Meeting the standard for tourism, hospitality and events External peer-review of assessment phase 2

Overview

This plan outlines a collaborative process for external referencing of the Tourism Hospitality and Events (TH&E) academic achievement of standards, where peers who are acknowledged discipline experts, review and report on the assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes. The project builds on the work of the Meeting the standard for tourism, hospitality and events pilot project, which provided evidence that assessments and grading standards are appropriate and broadly comparable with those assessment practices occurring in other similar courses elsewhere.

The project also references:

- Setting the Standard: Establishing TLOs for Tourism, Hospitality and Events Higher Education, which produced a set of nationally agreed upon and clearly articulated threshold learning outcomes (TLOs) for tourism, hospitality and events higher education coursework programs at Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) bachelor (level 7) and coursework master (level 9)
- External Referencing of Standards (ERoS) project
- *Calibration: 'The' key for assuring learning when benchmarking*

In particular, this referencing process focuses on:

- Unit learning outcomes[1]
- Assessment methods
- Student achievement of the TH&E Learning and Teaching Academic Standards (TLOs)

Project management and project roles

The pilot project team is comprised of invited participants from CAUTHE Chapter member institutions with Project Leaders (PL):

- Assoc Prof Pierre Benckendorff (The University of Queensland)
- Dr Paul Whitelaw (William Angliss Institute) Associate Director Higher Education and Quality

Project Manager (PM): Mrs Penny Jose (CAUTHE Secretariat)

---

[1] Unit: An individual unit of study. Also known as a subject or course.

Timeline

The project will be conducted over a 12-month period commencing in September 2017 involving four stages. To be completed by the mid-year meeting in late July 2018.

Outcome	Tasks	Resp	Date
Stage 1			
Formation	Send invitation to Unit coordinators to participate in the project seeking: • Commitment to ***Peer-review of assessment phase 2*** • Involvement at two ***Calibration of academic standards (CAS)*** workshops (timeline Appendix 1): ○ CAS2: **Sun 4 Feb, 3:00pm til late and Mon 5 Feb 9:00am-12:00pm** immediately prior to CAUTHE 2018 conference, Newcastle ○ CAS3: **Fri 20 Jul, 9:00am-4:00pm** in conjunction with the 2018 CAUTHE Mid-year meeting • Identification of the Unit coordinator to be involved • Sign off by the CAUTHE Chapter director Distribute project plan and pre-reading materials in preparation for teleconference meeting. All participants are asked to **sign a participant agreement** covering confidentiality and ethical behaviour (see attached Appendix 2: Participant Agreement).	PL, PM	Aug – Sept 2017
	Meeting by teleconference on **Fri 6 October 2:00-3:30pm** of all team members to: • Establish principles of engagement including: ○ course design, relationship between Units of Study, TLOs and assessment regime ○ assessment regime – assurance of achievement of TLO & fitness for purpose ○ use of dyads or triads • Discuss administrative arrangements: contact details, timeline, meetings schedule and document management (*Dropbox)*. • Request a volunteer to provide a sample assessment item and student work (AQF level 7 or 9) for CAS2 workshop.	All	6 Oct 2017

Stage 2			
Sharing and review	The participating Unit coordinator **nominates and uploads information for a unit that assesses two or more TLOs (ideally at AQF 7 level)** and **nominates discipline staff in the Unit** to be involved in the external referencing process **by Friday 27 October**. Information required (see Appendix 3: Review materials **Part A Unit of Study details**): • Unit coordinator name and contact details • Institution • Qualification (degree title) • Threshold Learning Outcomes (being assessed) • Unit of Study • Year level • Assessment regime • Unit outline	PT	27 Oct 2017
	Cross-institutional groups (dyads/triads) are formed from the nominated tourism, hospitality and/or events staff from the participating courses. Based on matching of the TLO and assessment regime. Participants will be advised by email about dyad/triad groupings prior to a teleconference on **Fri 24 November 11:00am-12:00pm** to discuss.	PM	10 Nov 2017
	Each group (dyad/triad) conducts a **preliminary introductory conversation** in order to: • share your expectations of the peer referencing process • provide a brief introduction to the units and assessment selected for review **using unit outlines** to inform the discussion • discuss background issues and questions arising from preliminary reading of the material (e.g. student cohort, pre-requisites, context of the assessment item within the subject and program) • clarify detail about student expectations and understanding of the threshold standard/s being addressed • confirm timeline and key dates (e.g. draft reports and review meeting, final reports). Please feel free to arrange a **second teleconference** if further discussion would be beneficial after beginning the review process.	UC	Nov 2017
	Each participating institution **provides de-identified** (where possible) **assessed student work samples** for selected unit to the other participating institutions by **Friday 15 December**. See Appendix 3: **Part B Review materials checklist**	UC	15 Dec 2017

	Participants **each individually review student work samples and background curriculum** material provided as follows: • Institution A and B review C's set of curriculum materials and work samples • Institution B and C review A's set of curriculum materials and work samples • Institution C and A review B's set of curriculum materials and work samples	UC	Early Jan 2017
	Each reviewer drafts responses to the questions on the **referencing feedback form** and notes areas where any additional information might be provided by the unit coordinator that would further inform the reviewer's understanding of the assessment context and upload to Dropbox by **29 January 2018**.	UC	End-Jan 2018
Stage 3			
Evaluation and reporting	Face-to-face workshop **for all project team members and unit coordinators** prior to the CAUTHE 2018 conference on: **Sun 4 Feb: including dinner** • 3:00-6:00pm calibration workshop (CAS2) for the first nominated learning standard (domain) • 7:30-9:00pm discuss draft peer-review responses, issues and experiences of the peer-review project to date. **Mon 5 Feb** • 9:00-12:00pm calibration workshop (CAS2) for the second nominated learning standard/s (domain/s)	UC	Feb 2018
	PM checks the draft reports for appropriateness before sharing with the partner institution and final SKYPE meeting.	PM	Feb 2018
	The **draft reports are provided back to the originating institution** and then the group meets (in person or online) to conduct **feedback conversations** on each set of materials reviewed guided by the following points. a) Group provides general comment on the overall reviewing experience b) For each reviewed unit a collegial, robust discussion is undertaken. Following is a suggested structure for this discussion: • Invited the unit coordinator to comment on the draft report and their own review experience. • Reviewer/s raise questions emerging from the reviewing process (e.g. the conditions under which the assessment task was performed, how the task related to similar tasks in other units likely to have been undertaken by the same students etc.). • Reviewer/s provide feedback on the appropriateness of judgements. Feedback should be supported by explanatory comment regardless of whether judgements were deemed appropriate or not.	UC	Feb 2018

	• Reviewer/s comment on areas of strength and areas likely to benefit from further attention. Reviewers who have identified several points may wish to limit these to the three considered most important so as not to overwhelm the person receiving feedback. • Staff from the reviewed institution are invited to provide further comments or ask questions throughout the discussion. The main points raised during the conversation are summarised by the group.		
	Reviewers **individually complete their external referencing report** that is returned to the institutional coordinator of the reviewed unit.	UC	End Feb 2018
Stage 4			
Project completion	Final reports are discussed between the relevant program coordinator and unit coordinator who participated in the external referencing process. Any errors of fact in the reports may be corrected at this stage. Determine responsive actions, briefly document actions on the template and follow up according to institutional processes ie close the loop.	UC	Mar – Apr 2018
	Each dyad/triad to identify an exemplar of an assessment item that demonstrates achievement of the standards for uploading to the project website.	UC	Mar - Apr 2018
	UC to complete reflections and lessons learned template: 1. Project methodology 2. Summary of the dyad/triad and materials 3. Quality of participants 4. Selection of units of study to be reviewed 5. Important and useful lessons learnt 6. Overall reflection 7. Estimate of time spent Project manager collate responses including reference report feedback, reflections and lessons learned and time spent.	UC PM	Mar – Apr 2018
	Final project teleconference and next steps.	All	May 2018
	Project evaluation and draft report.	PL, PM, UC	May-June 2018
	Report to the 2018 CAUTHE Executive at the mid-year meeting on outcomes, findings and experiences. Undertake calibration workshop (CAS3) for the nominated learning standards. Interested other/future parties to be invited to meeting.	PL, PM, UC	27 July 2018
	Project report to CAUTHE Executive committee – benefits, costs, time, resources	PL, PM	Aug 2018

Appendix 1: Calibration of standards workshops timelines

CAS2 2018 conference workshop

Workshop to be held on Sunday 4 February 2:00-5:00pm and Monday 5 Feb 9:00-12:00pm immediately prior to the CAUTHE 2018 conference at the University of Newcastle.

Task	Resp	Date
Send invitation to join the workshop to CAUTHE Chapter directors & project participants	Penny	10 Nov 2018
Confirm TLO(s) to calibrate (and the AQF level) & identify an assessment item and a range of (3) marked examples	Paul / Pierre	17 Nov 2018
Set up a survey space (*Qualtrics)* where colleagues provide feedback on assessment items prior to the workshop	Penny	12 Jan 2018
Open pre-workshop survey in *Qualtrics* & share the items (*Dropbox*)	Penny	15 Jan 2018
Deadline for reviews	All	29 Jan 2018
Publish and circulate aggregated results	Penny	31 Jan 2018
Calibration of Academic Standards (CAS2) workshop Sun 4 Feb 3:00pm til late & Mon 5 Feb 9:00am-12:00pm 2018	All	4-5 Feb 2018

CAS3 2018 Mid-year meeting workshop

Workshop to be held on Friday 20 July from 9:00am-4:00pm in conjunction with the CAUTHE 2018 Mid-year meeting at The University of Queensland.

Task	Resp	Date
Send invitation to join the workshop to CAUTHE Chapter directors & project participants	Penny	19 May 2018
Confirm TLO(s) to calibrate (and the AQF level) & identify an assessment item and a range of (3) marked examples	Paul / Pierre	26 May 2018
Set up a survey space (*Qualtrics)* where colleagues provide feedback on assessment items prior to the workshop	Penny	15 June 2018
Open pre-workshop survey in *Qualtrics* & share the items (*Dropbox*)	Penny	30 June 2018
Deadline for reviews	All	18 July 2018
Publish and circulate aggregated results	Penny	18 July 2018
Calibration of Academic Standards (CAS3) workshop 9:00am-4:00pm	All	20 July 2018

Appendix 2: Participant agreement

1. I have read the information and guidelines provided and understand the referencing process.

2. I agree that I **(or my nominee)** will participate in the referencing process, including teleconferences and face-to-face meetings as described in the project plan.

3. I understand my role in the process is to provide collaborating institutions with the required unit information for which I am Unit coordinator. I will use the checklist of information to complete this. I **(or my nominee)** will also be available to speak with staff of the other institutions to develop the relationship necessary for the review, and to provide clarification and advice as required.

4. In turn I **(or my nominee)** will be required to review the unit or units of the other institutions involved in the external referencing process using the template report format and associated guidelines provided.

5. I understand that if I have questions about the referencing process I can contact the institution contact.

6. My participation in the referencing process will give me access to confidential information including samples of de-identified student assessment tasks.

7. I will respect the views and opinions of others during the process.

8. I will not compromise anyone else's intellectual property or participant confidentiality

Unit Coordinator name   **Chapter Director name**

Date   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature   **Signature**

Appendix 3: Review materials

(for the institution requesting the external referencing)

Part A Unit of Study details

Institution		Qualification		
Unit Coordinator details				
Name		**Email**		
Unit of Study title*				
TLO/Domain	**Description**	**Year level**	**Assessment regime (brief description)**	**Attachments** eg Unit outline
Service and Experience Design				
Interdisciplinary Inquiry				
Collaboration				
Problem Solving				
Professional Responsibility				

* Nominate a final year unit of study that assesses two or more TLOs

** See Setting the Standard: Establishing TLOs for Tourism, Hospitality and Events Higher Education

Please submit this information to penny.jose@vu.edu.au by 27 October 2017

Part B Review materials checklist

The requesting institution will provide the reviewer with the following information:

General points

☐ An overall course or study plan structure which positions the unit being reviewed. (A curriculum map, showing the way the ULOs are mapped to the TLOs, is helpful if available)

☐ List of Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs)

☐ Specific CLOs relevant to the Unit being reviewed

For the selected unit

☐ Unit outline

☐ Unit Learning Outcomes (ULOs)

☐ A schedule of learning for the unit showing key learning and assessment over the teaching period

For the selected assessment task

☐ Information provided to students setting out the assessment task requirements and/or questions

☐ Weighting of the assessment

☐ Assessment rubrics, marking guides, or criteria sheet

Grading

☐ Explanation of the grading scheme as it applies to the samples of student work and explanations of nomenclature

Samples of student work

Please read Appendix 4 for information on how to select samples of student work

☐ Samples of de-identified student work provided

Appendix 4: Guidance on the selection of student work for external referencing

Student work selected for external referencing should ideally demonstrate two or three of the TH&E Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs), i.e. those that characterise the knowledge and capabilities students should have achieved by the completion of their course. (It is recognised that samples will not be able to cover the full range of possible outcomes.) It would be unusual to encounter this problem but avoid selecting samples that might have intellectual property implications (e.g. commercial-in-confidence).

Samples should be selected from defined grade ranges, based on the final mark achieved as described below. Within these grade ranges, sampling is conducted at random. Student work must be de-identified prior to the external referencing process, but otherwise the work is left intact, complete with any annotations made by the original assessor. (If assessor comments/marks are on a separate document, such as a rubric, this should be included alongside the student work.)

Stratified Random Sampling

To enable a focus on threshold standards, and to provide a consistent format for the comparison of student work across institutions that may use different grade band boundaries, samples for external referencing should represent a random selection of assessed work to include the mark ranges as follows:

1. **A minimal pass** (selecting a sample at random from student work that achieved the minimum pass mark up to no more than 5% above this. If there is no student work that falls into this category, the work with the lowest passing mark should be submitted for review.)

2. **A fail** (selecting a sample at random from student work that did not meet the pass mark, but did not fail by more than 10% below the minimum pass mark. If there is no student work that falls into this category, then the work with the highest failing mark should be submitted.) If there are no failing students then a second sample from the 'minimal pass' category should be added.

3. **A grade greater than a pass** (selecting a sample at random from student work that achieved a mark that is higher than that which falls within the grade range associated with a 'Pass'. [e.g. Credit, Distinction, High Distinction] If there are no students achieving a strong pass then do not submit work in this category.)

The procedure above is designed to produce **at least two and normally three samples** of work for review. Work should be selected using some form of random selection procedure (i.e. selecting a sample at random from a sub-list of eligible samples, or selecting samples at random from the full cohort until the three sample criteria are met.

See Appendix 5 for Selection of student work examples

Appendix 5: Selection of student work examples

Example 1

Institution X has five grade bands within their institution, as follows:

High Distinction	80-100
Distinction	70-79
Credit	60-69
Pass	50-59
Fail	0-49

Unit X1 has the following distribution of marks for the final assessments:

Student	Mark	Grade Band
1	14	Fail
2	23	Fail
3	40	Fail
4	43	Fail
5	45	Fail
6	50	Pass
7	52	Pass
8	55	Pass
9	58	Pass
10	59	Pass
11	60	Credit
12	63	Credit
13	67	Credit
14	65	Credit
15	66	Credit
16	69	Credit
17	70	Distinction
18	71	Distinction
19	76	Distinction
20	80	High Distinction
21	86	High Distinction

One sample of assessed work for external referencing should be randomly selected from within the:

1. green strata (representing a minimal pass)

2. red strata (representing a fail)

3. blue strata (representing a strong pass)

If there had been no failing students, then two samples would have been drawn from the green strata.

Example 2

Institution Y also has five grade bands, but with different boundaries compared with Institution X:

High Distinction	85-100
Distinction	75-84
Credit	65-74
Pass	50-64
Fail	0-49

Unit Y1 has the following distribution of marks for the final assessments:

Student	Percent	Grade Band
1	29	Fail
2	32	Fail
3	36	Fail
4	50	Pass
5	53	Pass
6	55	Pass
7	58	Pass
8	59	Pass
9	60	Pass
10	63	Pass
11	67	Credit
12	65	Credit
13	66	Credit
14	70	Credit
15	71	Credit
16	76	Distinction
17	80	Distinction
18	86	High Distinction

One sample of assessed work for external referencing should be randomly selected from within the:

1. green strata (representing a minimal pass)

2. red strata (representing a fail – but in this case there are no students with a score between 40-50%, so the highest failing mark [36%] is selected instead.)

3. blue strata (representing a strong pass)

If there had been no students scoring 65% or more, then only samples 1) and 2) would be selected and put forward for review.

Glossary of terms and acronyms

Academic standards: refers to both learning and teaching standards. Teaching standards are understood to encompass "process" or "delivery" standards, while learning standards refer to "outcome standards" which describe the "nature and levels of student attainment" (TEQSA, 2011, p. 3).

Assessment: a process to determine a student's achievement of expected learning outcomes and may include a range of written and oral methods and practice or demonstration. It is expected to fairly, validly and reliably measure student performance of intended learning outcomes. Valid assessment refers to the explicit and clear alignment between intended learning outcomes and the assessment methods used to measure student achievement of those outcomes.

Assessment Rubric or Guide: A tool designed to measure the level of student achievement against consistent criteria and to award scored and/or graded outcomes. Assessment guides usually have three elements:

- Criteria for assessment
- Scored/graded outcome
- Descriptors of the performance criteria for each scored or graded outcome

Another commonly used term is **'Assessment Criteria sheet'**.

Example of an Assessment Rubric:

	Scored/Graded Outcome	High Distinction	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Fail
Criteria		**Example of descriptors of the performance criteria for scored or graded outcome.**				
	Thesis	Clearly stated, concise and consistent				
	Argument	Logical and well evidenced				
	Originality	Strong conceptual grasp and unique presentation of ideas that goes well beyond the prescribed reading for the unit				

Assessment Task: illustrative task or performance opportunity that closely targets defined learning outcomes, allowing students to demonstrate their learning and capabilities. Assessment tasks include, but are not limited to essays, tests, examinations, laboratory, clinical or field practicums, projects, compilations, productions, presentations, performances, web-based discussions and participation in forums.

Assessment Weight: the number of marks or % value attributed to a particular assessment item, which should reflect the relative importance of that assessment

Assurance: the process of ensuring that activities and outcomes meet an agreed standard.

Course: whole-of-degree program. **A course is** collection of units of study leading to an award or qualification. Also known as **program**.

Course Learning Outcomes: the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a student has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning across the whole program.

Coursework Program: Those taught programs of students. Higher Degree Research programs are generally not considered coursework programs.

End to End Process – A term used to refer to the beginning and end points of a methodology. It can refer to an academic methodology such as the EROS project, service delivery, and administrative and business processes.

External Referencing: External review of all, or aspects, of a program, unit of a program, or student achievement standards by a peer from another institution who is an acknowledged discipline or professional expert.

Grade Descriptors: describe performance at the subject level, but may be indicative of levels of performance of certain types of assessment task (especially project work, reports and other extended writing tasks).

Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF): the standards enacted under the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency Act, and are binding on universities.

Marking: the act of assessing individual assessment components, generating a score and/or grade, and feedback, as appropriate.

Program: whole-of-degree program. **A program is** collection of units of study leading to an award or qualification. Also known as **course**.

Program Learning Outcomes: the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a student has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning across the whole program.

Quality: is fitness for purpose/fitness of purpose and performance to an agreed standard.

Referencing: see External Referencing

Reliability: trustworthiness of assessment, the extent to which the grade awarded by one marker aligns with that awarded by another marker. Standards: statements describing the level or quality of student performance of criteria, in an assessment task.

Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs): a set of nationally agreed upon and clearly articulated standards contextualised for tourism, hospitality and events (TH&E) in HE, explicitly for bachelor (AQF level 7) and masters coursework (AQF level 9).

Unit: an individual unit taken as part of a whole-of-degree program. A single component of a qualification, or a stand-alone unit, that has been approved/accredited. A unit may also be called a 'course', 'subject', or 'module'.

Unit Learning Outcomes: the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a student has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning in an individual unit/ subject.

Validity: in establishing outcomes which are the focus of assessment, validity refers to the process of confirming, on evidence and against a range of agreed reference points, that what is being given focus on in a course or subject is both relevant and desirable. In terms of the process of assessment, validity refers to the use of assessment methods that are 'fit for purpose' – that is, they are shown to be the best way to measure the development of the capabilities and competencies set down for achievement in a particular course or subject.

Acronyms

AQF – Australian Qualification Framework

ERoS – External Referencing Of Standards Project

HESF - Higher Education Standards Framework

TEQSA – Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

TLOs – Threshold Learning Outcomes

ULOs – Unit Learning Outcomes

Acknowledgements

The TH&E Project team has drawn on a number of projects, resources and methodologies for our work.

We wish to acknowledge:

Bedford, Simon; Czech, Peter; Sefcik, Lesley; Smith, Judith; and Yorke, John, (2016), *External Referencing of Standards (ERoS) - An example of a collaborative end-to-end peer review process for external referencing*, Curtin University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Wollongong and RMIT University, 2016, 61p http://ro.uow.edu.au/uowbooks/13

Booth, S, 2014, *National External Peer Review of Assessment Network*, http://www.utas.edu.au/student-evaluation-review-and-reporting-unit/peer-review-of-assessment-network/nprn

Freeman, M 2014, *External peer review models for coursework degrees,* 5 Sept, Available at http://cauthe.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2014-09-05_M-Freeman_External-peer-review-models-for-coursework-degrees.pdf

Kraus, K-L., Scott, G., et al (2014), *Assuring Learning and Teaching Standards through Inter-Institutional Peer Review and Moderation*, http://www.olt.gov.au/resource-assuring-learning-teaching-standards-inter-institutional-peer-review

Hancock, P., Freeman, M., Abraham, A., De Lange, P. Howieson, B, O'Connell, B., & Watty, K. (2015), *Achievement Matters: External Peer Review of Accounting Learning Standards*, Final report. www.achievementmatters.com.au

National External Peer Review of Assessment Network Project (2014), http://www.utas.edu.au/student-evaluation-review-and-reporting-unit/nprn

Sadler, D. Royce (2012), *Assuring academic achievement standards: from moderation to calibration*, Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice, 2012, 1–15.

Whitelaw, P. A., Benckendorff, P., Gross, M. J., Mair, J., & Jose, P. (2015). *Tourism, Hospitality & Events Learning and Teaching Academic Standards*. Melbourne, Vic: Victoria University. Available at https://sites.google.com/site/tourismandhospitalitystandard/file-cabinet/2015%2009%2001_VU101_OfficeLearningTeaching_StandardGuide_A4_PDF%20WEB.pdf?attredirects=0&d=1