



# Higher Education Standards Panel

## Communique Number 13 – October 2014

### Introduction

To support the work of the Higher Education Standards Panel (the Panel), the Office of Learning and Teaching has funded a Higher Education Standards Panel Research Fellowship (<http://www.hestandards.gov.au/higher-education-standards-panel-research-fellowship>). The Fellowship has been awarded to Emeritus Professor Christine Ewan.

The aim of the Fellowship is to inform and provide an evidence base for clearly specifying application of the relevant Higher Education Standards for the new forms of teaching and learning that are emerging in the global higher education landscape.

Professor Ewan will be working on the tasks outlined below for the next twelve months. The Panel will maintain a close involvement with the project.

### How the Sector can Contribute

The Panel is aware that the range of stakeholders is broad, the issues are complex, and there is a considerable degree of relevant activity currently underway around new forms of higher education, including the verification of learning outcomes in multiple contexts. The contexts include:

- online learning
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- off-shore delivery
- individual learning plans
- industry sponsored program components
- joint degrees across countries
- Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- work-based learning
- multi-campus and inter-institutional benchmarking
- collaborative and cross-sector programs, and
- requesting credit for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Professor Ewan has commenced a review of existing and planned practice nationally and internationally, and a request for information has been placed on the Panel website (<http://www.hestandards.gov.au/olt-fellow-request-for-information>). Responses to that request will be used by Professor Ewan to shape advice on application of the Standards in diverse contexts.

An initial Forum to gather further information and feedback is planned as a satellite event at the Universities Australia conference in March 2015. A draft report will then be considered at a specific Forum in mid-2015. The Panel is keen to have wide sector engagement in these events, and registration by relevant higher education provider staff is encouraged. Information will be posted to the Panel website closer to the date of the Forum.

Professor Ewan has contacted key stakeholder groups and is in the process of arranging to attend meetings and conduct workshops and presentations for both public and private higher education

providers in most States. The main foci for discussion at these workshops and presentations will be on the ways in which institutions can demonstrate to themselves and the regulator that their engagement in alternative, disaggregated and distributed delivery methods for award courses meets the requirements of the Higher Education Standards Framework and whether the Framework imposes any unnecessary limitations or difficulties for innovative delivery methods.

Since the main aim of the project is to provide advice to the Panel and the sector on current and desirable good practice in this area, it is critical that stakeholders in the sector engage with the issues and provide considered views on the best way forward to address the emerging models of delivery in the context of the Australian regulatory framework. The Panel therefore encourages broad participation and contribution by the sector to this project.

## **Providing Feedback on this Project**

A number of questions have been posed to frame the discussion and these are available on the Panel website – they may be updated as the project progresses.

Responses to the questions are due by **2 November 2014**.

Please send responses, invitations and suggestions directly to Professor Ewan.

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**FELLOWSHIP WEBSITE**      <http://www.hestandards.gov.au/higher-education-standards-panel-research-fellowship>

Alan Robson  
Chair  
Higher Education Standards Panel  
October 2014

## **Distribution of Communiques**

It would be helpful if the existing addressees of the Panel's communiques could look to passing the communiques on to interested parties within their constituencies. Anyone who wishes to be added to the distribution list can contact the Higher Education Standards Executive ([info@hestandards.gov.au](mailto:info@hestandards.gov.au)). Copies of communiques will be uploaded to the Panel's website as soon as practicable after distribution.