

e-news

on higher education

Informing the Higher Education Sector—April 2001



Department of Education,
Training and Youth Affairs


www.detya.gov.au

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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.

websites

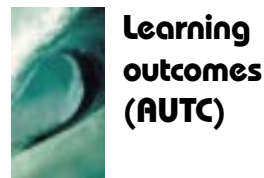
e-news on higher education also has links to relevant websites. To access a website, simply click on the URL when the open hand cursor changes to a pointing hand.

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University offers & unmet demand

Dr David Kemp, Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs, was delighted with the release of final round undergraduate applications and offers data from State Admissions Centres.

All states except Tasmania have increased university offers in 2001 compared to 2000. Nationally, total offers rose by 2.3 per cent in 2001 compared to 2000, with offers to school leavers increasing by 2.4 per cent and to non-school leavers by 2.2 per cent.

Overall there has been a national decline of 14.4 per cent in the number of unsuccessful applicants. This substantial decrease in

unsuccessful applicants suggests a significant decrease in unmet demand among undergraduate students.

There was a 0.8 per cent decline (from 227 449 to 225 712) in applications to State Admissions Centres for 2001. For school leavers the decline in applications was slight (0.2 per cent), while non-school leaver applications decreased by 1.8 per cent. It is likely that favourable labour market conditions around September to November 2000, when the majority of applications were made to the State Admissions Centres, account for some of the softness in demand for university admission in 2001.

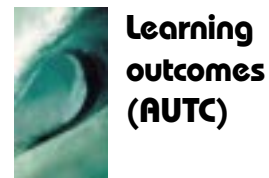
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2000 additional places

In *Backing Australia's Ability – An Innovation Action Plan for the Future*, the Government announced the provision of 2000 additional undergraduate places for Australian universities. These are targeted places, with priority given to the areas of information and communication technology, mathematics and science.

The Government expects these new places to contribute towards:

- ◆ strengthening the national skills base and the knowledge systems that support it; and
- ◆ fostering a culture of enterprise and innovation in students through collaboration between educational institutions and business.

Interested universities can submit a proposal to the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Proposals may be for new courses or for additional allocations to existing programmes of study. All proposals will be competitively assessed against the criteria as outlined in recently released Guidelines available on the Department's website. The deadline for submissions is 18 June 2001.

Announcement of successful applications is expected in mid-July 2001.

www.detya.gov.au/highered/programmes/targeted.htm

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Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health)

The Master of Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) [MAE-(IH)] programme is run by the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health (NCEPH), Australian National University (ANU). The MAE (IH) is an intensive, two-year public health research apprenticeship, during which students spend a total of three months in study modules at the ANU and the remaining 21 months in placements with health care organisations, including Aboriginal Medical Services, or academic institutions around the country.



Sitting on chairs: Ms Audrey Deemal (graduate), Dr Carmen Audera (Lecturer-MAE-IH) and Ms Sanchia Shibasaki (graduate).
Bottom row: Ms Lorian Hayes (graduate) and Dr Rennie D'Souza (Programme Director, MAE-IH programme)

Each student undertakes a series of research projects relevant to the public health information needs of their placement organisations and leading to the acquisition of the skills of applied epidemiology. The MAE (IH) is unique as it combines academic study with practical research. Students are supported at their placements by a field supervisor and by a supervisor from the NCEPH who makes four visits to the placement to supervise the students' projects. The practical work is

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Applied Epidemiology (Indigenous Health) continued...

also intensively supervised and has the additional benefit of integrating students into a public health team as part of their training. On completion of the course, students have acquired the research skills and the ability to apply the results of this research in developing practical policy and service delivery solutions.

Audrey Deemal, Lorian Hayes and Sanchia Shibasaki celebrated the completion of their MAE (IH) course on 5 April 2001. All three are from Queensland and have carried out a number of research projects in their communities over the past two years. This brings the total number of Indigenous graduates with this qualification to 11 over the past three years.

Audrey was particularly interested in social and emotional problems of young Aboriginal women living in a remote community. Lorian focused on the issue of alcohol and other drug abuse during pregnancy with special interest in foetal alcohol syndrome and Sanchia investigated the prevalence of asthma in Torres Strait Islander children.

Working in remote environments is not always easy. At times, it was a challenge just to find a chair and a desk, or even a power point to plug in their laptop. At other times they needed to travel 300 kilometres to the nearest library. Nevertheless, all three women succeeded, showing their commitment, strength and ability in working in the challenging area of Indigenous health. They deserve our most sincere congratulations on this achievement.

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Learning outcomes (AUTC)

The Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC) was established in 2000 as part of the Government's commitment to promoting quality and excellence in university teaching and learning in Australia.

The AUTC has a brief to identify emerging issues in teaching and learning in Australian universities. It administers a grants programme designed to identify and support effective methods of teaching and learning and seeks to promote the dissemination and adoption of such methods across the higher education sector.

In a previous edition of e-news (issue number four), we covered two inter-disciplinary projects currently receiving funding from the Australian Universities Teaching Committee. The AUTC is also funding several projects designed to enhance teaching and learning in selected as well as 'discipline specific'

areas. E-news will progressively cover all the projects currently receiving AUTC funding, resuming this week with 'Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Development in Arts Degrees'.

The Bachelor of Arts has been one of the longest established and largest undergraduate degree programmes in the university sector. It continues to provide students with the greatest degree of choice in the range of disciplinary and cross-disciplinary fields of study of any of the more general degrees. The BA has continued to attract substantial enrolments including high-scoring school leavers and mature-age entrants.

The distinctive features of the BA, such as the diversity of students in terms of ability and background, the range of subjects that can be studied within the degree and the variety of graduate destinations, have raised questions about the purposes of the BA in an

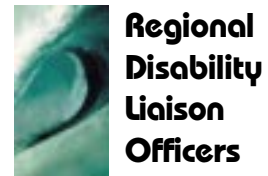
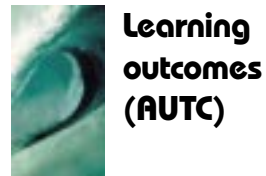
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Learning outcomes (AUTC) continued...

environment where there is an increasing focus on professional training and employment outcomes. There has been considerable public discussion and debate about the employability of BA graduates. Some surveys of employers have suggested that the BA is not regarded as a useful preparation for employment, while others (such as the 2000 A.C.Nielsen study 'Employer Satisfaction with Graduate Skills') give very positive ratings to BA graduates. One result is that a greater emphasis has been placed on the skills and attributes that BA students are expected to develop through the course of their studies and on the explicit identification of the educational objectives and learning outcomes of the degree.

'Learning Outcomes and Curriculum Development in Arts Degrees' delves into this complex environment and seeks to assess the impact created by the changing structural context of the BA degree in Australian universities. It will also review current innovations in learning and teaching that have emerged as a result of the needs of students and prospective employers.

The project is being undertaken by Professor Robert Pascoe (Victoria University), Professor Stuart Macintyre (University of Melbourne) and Dr John Ainley (Australian Council for Educational Research) and is expected to be finalised in early 2002.

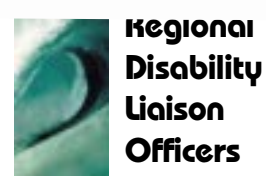
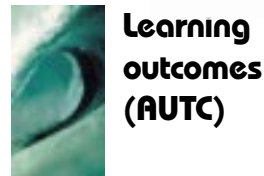
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Regional Disability Liaison Officers

The Government will be providing \$2.4 million over three years for an expanded Regional Disability Liaison Officer (RDLO) initiative. The expanded initiative will now cover all States and the Northern Territory, with particular emphasis on rural and regional Australia.

The role of the RDLOs is to provide practical support and assistance in helping students with disabilities move from school to further study at university or TAFE and then onto employment.

Dr David Kemp, Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs has approved initial grants of \$80 000 to the following universities to host RDLOs this year:

- ◆ Edith Cowan University
- ◆ James Cook University
- ◆ Northern Territory University
- ◆ RMIT University
- ◆ University of Central Queensland
- ◆ University of Newcastle
- ◆ University of South Australia
- ◆ University of Southern Queensland
- ◆ University of Tasmania
- ◆ University of Western Sydney

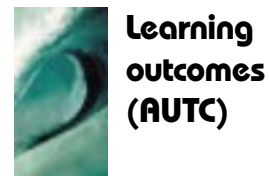
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Mid-West WA

While approximately 21 out of every 100 metropolitan Year 12 students enrol in university in Western Australia, in the Mid-West Region the ratio is only eight out of every 100. A recent DETYA study on regional participation in higher education ranked the central west region of Western Australia as 281st out of 290 in terms of access to higher education.

There is considerable demand for tertiary studies in the region. However, the high costs involved in sending prospective students to Perth have been a barrier to participation. Despite there being some local opportunities it is estimated that about 200 to 300 more students could be enrolled in university studies if more opportunities were available in the Geraldton region.

To help improve access in the region, Dr David Kemp, Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs has approved funding under the Higher Education Innovation Programme (HEIP) for a project to provide support for infrastructure and for the appointment of a Facilitator of Tertiary Studies in the Mid-West Region of Western Australia.

The primary role of the Facilitator will be to:

- ◆ facilitate and publicise articulation arrangements between the universities and the Central West College of TAFE in Geraldton;
- ◆ disseminate information to the people in the region about university study opportunities; and
- ◆ broker and negotiate with universities for regional access to university courses.

The Facilitator's role will complement work already being undertaken by the combined Universities Centre for Rural Health (CUCRH), which has recently been established by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The CUCRH is on a site adjacent to the TAFE site in Geraldton, and is being supported by the University of Western Australia, Curtin University of Technology, and Edith Cowan University.

The proposal was developed by the Office of Higher Education in the Department of Education Services in Western Australia.

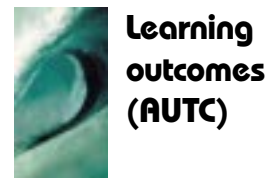
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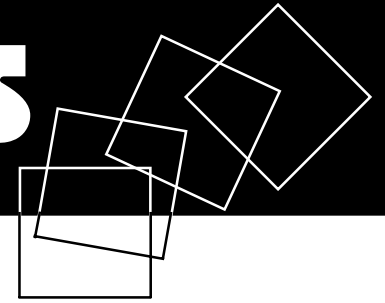
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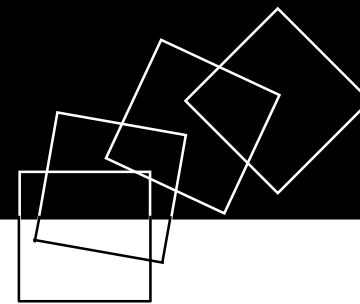
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publications & websites

DETYA's publications

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recently released

Literacy, Numeracy and Labour Market Success

Literacy, Numeracy and Labour Market Success examines the relationship between success in the labour market and educational attainment within a framework that allows for the links among educational attainment, literacy and numeracy and various labour market outcomes (labour force participation, unemployment, incomes). The analyses in *Literacy* are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 1996 Survey of Aspects of Literacy.

www.detya.gov.au/highered/eippubs.htm#00_9

The Australian Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework

This paper provides an overview of quality assurance in the Australian higher education sector. It begins by considering the development of higher education quality assurance in Australia before going on to outline Australia's current multi-faceted quality assurance framework. It covers the roles of the higher education sector, and the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, as well as their relationship with the Australian Qualifications Framework and the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

www.detya.gov.au/highered/occpaper.htm#00g

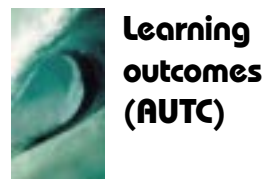
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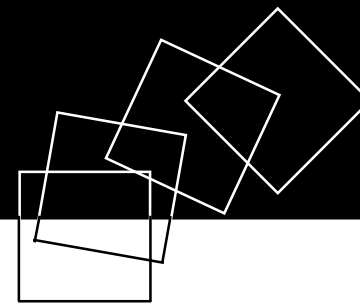
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due out soon

Quality of Australian Higher Education

The third in an annual series of reports on the quality of Australian higher education, *Quality of Australian Higher Education* contains an overview of quality across the sector and publishes quality assurance and improvement plans of thirty nine higher education institutions.

Enquiries about an individual institution's approach to enhancing and assuring the quality of its operations can be directed to the contact officer listed in the quality assurance and improvement plans.

More information, and publications on quality issues in Australian higher education generally, can be found on the DETYA's Higher Education web page.

www.detya.gov.au/highered

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

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

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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:

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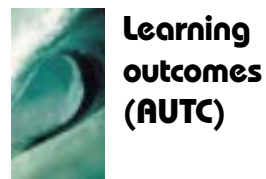
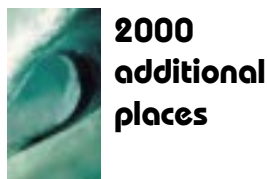
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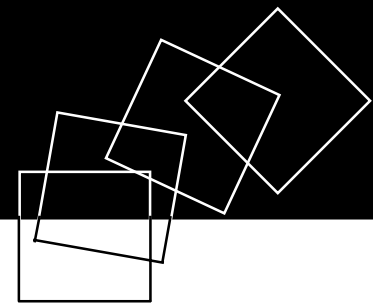
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websites, links, favourites & updates

websites

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
- Australian Universities - Admissions Centres
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www.detya.gov.au/highered/links.htm

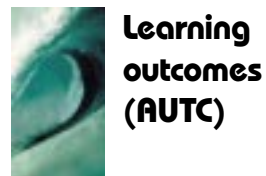
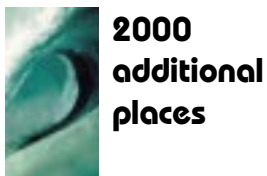
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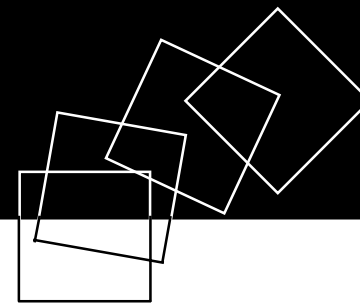
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favourites

- *Atlas of Higher Education: A community focus*

www.detya.gov.au/uniatlas

- e-news on higher education

www.detya.gov.au/highered/enews

- *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

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.

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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*

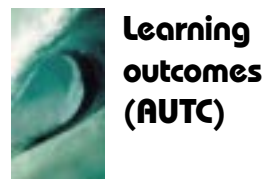
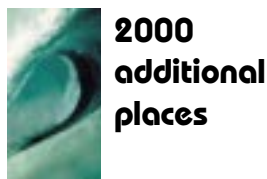
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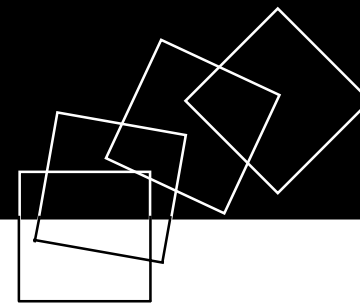
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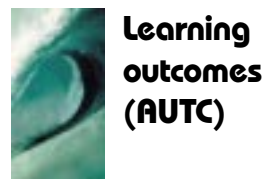
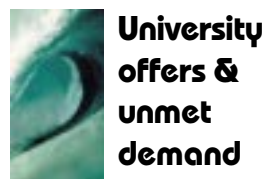
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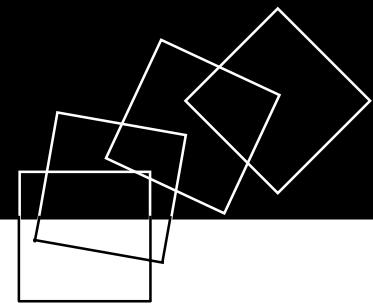
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