of individual teachers and the improvement of teaching practice?
4. Does the university provide teaching development support for non-academic staff who are increasingly involved in teaching – eg library staff, learning skills advisors, IT staff? If so, what form does this take?

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5. What does your university provide in the way of teaching support for new academic staff? Please complete the following matrix and add anything extra that your university does that is not in the matrix.

	Our university provides this program Y/N	Is this program compulsory for new staff Y/N? If yes, do you ensure compliance? (please elaborate below)	Is there an award/recognition/external accreditation (please elaborate below)	What % of your centre's/unit's teaching development work would go into this program?	Are there incentives/time release for staff to do this program?
Introduction to teaching/foundation programs					
Graduate Certificates					
Seminar/workshop programs					
Mentoring programs					

Investigation Into the Provision of Professional Development for University Teaching in Australia

6. What does your university provide in the way of teaching support for experienced academic staff? Please complete the following matrix and add anything extra that your university does that is not in the matrix.

	Our university provides this program Y/N	Is this program compulsory for new staff Y/N? If yes, do you ensure compliance? (please elaborate below)	Is there an award/recognition/external accreditation (please elaborate below)	What % of your centre's/unit's teaching development work would go into this program?	Are there incentives/time release for staff to do this program?
Introduction to teaching/foundation programs					
Graduate Certificates					
Seminar/workshop programs					
Mentoring programs					
Assistance with teaching development grant writing					
Teaching excellence awards					
University teaching development grants					

7. If your university has an introduction to teaching program, please complete the following questions. If the program can be taken as part of an award program (see Q8 below) please provide separate responses for both groups where appropriate.
- a) How long has the program been in existence?
 - b) How many people undertook this program in 2001?
 - c) How many hours does the program run for and when does it occur?
 - d) What format is the delivery mode? (face to face, online, print, mixed)
 - e) Is there an assessment component – if so what does it consist of?
 - f) Is there observation and feedback on teaching in the program?
 - g) How is the program evaluated?
 - h) Is the program structured to develop a specific teaching practice – eg teaching international students, online teaching? If so, please comment.
 - i) Does the structure of the program have the flexibility to respond to new topics/emerging needs. If so, how?
8. If your university has a formal award on tertiary teaching (eg Graduate Certificate), please complete the following questions:
- a) What is the award?
 - b) How long has the award been in existence at your institution?
 - c) How many people undertook this program in 2001? Were they primarily staff new to teaching or experienced teaching staff?
 - d) What is the notional time required for contact and study for the program?

- e) What is the structure of the program (how many units complete the award and over what time period are they done)?
- f) What format is the delivery mode? (face to face, print, online, mixed)
- g) Is the assessment practice-based or theoretical or a mixture of both??
- h) Is there observation and feedback on teaching in the program?
- i) How is the program evaluated?
- j) Is the program structured to develop a specific teaching practice – eg teaching international students, online teaching? If so, please comment.
- k) Does the structure program have the flexibility to respond to new topics/emerging needs. If so, how?
- l) Are possibilities for further study for credit (e.g. Masters) available?

9. Please make any general comments regarding the way universities prepare their staff for their teaching role.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder Questions

Re staff new to teaching:

- How effective do you think current forms of preparing staff for their teaching role are?
- Should universities be required to provide some form of teacher education for staff new to teaching?
- Do you think some form of teacher education for staff new to teaching should be compulsory?
- If so, do you think this should be a nationally recognised form of validation?
- If so, do you think some form of formal regular revalidation should take place as is found in other professions?
- Which organization would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation?
- Are there any other ways in which effective teaching can be recognised?

Re casual staff:

- How effective do you think current forms of preparing casual staff for their teaching role are?
- Should universities be required to provide some form of teacher education for casual staff?
- Do you think some form of teacher education for casual staff should be compulsory?
- If so, do you think this should be a nationally recognised form of validation?
- If so, which organization would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation?
- If so, do you think some form of formal regular revalidation should take place as is found in other professions?
- Are there any other ways in which effective teaching can be recognised?

Re staff experienced in teaching:

- How effective do you think current forms of continuing teacher education are?
- Should universities be required to provide some form of continuing teacher education for their teaching staff?
- Do you think that continual teacher education should be compulsory for all teaching staff in universities?
- Should some form of nationally recognised validation be required for staff already experienced in teaching?
- If so, you think some form of formal regular revalidation should take place as is found in other professions?

- Which organization would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation?
- Are there any other ways in which effective teaching can be recognised?