

e-news



Department of Education,
Training and Youth Affairs

www.detya.gov.au

on higher education

e-news 06

Informing the Higher Education Sector—March 2001

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pages

Articles that run onto the next page have a 'forward' icon at the bottom right hand corner of the page. Select this icon to move forward one page. Subsequent pages will have a 'back' icon that you can use to go back.

to exit

Don't have any menus to help you exit? Select 'Esc' on your keyboard then close the window as per normal.

Note: You can close the file *and* the application at the same time by selecting the top 'x'.

getting around

The front page of *e-news on higher education* features a set of icons that take you to the articles inside.

These icons are repeated at the bottom of every page, to guide you to other articles.

accessibility

A HTML 'text-only' copy of *e-news* has been posted onto our website.

www.detya.gov.au/highered/enews

printing

Use the keystrokes of 'Ctrl P' to launch a print window. Remember, you can print all of the pages or choose to print current page. *or*

Select 'Esc' on your keyboard. You will then have access to toolbars and menus and you can choose the 'print' icon.

websites

e-news on higher education also has links to relevant websites. To access a website, simply click on the URL when the open hand cursor changes to a pointing hand.

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RECOGNITION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE IN A GLOBAL EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

Recognition and quality assurance have always been important matters for the higher education sector at a national level but, as higher education increasingly operates in a global environment, international linkages also become very significant.

There are four facets to international liaison on recognition and quality issues. First is the protection of Australia's image as a provider of high quality education, the key to which is ensuring that the badge 'Australian university' does, in fact, denote quality. Second is the marketing of Australian education to countries that currently or potentially see Australia as a provider of higher education services. Third is the development and maintenance of international networks to facilitate qualifications recognition and participation in UNESCO Conventions for this purpose. Fourth is participation in the international dialogue about processes to ensure the quality of higher education.

The Higher Education Division of DETYA has been closely involved with all of these activities over the past twelve months and it is expected that developing and maintaining international quality assurance and recognition linkages will continue to be one of the functions undertaken by the Recognition and Quality Unit.

In the past year some of the highlights of these activities have been:

- presentations to delegations from South Africa, Mozambique, China (in July and November), Indonesia, Malaysia and Norway;
- presentation of papers at international conferences in Bangkok, India and Thailand;
- the launch in November of the APEC Engineer Project, which has been led by Australia; and
- representation at a two-week seminar on mutual recognition of qualifications in Japan.

Several of these countries have shown an interest in the Australian model of higher education and have sent delegations comprising senior political figures, officials and academics.

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IMS GLOBAL LEARNING CONSORTIUM

What is IMS?

IMS is an independent non-profit international consortium in which members with competing business interests and different decision-making roles collaborate to satisfy real-world requirements for interoperability and re-use of learning resources.

The principal goal of IMS is to define and deliver interoperable, XML-based specifications for exchanging learning content and information about learners among learning systems components. In other words if the computer applications marketed by various vendors are IMS compliant, the applications should be able to work together on the one site as in the case of a student enrolment system, a financial management system and a course delivery system.

IMS stands for 'Instructional Management Systems'. It is recognised that this terminology has now been superseded by 'Learning Management Systems'.

Membership of the IMS Consortium includes:

- major global software companies including Microsoft, SUN, CISCO, ORACLE, IBM;
- learning systems providers like Blackboard WebCT and others;
- content providers including Pearson, Thomson, and NetG;
- government agencies such as the US Defense Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative which is the most influential; and
- many developers from small start up firms.

The Australian IMS Centre

In mid-1999 the University of New England was awarded a Higher Education Innovations Program (HEIP) grant to establish and manage the Australian IMS Centre for a fixed term. The key objectives are to:

- ensure Australian participation in the development of IMS specifications;
- coordinate IMS activities being conducted in Australia;
- disseminate information about IMS developments to the Australian education and training communities; and
- promote the use of IMS specifications by Australian online service producers and education and training providers.

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IMS GLOBAL LEARNING CONSORTIUM (CONTINUED)

Director IMS Australia

In January 2001, Neil McLean, University Librarian at Macquarie University was seconded half time to the University of New England to be Director of IMS Australia.

The focus of Mr McLean's role will be to drive a further commitment within Australia to the IMS initiatives and to boost the adoption of relevant standards across the educational sectors.

Mr McLean will draw heavily on his already strong involvement in matters of systems interoperability to help IMS succeed. He is Chair of the Education Network Australia (EdNA) Metadata Committee, a member of the EdNA Reference Committee (ERC) Standards Sub-Committee, an AVCC representative on the EdNA Higher Education Advisory Group and a member of the AVCC Standing Committee on Information Policy.

In addition, Mr McLean's current role as Chair of the Standards Australia IT19 Committee – Computer Applications – Information and Documentation will also prove to be a useful link as the Committee has recently assumed responsibility for standards relating to IT for Learning, Education and Training.

Linking Australian IMS initiatives

The recently formed ERC Standards Sub-Committee will provide a focal point for coordinating IMS activities across the three educational sectors.

It is anticipated that each educational sector will form its own standards groups and that the IMS activity will feed into these groups. This in turn, will provide opportunities to contribute to the various IMS Working Groups and to ensure that Australia becomes part of the global learning community. Opportunities exist for the development of IMS testbeds in Australia and the nature and scope of such testbeds will be subject to investigation over the coming months.

For more information go to:

ims.edna.edu.au/index.htm

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Universities in Thailand

The Thai Ministry of University Affairs is in the process of modelling its university governance system on Australia's system of university autonomy. The move from the current system of universities being mainly incorporated into the Ministry's line budgets and staffing systems to autonomy is seen as a critical part of Thailand's education reform.

The Ministry of University Affairs has been conducting a series of training seminars twice yearly for senior university administrators as part of its preparation for the transfer to university autonomy. Last year an official from DETYA and two people from the university sector led a seminar on *Corporate Governance in University – Concepts and International Practice*. The seminar was highly rated by the 50 participants and the Ministry of University Affairs has again asked the Australian Government for assistance with the second series of seminars to be run from 27–30 March 2001.

Michael Gallagher, Head of the Higher Education Division of DETYA, along with Andrew Bain, University Secretary at Murdoch University, and Warren Snell, Executive Director of Finance and Administration at Edith Cowan University will be leading a series of seminars on university governance and other relevant issues over the four days of the series.

Michael Gallagher will also be delivering a paper on *New Issues for Higher Education*, at the plenary session of the first Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Congress being held in Bangkok from 26–29 March.

www.inter.mua.go.th/

www.seameo.org/

www.seameo.org/educongress/index.html

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New focus for Innovation website

The Commonwealth Government's innovation website has been redesigned, with the emphasis of the site changing from announcing the details of *Backing Australia's Ability: An Innovation Action Plan for the Future* to announcements of some of the implementation details for the innovation statement.

The site supports a whole-of-Government approach to innovation, with each of the portfolios involved in *Backing Australia's Ability* adding details about their particular initiatives. The site now lists 'what's new' and 'implementation news' buttons, which will help keep the interested public informed of developments.

Guidelines and application details for the Federation Fellowships announced in *Backing Australia's Ability* have recently been released by the Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Dr David Kemp, and are detailed on the Innovation website.

The Education, Training and Youth Affairs portfolio will announce the implementation details for its other six initiatives on the innovation site.

The Department of Industry, Science and Resources has recently added details of the Major National Research Facilities (MNRF) Program launch, including a fact sheet on the program. A scoping paper on Competitive Pre-Seed Fund for Universities and Public Sector Research Agencies is another recent addition.

www.innovation.gov.au/iap

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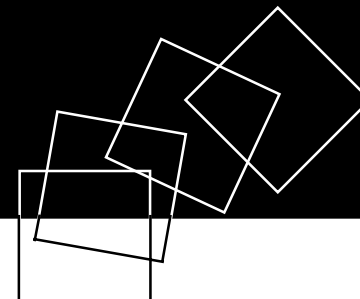
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recently released

The Emergence of Entrepreneurial Public Universities in Australia

The Emergence of Entrepreneurial Public Universities in Australia is the text of a paper presented to the Institutional Management in Higher Education General Conference of the OECD in September 2000.

Access: Effect of campus proximity and socio-economic status on university participation rates in regions

This study uses multivariate analysis to explore the relative importance of socio-economic characteristics and access to university campuses in determining participation rates in metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions.

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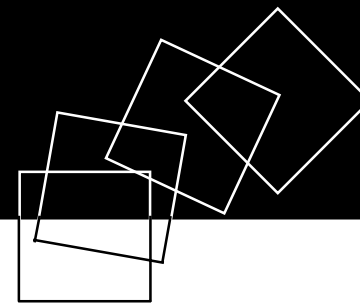
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due out soon

Atlas of Higher Education: A community focus

By focusing on their areas of research strength and improving their linkages with industry in the regions, as well as their local communities, universities are in a unique position to transfer knowledge and skills into initiatives for economic growth, environmental improvement and community development.

The *Atlas of Higher Education* is designed to be a planning tool to stimulate informed dialogue among local and regional communities with their higher education institutions. It aims to facilitate strategies to enhance greater access to learning to meet local and regional requirements. The data can be used to enrich conversations at the local and regional level about such priorities as economic competitiveness, student demand and supply flows, urban and rural regeneration, cultural vibrancy, social well being and the achievement of sustainable objectives.

favourites

- **Country Education Profiles: Australia**
www.detya.gov.au/noosr/cep/australia/index.htm
- **e-news on higher education**
www.detya.gov.au/highered/eneews
- **Backing Australia's Ability**
www.innovation.gov.au/iap
- **Higher Education Report for the 2001 to 2003 Triennium**
www.detya.gov.au/highered/he_report/2001_2003

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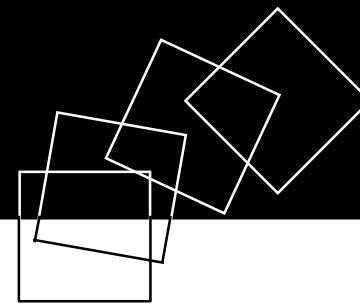
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Main page for DETYA's Higher Education Division
www.detya.gov.au/highered

HECS—Higher Education Contribution Scheme
www.hecs.gov.au

Which Course? Which University?
www.detya.gov.au/tenfields

National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition
www.detya.gov.au/noosr

links

Higher Education Links can help you access ...

- Australian State and Territory Education Departments
- Australian Education Organisations
- Australian Universities
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www.detya.gov.au/highered/links.htm

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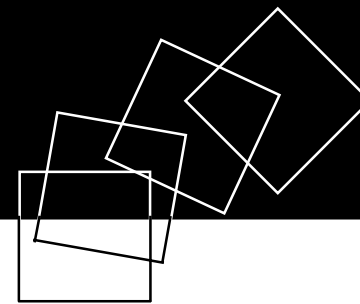
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updates

DETYA's website has new information posted to it on a regular basis. You can keep up with changes via the free Site Change Subscription Service (SCSS). This Service notifies subscribers of significant updates and additions to DETYA websites.

how it works

Interested parties need to register to the subscription service. Registration involves providing your email address and selecting the parts of DETYA's website you wish to be notified about.

what it does

Once registered, subscribers will be sent a weekly email (usually on Monday evenings) with a brief description of any changes and the address for such pages.

At www.detya.gov.au select *Site Change Subscription Service*

to grab a copy

internet versions

Most of our publications—from October 1996 onward—are available in full on the DETYA website at:

www.detya.gov.au/highered/repts.htm

hard copies

Copies of most of our publications can be purchased from AusInfo's Government Information Bookshops. Locations and contact details for the AusInfo bookshops are available at:

www.dofa.gov.au/infoaccess/infoaccess/ia_infoshops.htm

enquiries

General enquiries about publications can be emailed to

highered@detya.gov.au

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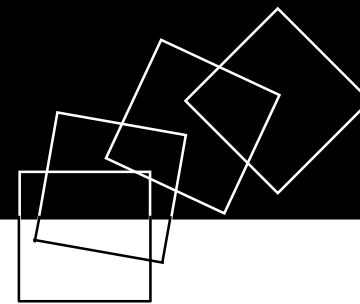
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The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

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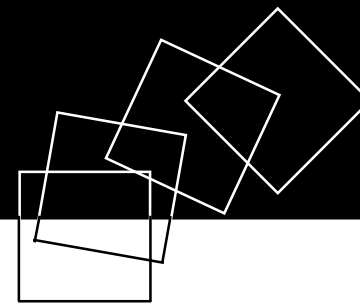
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