

29. Hospitality and tourism education in Australia: Challenges and opportunities

Stephen J Craig-Smith

The University of Queensland, Gatton College

Michael Davidson

Griffith University, Gold Coast

Christine N French

William Angliss College, Melbourne

Abstract

Hospitality and tourism education has undergone a major change during the early years of the 1990's, partly due as a result of government pressure, partly as a result of industry demands and in part because of a maturing of tertiary hospitality and tourism education in Australia. This paper is a follow up from an earlier survey conducted in 1990. Recent government initiatives are analysed together with the issues concerned in 1990 – namely the hospitality versus tourism focus of education, the proliferation of courses, a lack of Australianism, the role of industrial experience programmes, the flexibility of course delivery, a lack of professionalism and course articulation. Recent trends in North American hospitality and tourism education are discussed. Finally the paper outlines some future challenges and opportunities for Australian educators.

Keywords

Hospitality and tourism education, course articulation, work placement, future education trends.

1. Introduction

Hospitality and Tourism education in Australia is still in its infancy. Whilst it has witnessed a rapid proliferation of course provision in the last ten years it has still to mature, develop greater specialism, and be underpinned by an in depth research foundation. Given that the majority of hospitality and tourism courses are vocationally orientated it is not surprising that Australian educational programmes in this field are of comparatively recent origin. Only in the last two decades has Australia become a significant player on the world tourism stage.

In common with many new products, Australian hospitality and tourism education has experienced a period of rapid growth, but it is likely to enter a period of consolidation in the mid 1990's. Most colleges and universities interested in mounting hospitality and/or tourism programmes have now done so with no fewer than 20 of Australia's 36 universities offering courses specifically directed at the tourism and/or hospitality industry. If research programmes and individual subject offerings to non tourism and/or hospitality specialist courses such as B Arts, or B Soc Science are included almost every university in the country has some involvement. With a rapidly developing hospitality and tourism industry in

Australia student demand for such courses is likely to remain very strong but unrestricted growth may not occur for ever. As the North American tourism and hospitality industry has matured and its growth rate slowed so student demand for hospitality and tourism courses has also softened. The recent findings of Lewis (1993) are a sobering reminder of what could happen in Australia once the tourism industry matures and student demand reduces.

An earlier survey of Australian hospitality and tourism education (Craig-Smith & French 1990) identified seven issues pertinent to educators at that time; namely the split between courses with a hospitality and a tourism emphasis, the proliferation of courses, a lack of an Australian focus, the dilemma concerning the need for, and amount of, industrial placement, flexibility of course delivery, a lack of professionalism, and the need for greater course articulation. Since that survey was carried out four years ago there have been a number of significant changes affecting Australia's education sector. These changes, together with an updated overview of the present situation, are the subject of this paper.

2. Recent government initiatives

Recent developments in Australian hospitality and tourism education have continued to be linked with wider changes involving the structure and operation of the national economy and the entire educational system at tertiary level. In the years 1990 to 1993, four major reports were published which have had a dramatic effect on the way the nation addresses its education and training needs.

In 1990 the Deveson Report (1990) addressed issues concerning the training implications of award restructuring. Deveson argued for a change in secondary school emphasis to increase school leaver opportunities and prepare students for TAFE as well as University.

In 1991, the Finn Report (1991) focused on post compulsory education and proposed that by the year 2001 95% of 19 year olds would either have Year 12 or an initial post-school qualification, or be undertaking some form of education or training.

In 1992 the Mayer Report (1992) addressed the issues of Pathways in Education and Training. This redefined Finn's key areas of competence in performance based terms separating generic competencies from discipline based knowledge. Although Mayer proposed his competency measurements for schools and TAFE, credit transfer implications, particularly between TAFE and University, and the whole issue of competency based assessment remains a contentious issue.

The fourth report, the Carmichael Report (1993) built on the Finn report by advocating the establishment of an Australian Vocational Certificate based on skills testing rather than on the completion of courses. Carmichael proposed a simple vocational training structure which facilitates progression from one level to another in all industries. The structure envisages 'a flexible range of fully articulated, substantially work based, vocational certificate training pathways'.

The term 'pathways' has become increasingly used over the last few years as has 'training and education networks'. 'Pathways' refer to formalised opportunities for students to move between educational sectors, with credit where appropriate, while 'networks' incorporate any learning environment whether it be school, university, TAFE, business and industry, or private training providers.

A number of interesting pathways projects have been developed since 1990. These have aimed to maximise articulation between educational sectors. The State Training Board of Victoria and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board funded five projects in 1990 aimed at identifying secondary school and certificate of education programmes which maximise articulated entry to TAFE programmes.

In a similar vein the Victoria University of Technology during 1992 and 1993 has been committed to a Pathways Project which seeks to establish an institutional culture that enhances access and credit transfer for TAFE students into higher education programmes and higher education students to move into TAFE programmes.

Griffith University set up a full articulation model for all Queensland TAFE Associate Diploma's in Business – Hospitality, allowing the equivalent of one years full exemption from a Bachelor of Hotel Management in 1990.

3. The issues identified in 1990 revisited

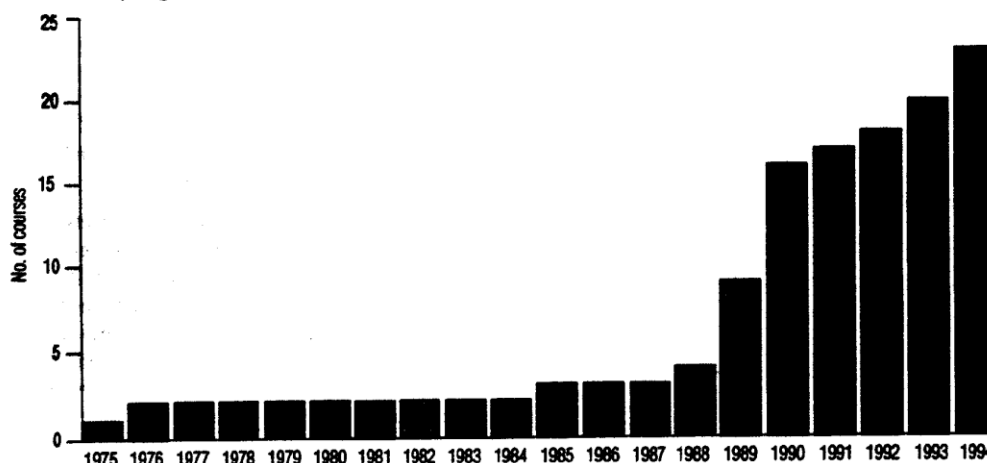
In the light of the dramatic changes affecting tertiary education philosophy and practice since 1990 the seven issues identified by Craig-Smith and French in 1990 are re-examined below.

3.1 Hospitality versus Tourism focus

Degree programmes designed to cater for the tourism industry can be grouped into two broad categories; hospitality/hotel management degrees and tourism/travel degrees. As was pointed out in the 1990 analysis, there is often a considerable syllabus overlap, but as a generalisation the former programmes focus on the hotel/accommodation sector and the latter on the travel/attractions sector. The differences between the two types of educational programme are often poorly understood by people working within the industry, by the careers advisory service, and by the potential student population.

Historically hospitality programmes are the oldest, not only within Australia but also in Europe and North America. In North America for instance the earliest university run hospitality programme started at Cornell in 1922 with a second programme appearing at Michigan State University in 1927 (McIntosh

Figure 1: No. of Tertiary Higher Educational Institutions in Australia offering Degree programs in Hospitality and/or Tourism.



1992). The earliest tourism programme did not appear in North America until 1945. the earliest programmes in Europe were also focused on the hospitality sector. The early development of such programmes was fostered by a perceived need for qualified personnel in the hotel industry and the accommodation sector was sufficiently well organised and influential, both to insist on, and underwrite the early hospitality courses.

Tourism programmes are of more recent origin and may or may not include hospitality skills. Given the considerable capital costs necessary to establish an adequate teaching facility in the hospitality area it is not surprising that many tourism courses have avoided an extensive hospitality element and many universities have resorted to subcontracting the skills element of hospitality to the TAFE sector.

It must also be acknowledged that within the university sector, any components of skills based training in the hospitality area, was viewed by most Australian university academics as inappropriate and best left to TAFE. This is reinforced by examining the universities that currently offer programmes in the area, of the twenty universities only two have always had on campus food and beverage training laboratories. Both of these, the University of Queensland, Gatton College and Victoria University of Technology are both former Colleges of Advanced Education and were the first higher education institutions to offer hospitality education in Australia. More recently Edith Cowan University has added facilities in 1993 and Griffith University is adding facilities in 1995.

Whilst the majority of tourism courses at the TAFE level have focused on travel management there is less emphasis on this aspect in the majority of university based tourism degrees. Courses at degree level have tended to focus on the management and environmental impact of tourism activity and the role of government in the control and regulation of this activity. This approach provides for an academically 'acceptable' educational undergraduate programme but there are still relatively few jobs specifically demanding these skills within the industry.

A recent survey of potential school leavers conducted by The University of Queensland revealed that the majority of potential students contemplating undertaking a degree programme were unsure of what a hospitality or tourism degree entailed. This confusion is likely to be exacerbated as a greater level of specialism develops. Club management is already emerging as an area of degree focus and tourism degrees are giving rise to travel management degrees. The University of Queensland for instance now offers degrees in hospitality management, tourism management, and travel management. Southern Cross University offers courses in tourism management and club management, Griffith University offers a hotel management degree and a business degree with majors in club and resort management and tourism, and the University of Technology, Sydney, offers courses in tourism management and in leisure and tourism.

Whilst it is desirable for educational establishments to offer programmes designed to 'fit' local needs and circumstances and for there to be a broad variety of programme

Table 1. Australian Universities offering degree programs in Hospitality and/or Tourism (1993)

Institution	Tourism Focus	Hospitality Focus
Ballarat (CAE)	x	
Bond		x
Canberra (CAE)	x	
Central Qld (CAE)	x	
Charles Sturt (CAE)	x	
Edith Cowan (CAE)	x	x
Griffith (from CAE sector)		x
James Cook	x	
La Trobe		x
Monash	x	
Newcastle	x	
NSW		x
NTU		x
Qld (CAE)	x	x
RMIT (CAE)		x
SA (CAE)	← 1	→
UNE (CAE)	x	x
UTS (CAE)	x	
UWSH (CAE)		x
VUT (CAE)	x	x
	12 + 1	11 + 1

offerings across Australia there needs to be clearer advice given to the industry, the careers advisory service, and potential students on exactly what each programme entails and what occupational outcomes may result. The situation is probably less clear now than it was in 1990.

3.2 Proliferation of courses

The rapid proliferation of courses offered in hospitality and/or tourism was identified in the 1990 survey. In 1987 three institutions offered degree courses; in 1990 there were 16! Since that time the number of new courses coming on line has slowed down but by mid 1994 there will be 23 institutions involved (see Figure 1).

Of the 26 courses offered by the 23 institutions twelve focus on tourism, eleven on hospitality management and one purports to have an equal content of both (see Table 1).

(CAE) denotes a College of Advanced Education before the Dawkins merger of 1990.

The rapid growth witnessed over recent years is not likely to continue as most universities

with an interest in hospitality/tourism have now become involved. The next area of growth is likely to be in the offering of coursework post graduate degrees and certificates, the focus of which lies beyond this paper.

Any further growth in the number of undergraduate courses on offer is likely to occur as a result of greater specialisation as already discussed in the previous section. Increasing focus on such areas as club management, convention and meetings management, or casino management may develop as specialist electives or majors within existing hospitality degrees or they may develop into fee standing specialist degrees depending on future student and industry demand.

Graduate output is notoriously hard to predict but if it is assumed that each of the 26 courses, currently operating, graduate approximately 70 students per year somewhere in the region of between 1800 and 2000 graduates are available to enter the industry annually. Of this number, approximately half have a hospitality specialism and half a tourism specialism. The estimated 2000 graduates per year is a ten fold increase on the 1989 student output. This output figure for graduates must be set in the context of the Department of Tourism (1991) projected growth in jobs, for tourism as a whole, where it is estimated that a further 200,000 jobs will be created by the year 2000. this job growth is predicted upon the increase of Australian tourism as a whole and in particular on the international visitations, Department of Tourism estimates on a low growth of 4 million and a high growth of 7.5 million by the year 2000.

A further growth in tourism related subjects is also occurring in a number of university faculties such as Arts, Social Science, Law, Commerce, and Planning. This facilitates a town planner, architect, economist or sociologist to obtain an insight into tourism without graduating with a specialist tourism degree (Fagence 1991). While some of these non tourism specialist students study tourism for the interest only, a number of them will utilise their tourism knowledge to relate other disciplines and professions to the tourism industry, e.g. Lawyers specialising in tourism and hospitality legal matters, economists working in government planning departments, and planners working on tourism development. As the present time the significance and output of these students is poorly documented and is in urgent need of fuller investigation.

3.3 Lack of Australianism

in recent years, Australian educators have begun to develop their own resources rather than rely so heavily on imports from Europe and the United States. This move reflects the general swing nationally, away from Western, to Australian or Asian influences and it is predicted to strengthen further as more universities concentrate on post graduate programmes and place emphasis on research and publication.

Undoubtedly, Australian tourism and hospitality educators are growing in confidence as they see the continued economic expansion of the tourism industry and a growing market for their educational services. It could also be said that they have become far less parochial in their networking with colleagues and industry and this has provided much of the stimulus for creative scholarship.

Some of this new confidence may also be attributable to the upheaval created by the enforced amalgamation of universities and CAE's during the Dawkins era. The current push to establish large Institutes of TAFE is a similar case in point. Pressures to restructure organisations, whether one supports them or not, have stimulated faculty movement within and across institutions.

There has also been an eagerness in the last 4 years to measure Australian standards internationally. Many institutions have developed twinning arrangements with sister institutions overseas, many others have aggressively recruited overseas students to Australian programmes and others have entered the educational consultancy field. All this activity has helped to forge new relationships and stimulate a demand for relevant, modern educational resources based upon the Australian context. It has also resulted in an increased confidence and valuing of Australian educational facilities and programmes relative to many offshore competitors.

This revaluation has not been confined to Australian tourism and hospitality educators; increasingly, established Swiss and American colleges are seeking to work in partnership with Australia, examples include the Blue Mountains School in N.S.W., the Swiss Hotel Association's International College of Hotel Management and Regency College, South Australia and the pending moves to develop a partnership between Cornell and the Canberra Institute of Technology. Such initiatives can

only enrich course offerings and increase Australia's standing internationally.

3.4 Industrial experience programmes

Previous research found that all tertiary courses in hospitality and tourism involved some formal element of practical work experience. It also identified the dramatic increase in student enrolments as a difficulty in finding meaningful industrial placement. Certainly placement has become a major challenge for most educators. Not only have placements become more difficult, due to the general down trend in the national economy, but more players have entered the field in the last four years.

The main new demand has come from the schools sector as it seeks increasingly to apply the Carmichael philosophy on making education more relevant to the Australian economy. Some enterprising hotels have capitalised on the secondary school's interest by offering 4 day residential hotel programmes aimed specifically at school leavers. The Hilton Corporation, for instance, offers a comprehensive fee for services programme incorporating in-house expertise.

The TAFE curriculum has also become much more industry driven and in many Certificate, Advanced Certificate and Associate Diploma courses a minimum number of work experience hours are required to be certified by and employer before final granting of awards. Many colleges are reporting difficulties with industrial placement due to less casual work being available across all tourism and hospitality industry sectors and also because industry does not sufficiently differentiate between tertiary students who have decided on a career option and school students who might be 'just looking'. Many personnel officers and business operators find requests for site visits confusingly similar regardless of which sector requests them. They are often planned insufficiently in advance and lack effective supervision and specific focus.

In the university sector, due partially to the high cost involved in industrial placement on site visitation and advisement, some degree programmes are reducing, and in some cases eliminating, industrial placement as an integral part of undergraduate study. This gives rise to a paradoxical situation on the issue of industrial experience for hospitality students. Employers state that they prefer to employ

people with experience. When employers are involved with the curriculum design processes for hospitality courses they insist upon industrial experience as being an essential element of both college and university courses. Yet it is increasingly difficult for the colleges and universities to meet this requirement. The situation can be explained by the rapid growth in student numbers which has unfortunately coincided with the severe economic recession Australia experienced in the late 1980's and the early 1990's. There is little doubt that industrial experience will require constant attention and coordination if both education and industry are to meet their objectives. Future research will reveal to what extent programme quality will rise or fall as a result of the strategies adopted on the issue of industrial experience by the various institutions.

On the positive side, the nexus between enterprise and education has grown quite considerable since 1990 with many interesting examples of broad support in the business community for both on the job and off the job training. The Sheraton corporation has introduced a full blown career path from entry level TAFE through to executive M.B.A. at Bond University which is action learning based. In the future it appears that the trend with industrial experience programmes will be towards less formalised general work-based learning and towards more flexible project-based involvement.

3.5 Flexibility of course delivery

The traditional teaching methods of chalk, talk, and lecture rooms is rapidly becoming outdated in the 1990's although ease of operation and relatively low operating costs of the traditional classrooms are strong impetus for their retention. For school leavers wishing to embark on a formal course, prior to industry entry, traditional courses in educational establishments from one to four years create no major difficulties but that is not the case for mature entry students or those currently working in the industry and wishing to obtain a formal qualification or a qualification upgrade.

Experience at a number of universities has indicated that part time study is not necessarily the answer. In an industry which operates up to 24 hours per day seven days a week, time off for part time college attendance is not a realistic possibility. Excessively long operating hours, and the risk of last minute rostering to cover for unforeseen absences, precludes many

industry personnel from regular class attendance.

Of greater value to those in industry is the use of distance learning materials and satellite/video conferencing facilities where the hotel or airline office becomes the temporary classroom. A number of Australian TAFE and university institutions are developing distance learning programmes.

One such initiative is the Queensland Open Learning Project in hospitality and tourism. Recognising the scattered nature of the tourism industry in Queensland, (Brisbane is 16kilometres by air nearer to Melbourne than it is to Cairns!) and the isolated nature of many of its reef resorts, the state government has funded a distance learning programme accessible to anyone. Four universities and Queensland TAFE have had an input. Tourism/hospitality subjects ranging from front office operation, to Japanese language and tourism impacts are now on offer.

The scheme has been administered through the Distance Education Department of the University of Southern Queensland with Queensland TAFE and the Universities of Queensland, Griffith, and Central Queensland preparing the subject material. A student can enrol on any of the 20 individual subjects. Whilst, in themselves the 20 subjects do not comprise a degree programme, the scheme is so designed that should a student subsequently wish to enrol for a degree each of the participating universities will recognise, for credit exemption, any of the successfully completed subjects in the Open Learning scheme. The subject material has been developed over the last three years and all 20 subjects will be available by mid 1994.

A programme is being developed in response to a requirement of Australian Resorts which operates seven tourism resort complexes, all in remote and offshore locations. The locations of the various resorts are spread from the tip of Cape York to the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef in central Queensland and comprise a total capital investment of \$86.3 million.

The programme consists of a series of satellite broadcasts to on-site trainers and students using video, audio and print materials. The resource materials will be further used within the tourism and hospitality industry throughout Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia. It is intended to pursue the down stream

commercial opportunities for the materials, to ensure they become an important element in lifting industry skills and exploiting the export opportunities for Australian training services.

In the post graduate re alternative modes of delivery have been introduced for tourism and hospitality education by Griffith and Southern Cross universities. Griffith offers a professional Master of Hospitality Management, primarily through distance learning and supported by two residential periods and Southern Cross offers distance program for a Master of Tourism Management.

3.6 Lack of professionalism

The research conducted in 1990 clearly identified weaknesses which related to two areas, one concerned government and the absence of coordinated tourism planning and development at both the National and State level, the other concerned education and a proliferation of courses that in some cases lacked academic rigour.

The continued maturing of the tourism industry and the impact of the national micro-economic reform agenda have created a situation where gaining nationally recognised qualifications is now valued much more than previously. Indeed, during the period 1990-94, many companies became autonomous training providers in their own right, and entitled to offer nationally accredited courses in direct competition with TAFE. The Pan Pacific Hotel on the Gold Coast currently offers an associate diploma in hospitality and the Intercontinental in Sydney offers a similar fee paying course.

Such developments have assisted in raising the profile of training and education and public institutions have responded by raising their own standards in many areas too. In some states TAFE teachers must now hold qualifications equivalent to, or higher than, the one they are teaching. In Queensland, relevant, recent industry experience is also required especially to teach subjects that have only recently been introduced to the curriculum such as Total Quality Management.

In the university sector, faculty qualification levels have all risen with many now requiring doctorates for appointment to lecturer and senior lecturer positions, a situation rarely if ever encountered a few years ago. Research and publication requirements are being assiduously raised in most institutions and appointment standards more rigorously applied. This focus on increased standards has

been accompanied by the introduction of The Journal of Tourism Studies from James Cook University and the recent launching of the Australian Journal of Hospitality Management from The University of Queensland. Such moves are evidence of a real willingness by government, educators and industry to raise the art of tourism and hospitality management to a truly professional level.

3.7 Course articulation

of all the issues identified in 1990 that of course articulation has probably progressed the furthest, where the need for greater levels and more structured course articulation procedures were discussed. Since then the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee has set up a working party on credit transfer and has now established credit transfer guidelines (Bushell & Robertson 1993).

The AV-CC working party analysed every university offering tourism and hospitality degree courses in Australia; their findings revealing that for a completed degree in a related field 20 per cent of universities granted up to 66 per cent credit, 35 per cent of universities granted up to 50 per cent credit, and 20 per cent of universities granted up to 33 per cent credit. For an Associate Diploma in the same of related field 10 per cent of universities granted up to 50 per cent credit and 60 per cent of universities granted up to 33 per cent credit. The survey further revealed that only 3 of the 20 universities granted a MINIMUM level of credit ranging from 5 to 25 per cent.

The majority of students wishing to articulate from TAFE into university courses received minimum credit, mainly calculated on an ad hoc case by case basis. At a time when the government is trying to streamline higher education and facilitate easier passage from one level of education to another current arrangements were far from adequate.

In arriving at a set of recommendations the AV-CC working group held in mind the need to;

- provide students with maximum benefit,
- ensure maintenance of standards,
- encourage a more liberal approach to credit transfer, and
- move away from the case by case/subject by subject approach.

Following on from the AV-CC study the following recommendations were proposed;

- holders of a completed Associate Diploma at a specific level of prior performance, should be granted on admission to a tourism or hospitality degree with a similar or related discipline base, credit equivalent to AT LEAST one third (33%) of the degree programme, in the form of block or specified credit, and
- holders of a partly completed degree in a similar or related discipline base, should be granted full credit, up to a maximum level of two thirds (66%) of a degree course in the form of block or specified credit.

This is the MINIMUM level of recommended credit and further credit is possible if considered appropriate. The University of Queensland is one of a number of universities undertaking a trial experiment on articulation using the above formula in 1994. Clearly articulation is becoming an accepted practice within higher education and it is likely to become more widespread in the future.

The AV-CC working party did however note a number of particular difficulties, namely;

- the difficulty of offering block credit because of the incompatibility of TAFE and university programmes,
- problems of establishing a minimum level of credit because of the wide diversity of curriculum design in existing degree courses,
- the fact that most of the TAFE programmes are hospitality based but that many of the degree programmes contain a limited hospitality operations content, and
- that under the planned National TAFE curricula students will be assessed on competency standards. Students under this system will be ungraded and this will have a significance on future credit transfer arrangements.

With a well publicised and widely practised policy of articulation it should be possible for more TAFE students to progress to a university degree without having to start at the very beginning of a higher but related course. This is a significant improvement on the 1990 situation.

4. Lessons from America

the buoyant growth of tourism and hospitality courses witnessed in Australia is in marked contrast to experiences in parts of North America. Throughout much of the late 1980's and early 1990's the US hospitality and

tourism industry has been in the doldrums as a result of overbuilding, the proliferation of products on offer, and the poor state of the North American economy. The consequence of this for higher education has been a softening student demand, the closure of some courses, and a threat to other courses struggling to survive (Lewis 1993). Whilst the North American experience is in marked contrast to that in Australia their problems and prognosis for them should be of some interest to providers in Australia.

According to Lewis, the early 1980's were characterised by a growth culture; jobs where there for the asking and promotion to higher ranks was common place. In the mid 1990's many jobs are disappearing and graduates don't know how to manage the downturn. Six US hospitality courses have already closed and others are under threat. Lewis believes that present knowledge and skills currently taught in hospitality and tourism degrees are inadequate for the late 1990's and new strategies are needed to understand the modern business environment and the change of interrelationships affecting the industry. Goodman and Sprague (1991) have noted;

Hospitality education as we know it today may soon disappear. The traditional 4 year trade and management programme will be squeezed by trade orientated 2 year programmes on one side and by general management orientated business programmes on the other...In short, the curricula of hospitality programmes is [sic] outdated...There is already evidence that the hospitality industry is just as likely to recruit from business schools as hospitality programmes (p66,68)

A frequent criticism of hospitality programmes in the United States is that they concentrate too heavily on technical skills and not enough on management knowhow and that too much time is spent on problem solving rather than on problem finding. Lewis has proposed that greater emphasis must be placed on the soft skills of leadership, team work, and the interpersonal skills of speaking, writing, negotiating, ethics, human resources, innovation, creativity, globalisation, and quality management. The challenge for the future is to be able to devise a curriculum that is meaningfully different from that of a straight business management degree to convince the industry that it is hospitality graduates that should be employed and not those from a business school. However, it is no longer realistic to rely on that difference being sauce preparation or bed making.

In an era of strong student demand and a rapidly expanding industry there is a danger of educationalists becoming complacent and believing that current demand equates with a quality product. If the Australian educational product is to thrive and have an assured future critical reappraisal is essential at every turn and stage.

5. The future

Because of the continued expansion of the tourism industry in Australia, the Pacific Region, and South East Asia, courses in hospitality and tourism are assured a buoyant future at least within the next decade. With a rapidly expanding industry, a continuing high level of unemployment and an aggressive higher educational sector all courses can look forward to a future of strong enrolments and political and industry support. However, as the USA situation reveals, there is no room for complacency. What then are the challenges and opportunities facing Australian hospitality and tourism education over the next few years?

6. Challenges

1. The vast majority of existing courses in hospitality and tourism are being offered by the newer universities originating from the former CAE sector where staff were appointed for their industrial experience and teaching ability. As such there is a very short history of serious research underpinning and in some cases virtually no research background at all. One of the greatest challenges facing hospitality and tourism education today is the need for a strong research base and a body of staff who can compete successfully with staff from other disciplines for a diminishing source of research funds.

As part of this greater emphasis upon research, it is essential that all hospitality and tourism researchers continue to lobby the Australian Research Council for the recognition of this area, as a category worthy of inclusion in the research grants awards. The issue of having research in tourism recognised and being able to have equal access to the competitive grants system is crucial for the strong research base that is needed.

2. A balance must be achieved between enjoying a close working relationship with the industry and yet maintaining independent academic integrity. A close relationship with industry is essential because academia is reliant on industry for supporting the industrial component of

many of its courses and the employment of its students upon graduation. There is however a danger in being too closely involved with everyday industry operations and developing a subservient approach to corporate practice. How often does one hear the phrase 'what does the industry want?' when academics and researchers should be saying 'this is what the industry needs'. If all we can achieve is a palimpsest of industry demands our very existence is called into question and we are merely followers not leaders.

3. More attention must be devoted to the whole meaning of hospitality and tourism so that courses and the body of collected knowledge develops towards a discipline in its own right. If educators continue to throw together a collection of borrowed concepts and underpin them with an assemblage of industry demanded skills we shall run the risk of losing out to other departments, courses and disciplines; a phenomenon already observed in the United States
4. In spite of our close proximity to both South East Asia and the Pacific we still suffer very strong competition from European and North American schools especially when it comes to overseas educational provision. Although our own intellectual development and collected experiences are of more recent origin we must become more aggressive in our overseas marketing and have a clearer image in our own minds as to what our product has to offer, what differentiates it from European and North American rivals and what are its unique selling features.
5. Whilst continuing to develop and cement liaisons with industry, the university sector must be seen to be leading industry in the latest innovations and management thinking. Currently, the universities which are involved in offering tourism and hospitality courses, are at best on a level footing with industry as far as innovative thinking is concerned. In many cases universities are simply following an industry lead. In order for universities firmly to take the lead in innovative thinking, the prerequisite is undoubtedly in depth research quality.

7. Opportunities

Although Australian hospitality and tourism education faces a series of challenges never

before have there been such exciting opportunities.

1. The strong industry demand for suitably qualified personnel and the interest shown by the potential student body in tourism and hospitality courses will allow this sector to expand even when other areas of education are facing financial cutbacks. Growth gives rise to optimism, greater job security and the chance for future imaginative recruitment.

A further aspect of growth will be higher numbers of better educated students entering the workforce and gradually moving into key positions. It is these individuals who will attach a greater value to education, providing stronger links between education and industry through alumni and other associations. This will in turn foster further cooperation and stimulate higher levels of professionalism in the industry.

2. In spite of the challenge from outside competition especially from Europe and North America there is a wide range of exciting opportunities facing any Australian provider ready and willing to seize them. The entire South East Asian region offers opportunities for twinning arrangements with Asian institutions, the provision of short courses, fellowships, distance education, and recruitment of full fee paying students.
3. Because of the small time difference between Australia and many of our South East Asian neighbours there is a wide range of possibilities for educational provision via satellite links and video conferencing. Current technology makes it possible to beam a lecture conducted on an Australian campus simultaneously to any number of subsidiary campuses in South East Asia. While both Europe and North America have expressed an interest in open learning technology provision the time differences make it more difficult for them. This is one opportunity that can be exploited to the full by Australian tourism and hospitality institutions.

8. Conclusion

Hospitality and tourism education in Australia has made great strides over recent years with a healthy growth rate and the development of a wide range of courses from certificate level to PhD. Degree courses are now offered in every

state and territory with the exception of Tasmania. A research background is developing with a tourism journal based on James Cook University, a hospitality journal based on The University of Queensland and an Asia Pacific hospitality and tourism journal also based on The University of Queensland due out later in 1994. With justification Australia is now in a position to make a significant contribution to the world knowledge base in this academic area.

Whilst the recent rate of growth is unlikely to continue at the undergraduate level future growth is expected at the post graduate and research level. While it was never the purpose of this paper to analyse the post graduate offerings in hospitality and tourism any future survey would have to take these into consideration given the likely increase expected between now and 1995. Provided a satisfactory balance can be maintained between the needs of students, industry, research and academic integrity the future bodes well for Australian hospitality and tourism education.

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Figure 1: No. of Tertiary Higher Educational Institutions in Australia offering Degree programs in Hospitality and/or Tourism.

