National support mechanism for peer review

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Universities Australia: An Agenda for Australian Higher Education 2013-2016: A smarter Australia

- **Theme 1: Increase Australians' university participation**

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- **Theme 3: A powerful research and innovation system that drives economic and social progress**

- **Theme 4: Efficiency, investment and regulation**

University actions

- Introduce external peer moderation of assessment standards

- Integrate technologies to support teaching and enhance the student experience

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Updated Higher Education Standards Framework (2014)

1.4.1: The expected learning outcomes for each course of study are specified, consistent with the level and field of education of the qualification awarded, and **informed by national and international comparators.**

5.3.1: All <u>accredited courses of study</u> are subject to periodic (at least every seven years) comprehensive reviews that are overseen by peak academic governance processes and **include external referencing and other benchmarking activities.**

5.3.4: Review and improvement activities include regular **external referencing of the success of student cohorts against comparable courses of study**, including:

a.   Analyses of progression rates, attrition rates, completion times and rates and, where applicable, comparing different locations of delivery, and

b.   **The assessment methods and grading of students' achievement of learning outcomes for <u>selected units </u>within courses of study.**

7.3.3 **Information systems and records are maintained, securely and confidentially** as necessary to:

b.   Prevent unauthorised or fraudulent access to private or sensitive information, including information where unauthorised access may compromise academic or research integrity

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Context setting: Peer review and evaluation of practice

Building capacity for peer review and evaluation of practice
Discipline Scholar Networks and Threshold Learning Outcomes projects
Quality Verification System (QVS), Innovative Research Universities (IRU), Academic Calibration Process; Achievement Matters (Watty et al., 2014); Inter-University Moderation Project (Krause et al., 2014); External Examiner System (UK)
Fitness of purpose and fitness for purpose of assessment: Emeritus Prof Geoff Scott: Peer review of program level outcomes (2015). Also builds on Scott's (2014) work on networks
Peer Review of Assessment Network (Booth, et al., 2015): national support mechanism for peer review of assessment; feedback also pointed to other forms of peer review
Ewan, C. & Freeman, M. (2015) Found evidence of improved assessment practices with the development of threshold learning outcomes (TLOs); the establishment of networks; and the important role Deans Councils play in leading efforts on academic standards. Yet, they also found three noticeable gaps: 1) the absence of non-self-accrediting and private providers in these academic quality projects; 2) the lack of an evidence base for quality assurance; and 3) the lack of external referencing.

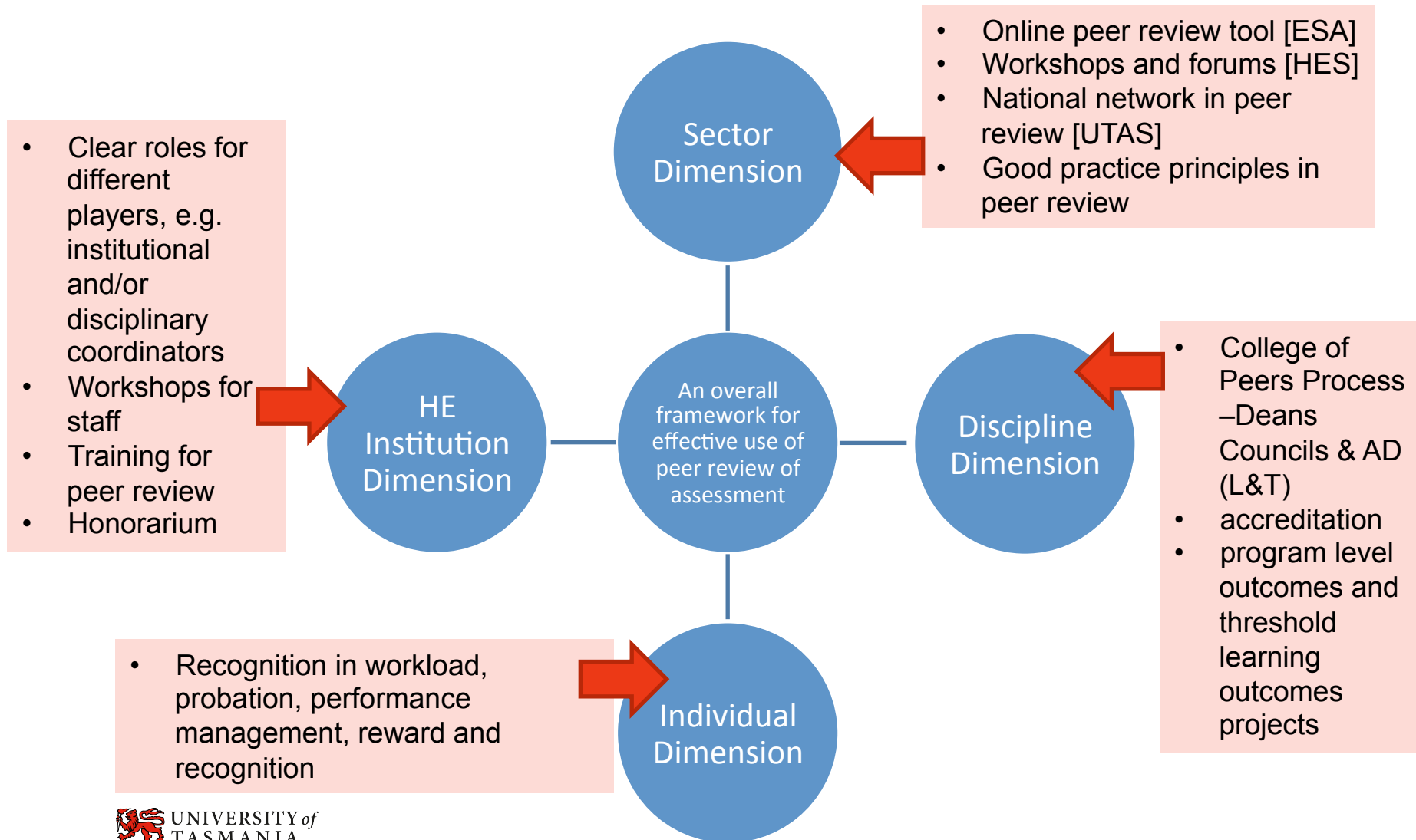# Context setting: Peer review and evaluation of practice

Building capacity for peer review and evaluation of practice
HEFCE (2015) Report recommended strengthening the external examiner system through establishing a College of Peers process; also expressed interest in the use of online software
Recognising and rewarding teaching: Australian teaching standards and expert peer review: Emeritus Prof Denise Chalmers (2015): Pool of endorsed and training teaching and learning experts to carry out reviews
Professionalisation of the Academic Workforce 2020 (James et al., 2015): Trusted evaluation of professional practice could be strengthened and diverse opportunities for education and training for teaching in higher education could be strengthened

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Framework for Effective Use of Peer Review of Assessment

- Clear roles for different players, e.g. institutional and/or disciplinary coordinators
- Workshops for staff
- Training for peer review
- Honorarium

- Online peer review tool [ESA]
- Workshops and forums [HES]
- National network in peer review [UTAS]
- Good practice principles in peer review

Sector Dimension

HE Institution Dimension

An overall framework for effective use of peer review of assessment

Discipline Dimension

Individual Dimension

- College of Peers Process –Deans Councils & AD (L&T)
- accreditation
- program level outcomes and threshold learning outcomes projects

- Recognition in workload, probation, performance management, reward and recognition
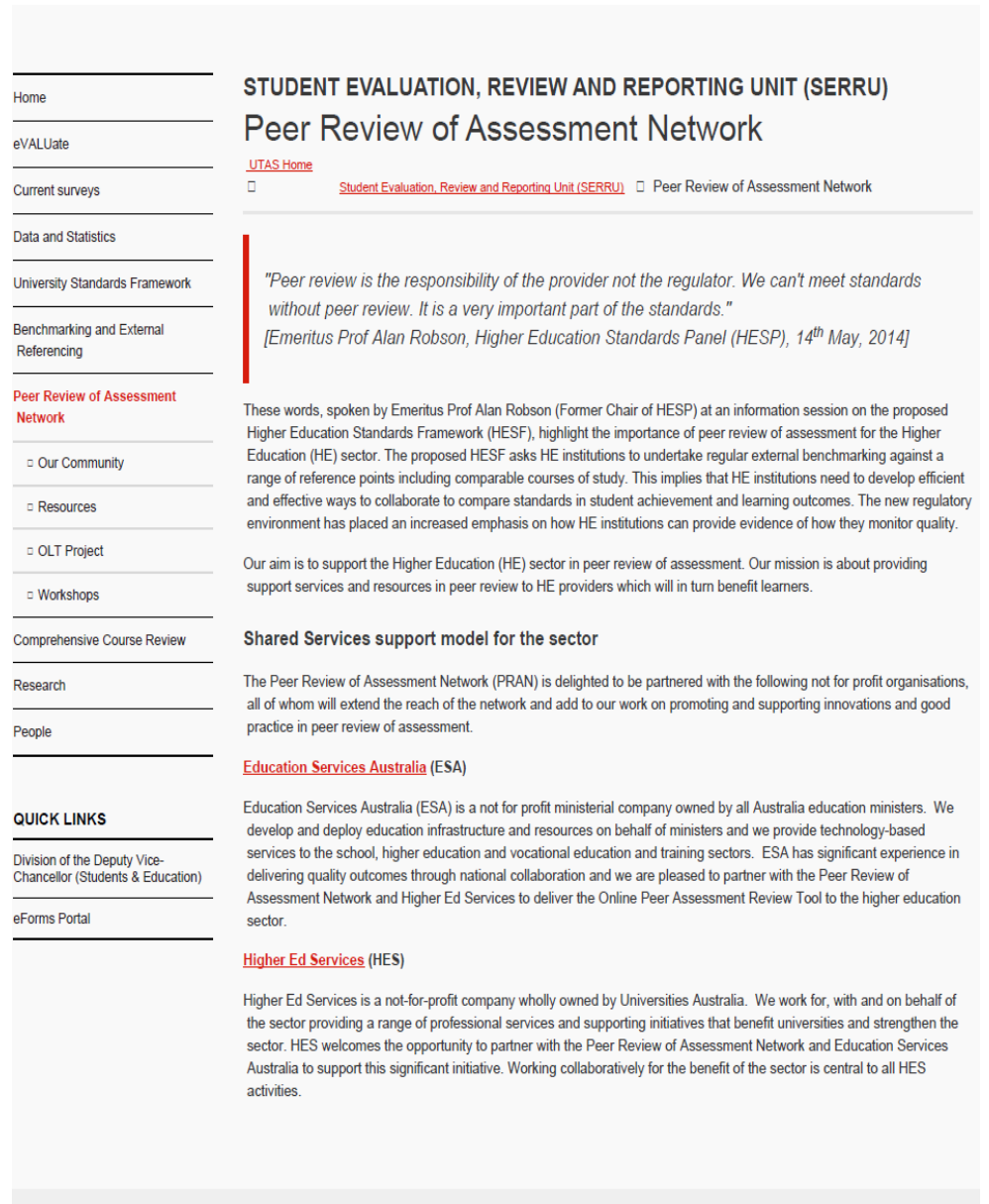
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Sector dimension

- Online peer review tool [ESA]
- Workshops and forums [HES]
- National network in peer review [UTAS]
- Good practice principles in peer review

ACTIVITIES

- ✓ UTAS/ESA/HES website for network
- ✓ Signed collaborative agreement
- ✓ Shared services support model with two not-for-profit organisations: ESA and HES
- External Reference Group: Good practice principles
- ✓ Monthly bulletins, subscription to network, workshops/forums [in progress]
- ✓ Subscription to online peer review tool and reporting [in progress]
- Link to other forums/networks

STUDENT EVALUATION, REVIEW AND REPORTING UNIT (SERRU)
Peer Review of Assessment Network

UTAS Home

Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU) □ Peer Review of Assessment Network

"Peer review is the responsibility of the provider not the regulator. We can't meet standards without peer review. It is a very important part of the standards."
[Emeritus Prof Alan Robson, Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP), 14th May, 2014]

These words, spoken by Emeritus Prof Alan Robson (Former Chair of HESP) at an information session on the proposed Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF), highlight the importance of peer review of assessment for the Higher Education (HE) sector. The proposed HESF asks HE institutions to undertake regular external benchmarking against a range of reference points including comparable courses of study. This implies that HE institutions need to develop efficient and effective ways to collaborate to compare standards in student achievement and learning outcomes. The new regulatory environment has placed an increased emphasis on how HE institutions can provide evidence of how they monitor quality.

Our aim is to support the Higher Education (HE) sector in peer review of assessment. Our mission is about providing support services and resources in peer review to HE providers which will in turn benefit learners.

Shared Services support model for the sector

The Peer Review of Assessment Network (PRAN) is delighted to be partnered with the following not for profit organisations, all of whom will extend the reach of the network and add to our work on promoting and supporting innovations and good practice in peer review of assessment.

Education Services Australia (ESA)

Education Services Australia (ESA) is a not for profit ministerial company owned by all Australia education ministers. We develop and deploy education infrastructure and resources on behalf of ministers and we provide technology-based services to the school, higher education and vocational education and training sectors. ESA has significant experience in delivering quality outcomes through national collaboration and we are pleased to partner with the Peer Review of Assessment Network and Higher Ed Services to deliver the Online Peer Assessment Review Tool to the higher education sector.

Higher Ed Services (HES)

Higher Ed Services is a not-for-profit company wholly owned by Universities Australia. We work for, with and on behalf of the sector providing a range of professional services and supporting initiatives that benefit universities and strengthen the sector. HES welcomes the opportunity to partner with the Peer Review of Assessment Network and Education Services Australia to support this significant initiative. Working collaboratively for the benefit of the sector is central to all HES activities.

Institution dimension

- Clear roles for different players, e.g. institutional and/ or disciplinary coordinators
- Workshops for staff
- Training for peer review
- Honorarium

ACTIVITIES

✓ UTAS website for network-universities and private providers
✓ Monthly bulletins, subscription to network [in progress]
✓ Workshops/forums aimed at:
- Quality directors/managers
- Associate Deans (L&T)
- Academics (peer reviewers and reviewees)
- Academic Senates [in progress]

- Register and contact details for universities/private providers for peer review projects
✓ Institutional subscriptions to the network/online peer review tool [in progress]

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eVALUate

Current surveys

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Benchmarking and External Referencing

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Comprehensive Course Review

Research

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STUDENT EVALUATION, REVIEW AND REPORTING UNIT (SERRU)

Our Community

UTAS Home

□   Student Evaluation, Review and Reporting Unit (SERRU)   □   Peer Review of Assessment Network   □   Our Community

PRAN has established a network of key contacts throughout Australian HE institutions (both universities and private providers). Contacts have a vital role in sharing good and innovative practice in peer review of assessment. Below is a current list of our Peer Review Community:

- Central Queensland University
- Edith Cowan University
- RMIT
- Western Sydney University
- Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE)
- Australian Council of Engineering Deans (ACED)
- Australian Council of Deans of Information and Communications Technology (ACDICT)
  - James Cook University
  - University of Tasmania
- Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery (CDNM)
  - Southern Cross University
  - Edith Cowan University
  - Griffith University
  - RMIT
  - James Cook University
  - University of Southern Queensland
  - University of South Australia
  - Federation University
  - Notre Dame University
  - Latrobe University
  - The University of Newcastle
  - Victoria University
  - University of Tasmania

- Adelaide College of Divinity
- Alphacrucis College
- Australian Institute of Professional Education
- Avondale College
- Eastern College Australia
- Griffith College
- Harvest Bible College
- Moore Theological College
- SP Jain School of Global Management
- Tabor Adelaide

Discipline dimension

- Online peer review tool [ESA]
- Workshops and forums [HES]
- National network in peer review [UTAS]
- Good practice principles in peer review

ACTIVITIES
- ✓ College of Peers process [in progress]
- ✓ Alignment to accreditation[in progress]
- ✓ TLOs
- ✓ Annual workshop on comparing program level outcomes/assessment across the sector [in progress]
- Calibration and discussion on discipline standards

STUDENT EVALUATION, REVIEW AND REPORTING UNIT (SERRU)

Our Community

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Individual dimension

- Recognition in workload, probation, performance management, reward and recognition

ACTIVITIES

- Reward and recognition process for undertaking peer review
- Training peer reviewers/ reviewees and aligning to course level outcomes

STUDENT EVALUATION, REVIEW AND REPORTING UNIT (SERRU)

Our Community

UTAS Home

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Participating HE institutions

Edith Cowan University
Central Queensland University
Western Sydney University
Swinburne University
RMIT
University of Tasmania
University of Wollongong
QUT
Curtin University
James Cook University
Federation University

Adelaide College of Divinity
Alphacrucis College
Australian Institute of Professional Education
Avondale College
Eastern College Australia
Harvest Bible College
Moore Theological College
SP Jain School of Global Management
Griffith College
ACDE
Tabor Adelaide

Participating Deans Councils

Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE)
Australian Council of Deans of Information and Communications Technology (ACDICT)
Deans Council of Nursing and Midwifery-Including the universities in list below: **Southern Cross University, University of Newcastle, Griffith University, Victoria University, RMIT, James Cook University, University of Western Sydney, University of Southern Queensland, University of South Australia, Federation University Newcastle University, Latrobe University, Notre Dame University**
Australian Council of Engineering Deans (ACED)
The Council of Australasian Tourism Hospitality Education (CAUTHE)

Peer Review Process
Peer review of assessment and benchmarking

Workshop Questions:

1. Consider the draft peer review of assessment processes- what are the collaborative opportunities/ challenges for implementation with ACDICT?

2. Consider the benchmarking procedure- what are the collaborative opportunities/challenges for implementation with ACDICT (Australia/New Zealand)?