

National Advisory Standards for the Professional Practice of HR in Australian Universities

Standard: 1.0

Activity Area: Learning and Development

This activity partners with Organisation Development and Career Development. The totality makes up human resource development.

This Advisory Standard applies to all categories of Learning and Development activities across the University.

This Advisory Standard applies to all staff (academic, general and all others).

Learning and Development activity may be carried out in one or more functional areas, and includes work-based learning, reflective practice, mentoring, job rotation, coaching and networking.

Some Universities have adopted a Competency / Capability Framework. This Standard assumes that this is not a sector wide practice to date.



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1 Definition of a Standard

- 1.1 A standard is an agreed specification or other criterion used as a rule, guideline, or definition of a level of performance or achievement (AUQA, n.d).
- 1.2 A Standard, according to Standards Australia (2008) *provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.*

2 Preface/Rationale

- 2.1 This Standard has been developed within a Workplace Productivity Programme (WPP) funded project with the premise that the project would support the professional practice of human resources in Australian Universities, and directly impact on the sector's capability to describe and assess better HR practice.
- 2.2 The purpose of this standard is as a national advisory standard for Australian universities. The Standard addresses quality practice in Learning and Development. The Standard, and any self-assessment or audit process, facilitates an integrated approach to the achievement of a University's learning and development goals. They identify opportunities for improvement and to implement strategies for their achievement.
- 2.3 A standard is an agreed, repeatable way of undertaking an activity. It is a published document that contains a specification or other criteria designed to be used consistently as a rule, guideline, or definition. Standards help to increase the reliability and the effectiveness of HR activities, and assist in their evaluation or measurement. This HR Standard is designed for voluntary use and does not impose regulation (British Standards Institution, n.d.). The application of the Standard is at the prerogative of each University.
- 2.4 This HR Standard will establish the basis for "what we could expect to see in a University HR activity" for the purposes of quality assessment, performance examination, a demonstration of better human resource practice and for demonstrating to stakeholders that value for money is being achieved. It can also be used for comparative benchmarking purposes.



2.5 This Standard:

- 2.5.1 has been developed using subject matter experts
- 2.5.2 is practical, not rhetorical
- 2.5.3 has its foundation within the current literature
- 2.5.4 draws on the UK experience in similar areas (HEFCE, 2005)
- 2.5.5 incorporates internal consistency
- 2.5.6 is outcome focused
- 2.5.7 should be comprehensible to users who have not participated in its preparation.

2.6 The Standard should be used as a tool to improve the management and activity of learning and development in a University environment, and is designed to be outcome focused. It is not intended to be used as a mandated checklist but rather it can be adapted to different HR environments. It allows each university to modify the final national standard, where necessary, to cater for organisational diversity and to reflect their operating environment.

2.7 The Standard describes *evidence requirements* which indicate the type of objective evidence that an auditor/examiner would expect to find to demonstrate that a criterion is being addressed. The extent of evidence provided should be commensurate with the issue being managed and the strategy being used. (Natural Resources Commission, 2005)



- 2.8 The Standard is applicable to any Australian University that wishes to:
 - 2.8.1 Develop and implement Learning and Development strategies in an efficient, effective and economic manner
 - 2.8.2 Address consistency and comparability with other Universities
 - 2.8.3 Assure itself that it is using quality processes
 - 2.8.4 Demonstrate such conformance to others, or
 - 2.8.5 Make a self-assessment of conformance with the Standard.
- 2.9 The structure of a Standard relies on the following framework (Victorian Auditor-General, 2008; Auditor-General of Queensland, 2007; and HEFCE, 2005):
 - 2.9.1 **Inputs:** the human, physical and financial resources used and the time required to produce the outputs. Inputs are what the process or activity uses.
 - 2.9.2 **Processes:** the activities that generate the products and services that constitute the outputs; the actions or processes applied to convert resources into a product or service.
 - 2.9.3 **Outputs:** the deliverables – goods and services – produced to achieve the outcomes being sought.
 - 2.9.4 **Outcomes:** the results or consequences of the actions or outputs. Outcomes may be short, intermediate or long term.
 - 2.9.5 **Risks:** “...the possibility of something happening that impacts on organisational objectives” (AS/NZS 4360:2004)

For each proposed standard we have, or will be undertaking, an initial 'Internal Consistency' check to identify that:

- a. each Outcome is supported by an Output
- b. each Output has a supporting Process or Input (or both)
- c. Inputs and processes are linked to Outputs.



3 Objectives of this Standard

Strategic Objectives

- (i) To ensure that University performance (efficiency, effectiveness and economy) is improved through the learning and development activities
- (ii) To create learning and development programs which support leadership in teaching, world-class research and best practice organisational professionalism and performance (USyd, 2005)
- (iii) To ensure that all learning and development is aligned with the University's strategic objectives (QUT, 2007)
- (iv) To promote, develop and retain excellent staff
- (v) To ensure that essential corporate training is identified, delivered and implemented
- (vi) To ensure that learning and development activities support equity objectives

Operational Objectives

- (vii) To ensure the design and provision of systematic and planned activities to provide staff with the opportunities to learn necessary skills to meet current and future job demands (Werner & DeSimone, 2006)
- (viii) To ensure that staff are adequately trained and developed to enable them to effectively discharge their responsibilities
- (ix) To motivate staff and increase their commitment by providing suitable personal and skill development opportunities
- (x) That staff take their own and others' professional development seriously and are committed to learning and development activities (HEFCE, 2005)
- (xi) To ensure that learning and development resources address identified priority gaps in the University's skill base (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005)
- (xii) To provide adequate and appropriate training facilities on a cost effective basis
- (xiii) To facilitate the provision of a cost-effective range of learning and development initiatives that meet University priorities
- (xiv) To ensure that staff recognise where and how their competencies have been improved by learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)
- (xv) To ensure that staff and managers act on agreed individual learning and development plans (HEFCE, 2005)



- (xvi) To ensure that Managers at different levels recognise the importance of learning and development and support and implement learning and development initiatives (HEFCE, 2005)
- (xvii) To ensure that staff believe the University is committed to their learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)



4 Inputs Criteria

Inputs: the human, physical and financial resources used and the time required to produce the outputs. Inputs are what the process or activity uses.

	Inputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
IP 1	There is a clearly defined accountability (or accountabilities) for learning and development activity (Clardy, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review of organisation chart> Review of HRD policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A single point of accountability or a effective co-ordinating mechanism for multiple accountabilities	
IP 2	The investment in learning and development is appropriate to achieve University objectives (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review budget and expenditure, which should be segmented to identify L&D expenditure.> Identify corporate objectives, and map the linkages to L&D initiatives with associated expenditure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Benchmarked L&D budget against sector (example: 3-5% of salary budget)	



	Inputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
IP 3	There is adequate expertise in learning and development available (either internally or externally) without undue cost or delay (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review L&D program / initiatives demonstrating a future timetable for the implementation or conduct of those initiatives.> Review program of earlier L&D initiatives to identify when they were conducted and by whom.> Review details of unmet L&D demand and ensure competency> Competency profiles for all L&D providers> Accreditation of providers> L&D Product mix and client mix can be delivered in a sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
IP 4	Managers and staff are aware of learning and development processes and opportunities within the University (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Survey of managers and staff> Website> L&D plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Percentage improvement over prior result> Benchmark comparison rate	



	Inputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
IP 5	Learning and development staff possess the capabilities and competencies required to consult, design, develop and deliver appropriate initiatives (eg job re-design) within the University (Werner & DeSimone 2006; ASTD, n.d.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review process for developing and delivering L&D initiatives> Review statements of L&D (internal) staff competencies and capabilities> Review learning and development plans for L&D staff> Review of participant feedback> Potential use of peer review	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University> An appropriate range of specialist competencies identified within the L&D team	



5 Processes Criteria

Processes: the activities that generate the products and services that constitute the outputs; the actions or processes applied to convert resources into a product or service.

	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 1	There is a review of learning and development needs using recognised processes (HEFCE, 2005)	Review the documentation of learning and development needs. > Is it up-to-date? > Who is responsible? > Is it comprehensive? > How is it developed? > L & D needs are identified by category and priorities are assigned.	> A performance standard established by the University	
PR 2	Learning and development activity is mapped to the competencies required by the strategic goals of the university (AUQA, 2002)	> Identify that all L&D outcomes, outputs and processes are linked to the university's strategic and operational goals	> A performance standard established by the University	
PR 3	Learning and development is undertaken using a range of processes (including induction, appraisals, mentoring, formal training, on the job training 360 degree feedback etc) (HEFCE, 2005)	> Sample L&D courses and other initiatives to identify L&D processes engaged. > L & D product offerings are reviewed for breadth and depth.	> A performance standard established by the University	



	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 4	There are learning and development initiatives that support organisational change priorities (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Identify organisational change programs and priorities from a corporate standpoint> Identify L&D initiatives are linked to priority program> Feedback from managers effecting change or usefulness to them> Review product offering to identify L&D products that focus on change management and leading change competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
PR 5	Essential corporate training is conducted (eg bullying, harassment, EEO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review historical and planned L&D programs to identify essential corporate training> A clear compliance program is identified, agreed and conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 6	There are management reports on learning and development activities with particular emphasis on ensuring that learning and development initiatives are delivered in a cost effective, efficient, economic and equitable manner (UTAS, 2004)	Review L&D management reports to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> that they are produced regularly> that they are viewed> that they demonstrate how equitable access is being achieved> how cost effectiveness, efficiency and economy are being measured, and the results of those measurements> how performance is evaluated> Management reports on L & D are sighted, with evidence of analysis and action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
PR 7	A performance self assessment or management review is conducted at least every five years to evaluate L&D effectiveness	Review L&D management reports to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> that they are produced regularly> that they are viewed> how performance is evaluated> outstanding items have been actioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review is to be conducted at least every five years.	



	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 8	There is a process to ensure that Learning and development is informed by the University's Risk Management Plan.	Identify that the Risk Management Plan has been reviewed to consider and develop learning and development needs. > Is there a clear linkage between the L&D plan and the RMP? > Who is responsible for considering the RMP?	> A specific section of the annual L&D plan adequately addresses risk issues.	
PR 9	Course designs specify learning outcomes and learning objectives to be met by the learning and development activity, and the methods by which results will be measured (Dolenko, 1990)	> L&D course program notes identify learning outcomes and objectives, plus a process for measuring results > Curriculum is reviewed on a sample basis to ensure compliance	> A performance standard established by the University	
PR 10	Learning and development initiatives cover appropriate staff categories (HEFCE, 2005)	> Review historical and planned L&D programs to identify target participants and priority participant groups. > Review client mix to ensure that priority areas receive adequate attention	> A performance standard established by the University	



	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 11	Staff newly promoted or appointed to a supervisory role are assessed and then if required attend appropriate supervisory training within a reasonable time frame (Vito, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Gather details of newly appointed supervisors.> Determine if a sample of these appointees has undertaken supervisory training, where a need has been identified, in an appropriate timeframe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Agreed percentage of such staff who attend training within the time allocated.	
PR 12	Newly appointed staff and relevant contractors undertake induction in an appropriate timeframe (Vito, 2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Gather details of newly appointed staff and relevant contractors> Determine if a sample of these appointees has undertaken induction in an appropriate timeframe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Induction completion review against stated target which is A performance standard established by the University.	
PR 13	There are appropriate levels or forms of evaluation of the impact of learning and development initiatives (HEFCE, 2005; Kirkpatrick, 2006).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review a sample of evaluations of L&D initiatives> Annual review of L&D specifically addresses the impact of L&D activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



	Processes Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
PR 14	Appropriate learning and development records are maintained to record internal and external learning and development activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review L&D records to identify the extent and details of recording of internal and external L&D> Review L&D expenditure records to identify that external L&D initiatives are being recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review is conducted and action arises	
PR 15	Costs associated with the delivery of learning and development courses are recorded, reported and controlled against budget (Dolenko, 1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Identify that costs of L&D are recorded, monitored, and reported (and identify those that are not)> Identify who is responsible for this task> Identify that the associated management reports are reviewed, with dated signoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



6 Outputs Criteria

Outputs: the deliverables – goods and services – produced to achieve the outcomes being sought.

	Outputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
OP 1	There is a Learning and Development Plan that reflects business unit priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review the L&D plan > Is it current? > Who is responsible? > Does it indicate which staff categories are encompassed by the policy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > L&D Plan is reviewed on a periodic basis, and updated as necessary, in line with quality assurance objectives. 	
OP 2	There exists a clear profile of staff skills and competencies needed for current and future roles (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review the profile > Is it current? > Who is responsible? > Is it clearly linked to organisational objectives? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The link between workforce planning (identifying future required skills) and L & D programs is observed. 	
OP 3	There exists a program of learning and development initiatives that meets identified University needs (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review the L&D program > How does it identify that it meets University L&D needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The link between University training needs and L & D programs is observed. 	



	Outputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
OP 4	There is appropriate reporting of unmet learning and development needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the report of unmet L&D needs> Compare it to the report of L&D needs (in OP4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Report on quantum and management response is identified.	
OP 5	There is a co-ordinated approach to learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the process by which L&D is co-ordinated> Review how external L&D, and L&D conducted by other internal departments, is advised to HR> Identify the points of accountability and evaluate the effectiveness of co-ordinating mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	
OP 6	There is a learning and development plan for early career academic staff and researchers (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the L&D program> It accommodates L&D for early career academic staff and researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	



	Outputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
OP 7	There are plans for maintaining and increasing the professionalism of support staff (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the L&D program> It contains L&D initiatives for addressing support staff professionalism> Review L&D records to identify how support staff are identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	
OP 8	There are individual learning and development plans, when appropriate (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review individual L&D plans> Where are they filed?> Who do they cover?> What do they contain?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	
OP 9	There are strategies for management development (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the strategies for management development> Do the strategies extend beyond training courses?> Are academic as well as all other staff eligible for management development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Management Development is addressed within the L&D product offerings	



	Outputs Criteria	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice	
OP 10	There is expertise in work organisation and job design to support organisational change. (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review statements of L&D staff competencies and capabilities> Feedback from recipients of service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Change effected within required time frame> Change objectives are achieved	
OP 11	There is an appropriate level of expenditure in learning and development to meet identified needs (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Benchmark data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
OP 12	The University's commitment to equity is incorporated in the Learning and Development Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review the L&D policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Equity is incorporated	
OP 13	There is equitable access to learning and development activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review how activity on this criterion is being recorded and achieved> Staff survey addresses equity issues in L & D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Number of complaints from staff regarding lack of equity> A performance standard established by the University	



7 Outcomes

Outcomes: the results or consequences of the actions or outputs. Outcomes may be short, intermediate or long term.

	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 1	Learning and development programs are created which support leadership in teaching, world-class research and best practice organisational professionalism and performance (USyd, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Benchmarking activities > Performance evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Critical programs are equal to, or exceed appropriate benchmarks > Evaluation processes confirm programs are effective (rating >3.5 on a 5 point Likert scale where 1 = ineffective & 5 equals highly effective) 	
OC 2	Performance metrics for learning and development are aligned with strategic goals (AUQA, 2006) and assist in assessing the impact and worth of learning and development initiatives (UTAS, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review the clarity of the linkage between L&D metrics and strategic goals > Review the extent to which the metrics assess effectiveness, efficiency and economy of L&D initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A performance standard established by the University 	
OC 3	The learning and development regime facilitates the promotion, development and retention of excellent staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Staff climate survey > Exit surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > A performance standard established by the University 	



	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 4	Essential corporate training is identified, delivered and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review historical and planned L&D programs to identify essential corporate training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A clear compliance program is identified, agreed and conducted.	
OC 5	Learning and development activities support equity objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review reports of the intended equity and access outcomes with the actual outcomes> Review staff survey results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
OC 6	Systematic and planned activities are designed and provided to provide staff with the opportunities to learn necessary skills to meet current and future job demands (Werner & DeSimone, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Review individual L&D plans> Where are they filed?> Who do they cover?> What do they contain?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
OC 7	Staff are adequately trained and developed to enable them to effectively discharge their responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Staff survey> Sample of managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 8	Staff motivation and commitment is enhanced by the provision of suitable personal and skill development opportunities.	> Staff climate survey	> A performance standard established by the University	
OC 9	Staff take their own and others' professional development seriously and are committed to learning and development activities (HEFCE, 2005)	> Sample of managers and staff > Review of incomplete individual learning and development plans > Sample data used in building L&D program to determine if individual needs have been addressed	> A performance standard established by the University.	
OC 10	University performance (efficiency, effectiveness and economy) is improved through the learning and development activities.	> Benchmarking activities > Performance evaluation	> A performance standard established by the University	



	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 11	Learning and development resources address identified priority gaps in the University's skill base (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Identify that all L&D outcomes, outputs and processes are linked to the university's strategic goals> L&D programs are targetted to University priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Delivery against agreed product mix to a A performance standard established by the University criterion> Delivery against agreed client mix to a A performance standard established by the University criterion	
OC 12	Adequate and appropriate training facilities are provided on a cost effective basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Identify that costs of L&D are recorded, monitored, and reported (and identify those that are not)> Review cost effectiveness of L&D resources> Identify who is responsible for this task> Identify that the associated management reports are reviewed, with dated signoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 13	The provision of a cost-effective range of learning and development initiatives that meet University priorities is facilitated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Identify that costs of L&D are recorded, monitored, and reported (and identify those that are not)> Identify who is responsible for this task> Review cost effectiveness of L&D initiatives> Identify that the associated management reports are reviewed, with dated signoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	
OC 14	Staff recognise where and how their competencies have been improved by learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Sample of staff who have been involved in L&D initiatives to review pre- and post-initiative competencies> Compare those results with those of their managers or supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	
OC 15	Staff and managers act on agreed individual learning and development plans (HEFCE, 2005)	Sample the individual learning plans to identify whether there is timely action	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University.	



	Outcomes	Sources of evidence Where to review the application of the particular criterion	Indicators of success The range of performance which demonstrates good HR practice;	
OC 16	Managers at different levels recognise the importance of learning and development and support and implement learning and development initiatives (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Sample of managers to review performance> Time release for staff to attend L&D> Support for the development of staff is evidenced by the review> Staff climate survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	
OC 17	Staff believe the University is committed to their learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> Staff climate survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">> A performance standard established by the University	



8 Risk Criteria

The use of this Standard assists the University to avoid or effectively manage risks associated with:

- Staff leaving because of inadequate opportunities provided for learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)
- Lack of take-up of learning and development provisions available (HEFCE, 2005)
- Under-resourcing of learning and development (HEFCE, 2005)
- Costs and/or damage to corporate reputation through inadequate provision of essential corporate training.
- Productivity and efficiency losses from high levels of disengagement
- Loss of productivity created by poor leadership and poor management practices
- Poorly focussed learning and development initiatives that are ineffective (HEFCE, 2005)
- Missed opportunities because of lack of appropriate skills or expertise amongst staff (HEFCE, 2005)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Costs and/or damage to corporate reputation > Costs incurred as a consequence of cancellations > Duplication of L&D initiatives > Failure to achieve University equity objectives > Failure to meet objectives of strategic plan and goals of the university > Inability to deliver business outcomes > Inability to evaluate the allocation of L&D resources > Inability to monitor efficiency, effectiveness or economy of L&D initiatives > Inadequate basis for development of future L&D program > Inadequate governance of L&D initiatives > Inadequate skills development > Inappropriate / in accurate / outdated transition of learning content to the client group from L&D staff > Incomplete L&D records > Industrial issues or stress > Ineffective L&D activity > Inefficient allocation and/or application of L&D resources > Insufficient effective L&D activity > Insufficient L&D initiatives > L&D initiatives are poorly or ineffectively focussed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Lack of behavioural change in the workplace > Lack of clarity about which L&D initiatives the University determines priority for resource allocation Lack of co-ordination due to unclear accountability > Lack of supporting evidence for development of L&D plan > Lack of take-up of L&D initiatives > Inability to meet workforce planning / succession planning objectives > Litigation or stress due to supervisors not demonstrating appropriate supervisory behaviours > Loss of productivity, or premature resignations Misallocation of L&D resources > Negative impact on staff morale and the psychological contract > Poor morale > Potential for human resources staff to provide ad hoc advice and guidance for managers and supervisors to identify and meet learning and development needs of staff > Providers treated differently across the University > Reduced information on which to develop or refine L&D plans > Some L&D needs may not be addressed > Uneconomic use of L&D resources > Workplace stress
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9 Date of Application

10 Review Date

11 Contributors

Charles Sturt University
CQ University
Curtin University of Technology
Edith Cowan University
Monash University
University of Melbourne
University of New England
University of the Sunshine Coast
University of Western Australia
Victoria University

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13 Standards Project Definitions

Accountability

A personal obligation, liability, or answerability to others for actions carried out and performance achieved; responsibility (CCH Macquarie Dictionary of Employment and Industrial Relations 1992).

Assessment

To *officially* estimate the value of something (Concise Macquarie).

Assurance

An objective *examination* of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment on risk management, control, or governance processes for the organisation. Examples may include financial, performance, compliance, system security, and due diligence engagements (Institute of Internal Auditors).

Attestation

One type of assurance service in which public accountants (or other professionals) issue a written communication that expresses a conclusion about the reliability of a written assertion of another party. To qualify as an attestation service, the engagement must involve written assertions on some accountability matter (Arens, Best, Shailer, Fielder, & Loebbeche, 2002).

Audit

An official *examination* and verification of records. (Concise Macquarie Dictionary).

A systematic analysis, appraisal, testing and verification of the legality, fidelity and efficiency or feasibility of proposed or completed procedures, operations, transactions, expenditures and the official records of them (CCH Macquarie Dictionary of Employment and Industrial Relations 1992).

Auditing

The accumulation and evaluation of evidence about information to determine and report on the degree of correspondence between the information and established criteria (Arens et al, 2002).



Audit Report

The communication of findings to users (Arens et al, 2002).

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is the formal and structured process of searching for those practices which lead to excellent performance, the observation and exchange of information about them, their adaptation to meet the needs of one's own organisation, and the implementation of the amended practice. (Meade, P. H. 1998, A guide to benchmarking, Dunedin, University of Otago Press.) (AUQA: n.d.)

Capability

Capability is a broader concept than that of competence. Capability embraces competence but is also forward-looking, concerned with the realization of potential. Capability includes but goes beyond the achievement of competence in present day situations to imagining the future and contributing to making it happen. Capability is an integration of knowledge, skills, personal qualities and understanding used appropriately and effectively - not just in familiar and highly focused specialist contexts but in response to new and changing circumstances. (Dolan, n.d.)

Certification

Official recognition that a specified status has been achieved, or that certain privilege(s) may be exercised. The same as licensing (qv). (AUQA: n.d.)

Competency

The specific knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviour applied within an occupation or industry to the standard required in employment. (University of South Australia, n.d.)

The integrated application of knowledge, skills, values, experience, contacts, external knowledge resources and tools to solve a problem, to perform an activity, or to handle a situation. (Sitthisak, Gilbert and Davis, 2007).

Criteria

A standard of judgement; an established rule or principle for testing (Concise Macquarie).



Economic

Expenditure is *economic* if it achieves the desired objective at least cost. (Leibenstein, cited in Craven and McNulty 1994, p.4.)

Effectiveness

A process is effective if its outcomes match the stated goals. Effectiveness is often seen as an aspect of quality (qv). (AUQA: n.d.)

Expenditure is *effective* if it achieves its objectives without taking account of cost. (Leibenstein, cited in Craven and McNulty 1994, p.4.)

Efficient

Efficiency refers to the cost in relation to the outcomes achieved. It is rarely possible to describe it in absolute terms. One process is more efficient than another if it achieves the same outcomes at a lower cost (AUQA: n.d.)

Expenditure is *efficient* if it gives the highest Net Present Value (NPV) when other uses of the funds are considered. (Leibenstein, cited in Craven and McNulty 1994, p.4.)

Equity

Equity refers to: the quality of being fair and just; fairness (Macquarie Dictionary of Employment & IR: 1992). Equity is considered within a context – eg: equal access; equal treatment; equal opportunity; equal pay; equal worth. In the context of developing HR standards for specific activities there is a need to examine each of the proposed standards against equity considerations.

Example: Workforce planning – care must be taken to ensure that the workforce profile selected for a future time period is not based on direct or indirect criteria that might result in gender discrimination.

Evaluation

To ascertain the value or amount of; to appraise carefully. (Concise Macquarie)

The systematic investigation of worth or merit. Criteria must be specified for determining 'worth' or 'merit'. 'Evaluation' is sometimes used as a neutral term. (Adapted from AUQA: n.d.)



Evidence

Proof; grounds for belief; that which tends to prove or disprove something. (Concise Macquarie)

Any information used by the auditor to determine whether the information being audited is stated in accordance with established criteria (Arens et al, 2002).

Evidenced Based

The conscious, explicit and judicious use of the best and current evidence in making decisions. It means integrating experience with the best available external evidence taken from systematic research. Evidence based decision making requires efficient literature-searching skills and the application of rules of evidence and logic in evaluating the research (Sackett, Rosenberg, Muir Gray, Haynes, & Richardson, 1996).

Examination

To inspect or scrutinise carefully; to interrogate; to test the knowledge, reactions or qualifications. (Concise Macquarie)

Human Resource Audit

An audit undertaken of human resource management, or within an aspect of human resource management. (Andrews, 2007)

Human Resource Performance Audit

A performance audit of human resource management, or an aspect of human resource management, to determine its effectiveness, and/or efficiency and/or economy (Andrews, 2007).

Inputs

The human, physical and financial resources used and the time required to produce the outputs. Inputs are what the process or activity uses. (Audit Office of New South Wales, 2000; Local Government Best Value Commission, n.d.)

KPI: key performance indicators

A performance indicator deemed particularly important or significant.



Measure

The act or process of ascertaining the extent, dimensions, quantity etc of something especially by comparison with a standard*; (Concise Macquarie)
In relation to a *standard* this view of the meaning of *measure* would presume the standard has a quantitative dimension.

Management Assurance

A level of assurance provided by Management alone.
Management assurance requires qualified independent validation in order to raise its perceived value to the level of independent assurance (eg audit).

Measurement

The act of measuring. (Concise Macquarie)

Outcome

The results or consequences of the actions or outputs. Outcomes may be short, intermediate, or long term. (The Audit Office of New South Wales, 2000).

Outputs

The deliverables – goods and services – produced to achieve the outcomes being sought. (Queensland Government Treasury, 2003).

Output measures

Demonstrate the contribution made by the output to the achievement of strategic goals and outcomes. Output measures are often:

- Cost: how much does the process or service cost to deliver?
- Time – whether outputs are delivered in a timely manner
- Quality – how good the output is. (Auditor General of Queensland, 2007)

Opinion

Judgement or belief resting on grounds insufficient to express certainty; a formal or professional judgement expressed; a personal view, attitude or estimation. (Concise Macquarie)



Note: Types of opinion: unqualified, qualified, adverse and disclaimer (ie insufficient competent evidence), (Siegal & Shim 2000)

Performance Indicator

A representation - numeric or otherwise - of the state of, or outcomes from, an organisation, or any of its parts or processes.

Performance indicators should be subject to informed interpretation and judgement; for example, by such assessment groups as audit panels. They are sometimes called management indicators, to suggest their purpose rather than their source. Organisational performance measures that have been developed independently tend to be weakly correlated with one another. To avoid this, they should be developed in an integrated fashion, with a common direction. (AUQA, n.d.)

Processes

The activities that generate the products and services that constitute the outputs. The actions or processes applied to convert resources into a product or service. (Department of Finance and Administration, 2000).

Proof

Evidence sufficient to establish a thing is true, or to produce belief in its truth (Concise Macquarie).

Quality

Fitness for purpose, where 'purpose' is to be interpreted broadly, to include mission, goals, objectives, specifications, and so on. This is an inclusive definition, as every organisation or activity has a purpose, even if it is not always precisely stated. Fitness for purpose' means both that an organisation has procedures in place that are appropriate for the specified purposes, and that there is evidence to show that these procedures are in fact achieving the specified purposes.

Some people criticise this definition for ignoring 'fitness of purpose', but this misses the point. Fitness of purpose must be considered at the time that objectives are defined; quality is then a matter of achieving these objectives.

Using this definition, achieving quality in education involves two steps. The first step is for institutions to set objectives that embody what is expected and required by students, employers, legislation and statutes, in addition to responding to broader issues, such as the demands arising from the characteristic nature of academic activity and the rapid development of knowledge. The second step is for the institution to ensure that it attains its objectives. Quality is related to standards if the objectives include explicit specification of levels of attainment. {AUQA, n.d.)



Quality Audit

'Quality audit' is defined as 'a systematic and independent examination to determine whether activities and related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives' (Standards Australia & Standards New Zealand Joint Technical Committee QR/7 1994). This definition has been adopted by AUQA as the foundation of its approach to audit (AUQA, n.d.).

A 'quality audit' must be distinguished from an 'audit' conducted by a qualified auditor operating under a professional audit framework and within the Australian Auditing Standards.

Review

An institution (or any part thereof) may be reviewed for any purpose, and the term 'review' can embrace a checking mechanism, whether it be assessment, audit or accreditation, internal or external, and so on. Care must be taken when using the term to differentiate the activity from a professional audit (AUQA, n.d.).

Risk

Risk is the likelihood that some peril may actually occur to produce a loss, that is, risk is the degree to which an organization is exposed to the loss of its resources.

A risk is defined by the Australia/New Zealand Standard for Risk Management (AS/NZS 4360:2004) as

"...the possibility of something happening that impacts on organisational objectives. It is the chance to either make a gain or a loss. It is measured in terms of likelihood and consequence."

Risk is anything that threatens or limits the ability of a project to achieve its goal, objectives, or the production of project deliverables.

Risk Management

The Australian / New Zealand Risk Management Standard, AS/NZS 4360: defines risk management as: *"the culture, processes and structures that are directed towards the effective management of potential opportunities and adverse effects"*.

Risk management is a process of thinking systematically about all possible undesirable outcomes before they happen and setting up procedures that will avoid them, minimise or cope with their impact.

Risk management involves establishing an appropriate risk management infrastructure and culture, and applying logical and systematic risk management processes to



all stages in the life cycle of any activity, function or operation that includes risk. By minimising losses and maximising gains, risk management enables the University to best meet its organisational objectives.

Self-audit

An oxymoron; the correct term is self-assessment (or self-review or self-evaluation). Audit, by its very nature, cannot be 'self', as it lacks independence.

Self-review

Self-review can be an ongoing process that is built into all activities in a sense of continuous improvement; it might be an ongoing process that leads to a report to the governing body for confirmation or redirection; it might be a long event that leads to major change; it might be a brief event that provides a snapshot for comparison with an earlier snapshot; and so on. (AUQA Audit Manual, Version 3.0, section 2.4.2). May also be called self-evaluation but never self-audit (Andrews, 2007).

Standard

Anything taken by general consent as a basis of comparison; an approved model; a level of quality which is regarded as normal, adequate or acceptable (Concise Macquarie).

A norm or model adopted by general consent as a basis for comparison eg against which to measure individual or organisational achievements or procedures, or as a target to be aimed at (CCH Macquarie Dictionary of Employment and Industrial Relations 1992).

A standard is an agreed specification or other criterion used as a rule, guideline, or definition of a level of performance or achievement. One function of standards is to measure the criteria by which quality may be judged. Although standards are necessary, they are difficult to determine (AUQA, n.d).

The term 'standard' is also often used to refer to:

- Factors for evaluating performance
- Normative characteristics
- Best practice exemplars.

Quality is related to standards if the objectives include explicit specification of levels of attainment. {AUQA, n.d.)



Standards Project for University Human Resources (Aust)

These standards should reflect what we 'would expect to see' at a university human resource function in Australia. (NB: A university or group of universities may also have organisational specific or group HR standards).

Validation

The independent checking of a process. The term is sometimes used to denote the accreditation of a program (as distinct from a whole institution) (AUQA, n.d.).

Value

Estimated or assigned worth (Concise Macquarie).

Value for Money

Auditors and economists (at least in the public sector) consider an activity to be worthwhile if it gives 'value for money'. This means that an activity must be *effective, economic and efficient* (the three Es).

Note:

- a) Expenditure is *effective* if it achieves its objectives without taking account of cost,
- b) Expenditure is *economic* if it achieves the desired objective at least cost, and
- c) Expenditure is *efficient* if it gives the highest Net Present Value (NPV) when other uses of the funds are considered. (Leibenstein, cited in Craven and McNulty 1994, p.4.)
- d) While equity would normally be considered as a sub-set of the specification of effectiveness it may also be useful to explicitly add equity as a criteria for reference. This changes the value-for-money criteria to *effectiveness, efficiency, economy and equity (the four E's)*.

Verify

To prove something to be true by evidence or testimony. (Concise Macquarie)

Verification

The act of verifying. (Concise Macquarie)



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