

Final Report

FORWARD THINKING: LEARNING AND TEACHING PHILOSOPHY IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES

2010

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www.aap.org.au/forwardthinking

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Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
ABOUT THE FORWARD THINKING PROJECT	5
Background	5
<i>Project Team</i>	5
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	5
Project Rationale	6
Project Aims	8
Project Objectives	8
Project Limitations	8
Project Deliverables	9
<i>Reports</i>	9
<i>Data sets</i>	9
<i>Case Studies</i>	9
Project Definitions	11
<i>Notes on the data:</i>	11
PROJECT METHODOLOGY	13
Project Method	13
Project Stages	13
<i>Stage 1: Project Design and Data Appraisal</i>	14
<i>Stage 2: Data Gathering and Initial Analysis</i>	15
<i>Stage 3: Further (secondary) Data Analysis</i>	15
<i>Stage 4: Collecting Information on Innovative Practice and Building Networks</i>	16
<i>Stage 5: Report Writing and Web Page Development</i>	16
Project Evaluation	16
<i>Formative Evaluation</i>	17
<i>Summative Evaluation</i>	17
Project Dissemination	17
FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES	17
Project Findings	17
<i>Institutional</i>	18
<i>Undergraduate Issues</i>	18
<i>Postgraduate Issues</i>	21
<i>Staff Issues</i>	22
Project Outcomes	23
RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE FUNDING SUBMISSIONS	25
Recommendations	25
Future projects	25
REFERENCES	27
GLOSSARY	29
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMS (that participated in the survey)	31
APPENDIX 2: FORWARD THINKING SURVEY QUESTIONS	32
SECTION 1: UNDERGRADUATE	32
<i>Structure of the BA and the Philosophy Major</i>	32
<i>Curriculum trends</i>	32
<i>Developing and Mapping Graduate attributes</i>	32
<i>Trends in class size</i>	32
<i>Online teaching (of internal units)</i>	33
<i>Innovations in teaching</i>	33



<i>Casualisation of teaching</i>	33
<i>Assessment modes</i>	34
<i>Plagiarism</i>	34
<i>Evaluation of teaching and student satisfaction</i>	34
<i>Career choices after graduation</i>	34
<i>General</i>	34
SECTION 2: HONOURS	34
<i>General</i>	35
SECTION 3: POSTGRADUATE	35
<i>Part 1: Coursework degrees</i>	35
<i>Part 2: Research Higher Degrees (Masters by Research and PhD by Research)</i>	35
<i>Postgraduate scholarships</i>	36
<i>Supervision arrangements</i>	36
<i>Progress reviews</i>	36
<i>seminars and conferences</i>	36
<i>Rates of Postgraduate Publication (while still enrolled)</i>	36
<i>Other forms of postgraduate support</i>	37
<i>Postgraduates and casual teaching</i>	37
<i>Student satisfaction</i>	37
<i>Postgraduate destination and career choice after graduation</i>	37
<i>General</i>	38
SECTION 4: STAFF ISSUES	38
<i>Staff workloads</i>	38
<i>Planning for generational change</i>	38
<i>Professional development and performance review</i>	38
<i>General</i>	38
APPENDIX 3: ROUND TABLE PARTICIPANTS	39
APPENDIX 4: LIST OF INSTITUTIONS THAT REPORT PHILOSOPHY UNITS TO DEEWR .	40
APPENDIX 5: LIST OF AUSTRALIAN PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMS included in the AAP	
Benchmarking collection	41



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

'Forward thinking: learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities' was funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd (ALTC) via a Discipline-Based Initiative Grant. The Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) also supported the project.

Phase 1 of this project involved the development of a detailed proposal for the discipline-based investigation itself, and built a suitable research team. Its principal aim was to record the state of tertiary teaching of philosophy in Australia and to provide benchmarking data on philosophy in the following areas: teaching academics, the structure and composition of the philosophy major, and the teaching of philosophy from first year or 'service' units/subjects, through the honours year and into postgraduate study. A further aim of the project was to continue to build networks of those philosophers interested in strategies for enhancing the curriculum and in enhancing their teaching practice.

The project reviewed data from national databases including Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and Graduate Careers Australia (GCA), as well as data collected by the AAP. The project team conducted a survey of philosophy programs through heads of philosophy departments, a review of philosophy program websites, and held round table discussions on teaching philosophy. The project commenced in July 2008 and was concluded in February 2010.

This report provides an overview of the projects' activities, methods, findings and main outcomes.

A key outcome of the project is a centrally-located, accessible database (www.aap.org.au/forwardthinking) which can be used by heads of departments, program conveners and others in the benchmarking and planning of their own programs, as well as by the profession for sharing elements and cases studies of best practice. It provides a picture of learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities at undergraduate, honours, postgraduate and staff levels and identifies the challenges facing the discipline over the next decades. A further outcome of the project has been to extend the network of philosophy academics with an interest in learning and teaching established in phase 1 of the project. The team aims to expand on these newly-established connections through the dissemination of the materials and outcomes of this report.

The project makes the following three recommendations to the AAP.

1. That the AAP tables this report and commits to discussing the report with heads of philosophy programs.
2. That the AAP look into ways to facilitate information sharing on best practice including a stream on philosophical pedagogy at the annual AAP conference and an area for learning and teaching philosophy on the AAP website.
3. That the AAP, using members of the learning and teaching network, establish a working party to review and draw up philosophy-specific graduate attributes, with reference to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA), the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK) philosophy benchmark statement, and other resources.



ABOUT THE FORWARD THINKING PROJECT

Background

'Forward thinking: learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities' was funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd (ALTC) via a Discipline-Based Initiative Grant. The Australasian Association of Philosophy (AAP) also supported the project. Phase 1 of this project involved the development of a detailed proposal for the discipline-based investigation itself, and built a suitable research team.

Project team

The project team was drawn from a number of institutions. Team members have a breadth of teaching experience in a broad range of areas, and brought a range of professional perspectives to the project. Members of the project team have been recognised for excellence in learning and teaching.

Lead Institution: Flinders University

Partner Institutions: Macquarie University; The University of New South Wales; University of Tasmania; Australasian Association of Philosophy

Project team members:

Project Leader: Associate Professor Ian Ravenscroft (Flinders University)
Project Manager: Eliza Goddard (Australasian Association of Philosophy/Flinders University)

Project Members: Professor Ros Diprose (The University of New South Wales); Professor Susan Dodds (University of Tasmania); Dr Jennifer Duke-Yonge (Macquarie University); Dr. Simon Lumsden (The University of New South Wales); Professor Catriona Mackenzie (Macquarie University); Professor Peter Menzies (Macquarie University); Dr Mitch Parsell (Macquarie University)

Acknowledgements

The project team gratefully acknowledges the assistance of heads of philosophy programs, discipline conveners and members of the profession for providing useful feedback about the project in its formative evaluation, and responding to the survey(s) and requests for data in a spirited and frank manner. Specific thanks to Professor Graham Oppy (AAP Council and Monash University) and Associate Professor Nick Smith (Macquarie University) who evaluated the survey prior to distribution to heads of philosophy programs. The project team would also like to thank those who attended the round table discussions held in Sydney and Adelaide and shared strategies and ideas relating to their teaching practices, and to those institutions for hosting the meetings.

We would also like to thank the AAP for permission to access data from the AAP Benchmarking Collection, as well as hosting the project website, and the Australian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) for their permission to access data collected as part of the ALTC/DASSH Bachelor of Arts Scoping Project (Gannaway and Trent 2008).

Further, in advance, we thank those ALTC citation winners who have agreed to be involved in a summative evaluation of the project.



Project rationale

Academic philosophy in Australia continues to carry an international reputation for its excellence, with Australian philosophers being recognised as making a substantial contribution to philosophical debate in a range of key areas. Graduates from Australian philosophy undergraduate programs are recognised as being well-prepared for further academic study internationally, and Australian philosophy PhDs are able to compete effectively for academic positions in many countries and to contribute in substantial ways to cutting-edge research. This project seeks to record the state of tertiary teaching of philosophy in Australia and to provide benchmarking data on philosophy in the following areas: teaching academics; the structure and composition of the philosophy major; and the teaching of philosophy from first year or 'service' units/ subjects, through the honours year and into postgraduate study.

International context

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) views the teaching of philosophy as of vital importance to the promotion of both peace and democracy. The importance of philosophy is enshrined in the founding constitution of UNESCO (UNESCO 2007, p. xii), and in 2006 was reinforced with the release of the *Intersectoral strategy on philosophy (ISP)* by the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO (UNESCO 2006). The ISP promotes three 'key pillars of action' – the sharing of philosophical dialogue on world problems, the teaching of philosophy (to extend where it is already taught and introduce it where it is not) and the popularisation of philosophy (to the wider public).

In 2007, the Social and Human Sciences Sector of UNESCO published *Philosophy: a school of freedom – teaching philosophy and learning to philosophize: status and prospects* (UNESCO 2007). This was based on the results of a worldwide study of philosophy education and includes unprecedented recommendations and proposals on the teaching of philosophy. In 2009 the UNESCO regional high-level meeting of Asian, Pacific and Australasian educators in Manila agreed to support the introduction of philosophical thinking into all levels of schooling, in ways appropriate to the context of each country's culture and capacities (UNESCO 2009).

In 2000, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education in the UK released a subject benchmark statement for philosophy (bachelors degree with honours). This was revised in 2007 (QAA 2007). The statement lists academic standards for philosophy, including a statement of the nature and extent of philosophy teaching; subject knowledge; understanding and skills; teaching, learning and assessment; as well as benchmark standards and levels of achievement.

These international developments provide a context and point of comparison for what is happening locally, an opportunity to think about the way we learn and teach philosophy, and may also lead to a reconsideration of the teaching of philosophy in universities.



The changing learning and teaching environment

Over the past decade there have been substantial changes in the tertiary learning and teaching environment with increased emphasis on the use of a range of electronic technologies in teaching, greater emphasis on generic skills training, and the development of graduate attributes as measures of effective pedagogy. Philosophy has been well placed to argue that its students develop high-level skills in critical thinking, reasoning, understanding of complex concepts and argument, but as a discipline there has been relatively little discussion about how best to teach philosophy at university level (much greater attention has been given to teaching in the discussions about philosophy for children and philosophy in schools).¹ It is important, however, that the teaching claims of philosophy are backed up by good evidence of the standards being attained by students in light of developments in evaluation by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (see DEEWR 2009).

Over that same period there have been significant changes in many philosophy programs. One change has been structural, as philosophy departments have been aggregated with other disciplines into schools, and some have been disaggregated back into departments. Another has been in the proportion of the teaching effort that is devoted to the philosophy major *per se*, as opposed to the teaching of 'service units' as part of courses other than the BA (eg the teaching of ethics units within professional degrees) or in the teaching of units that attract the many students who pursue a little philosophy as part of their BA or other undergraduate course without pursuing a major in philosophy.

Philosophy and employment

In recent years, labour market shifts have revealed an unexpected new interest by employers in the skills of philosophy students. In the UK there are reports that philosophy graduates are able to earn higher salaries because of the perception that their skills in reasoning and the analysis of complex problems, and their ability to adapt reasoning to new information, make them better able to adapt to changing economic, regulatory and fiscal conditions (Shepherd 2007). There are similar reports from Canada (Drolet 2008), the USA and Australia (Gilling 2008). This is independent of emerging evidence that, 10 years after graduation, Australian graduates who have completed a BA degree are able, on average, to earn more than the average university graduate (excluding those who studied dentistry). This issue is being pursued in the current ALTC project, 'Employability of Bachelor of Arts graduates', Harvey, 2009.

A second workforce issue is a bigger challenge to the future of philosophy. Professor Graeme Hugo in *The demographic outlook for Australian universities' academic staff* has commented on the ageing of the higher education workforce, the lack of a cohort of rising research and teaching leaders in the humanities, arts and social sciences, and the impact of this on the ability of university departments to service a growing demand for higher education (Hugo 2008). Hugo cites unpublished data from the Department of Education Science and Training (now DEEWR) which shows that in 2006, amongst those employed in philosophy departments, the proportion of academics aged 50 or older was 47.8 per cent (Hugo 2008, p. 24). This means that for the discipline of philosophy to contribute to Australian government goals for increased participation in higher education by 2020, it will need to move quickly to increase the number of PhD students who secure permanent academic teaching and research positions.

¹ For example, in the activities of those working in Australasia on the area of philosophy for children and community of inquiry. See the Federation of Australasian Philosophy in Schools Association (FAPSA) and those involved in the State-based Associations of FAPSA.



Project aims

This scoping project aims to provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of learning and teaching in the discipline of philosophy in Australian universities, which draws comparisons across the sector and internationally. It is anticipated that this information will be used by heads of departments, program conveners and others in the benchmarking and planning of their own programs, as well as by the profession for sharing elements and cases of best practice. A further aim of the project is to continue to build networks of those philosophers interested in strategies for enhancing the curriculum and in enhancing their teaching practice.

Project objectives

- To provide the ALTC, DASSH, the AAP and philosophy departments with a picture of philosophy at undergraduate, honours, postgraduate and staff level.
- To identify the challenges facing the discipline over the next decades.
- To identify examples of innovative teaching and assessment (best practice) and areas for further investigation (including mechanisms for the distribution of information about best practice within the discipline). The project raises a number of questions: amongst the current practices in the discipline, which can be identified as genuinely excellent? How is excellence in the teaching of philosophy to be measured? What steps can be taken now to develop excellence in future practice?
- To identify some key areas for future planning for the development of learning and teaching in philosophy.

Project limitations

In the development of the project it became increasingly obvious that the different sources of data – DEEWR data, AAP data (self-reports from philosophy departments), and the information provided on the web by universities – were not readily comparable. Where possible we have attempted to provide the data from multiple sources to support the claims made in this report. One area of particular difficulty was the recognition that individual units (subjects) might be coded as philosophy units in reports to DEST/DEEWR, even where there was no philosophy major or department in a given university (for example, Charles Darwin University and Queensland University of Technology). This is related to the fact that in some universities academics trained as philosophers may be employed outside of a philosophy department or faculty of arts. They may, for example, teach business ethics in a commerce faculty, or philosophy of education in an education faculty. It became obvious for these reasons that we would not be able to provide a comprehensive account of either philosophy units taught in Australian universities or of philosophers teaching in Australian universities. Nor does the report cover history and philosophy of science programs. The focus of this report is primarily philosophy taught as part of a program of philosophy study by academics employed in a unit of an academic organisation (eg a philosophy department) that includes a number of academic philosophers.

The project proposal planned to draw comparisons with the Philosophy Department of The University of Auckland. As the project progressed it became clear that obtaining sufficient data for the basis of a comparison would not prove possible.



Project deliverables

The main deliverable of the project is a collection of centrally located accessible data that can be used by heads of department (conveners and others) in the benchmarking and planning of philosophy programs, as well as by the profession for sharing elements and cases of best practice. The collection includes summary reports on key areas, datasets, and case studies of innovative practice. All reports, data and case studies are available on the project website:

www.aap.org.au/forwardthinking. Some information is restricted to the contributors to the project.

Reports

The [reports](#) contain an overview of key areas relevant to learning and teaching philosophy in Australian Universities. They include:

- *Significance of the discipline of philosophy*
- *Philosophy in Australian universities*
- *Undergraduate and honours issues*
- *Postgraduate issues*
- *Staff issues*

These reports present key findings drawn from the data sets.

Data sets

[Data sets](#) collected and used in the presentation of the summary reports are included on the project website. The data is presented as pivot tables and excel spreadsheets. The datasets contain information about students (enrolments, load, completions, course experience and graduate destinations), staff (load, level and age), and curricula (unit offerings).

The individual data sets are:

- student enrolments in philosophy 2001-2004 & 2005-07 (DEEWR)
- student load in philosophy 2001-2004 & 2005-07 (DEEWR & AAP)
- completions in philosophy 2001-07 (DEEWR & AAP)
- postgraduate experience 2002-08 (GCA)
- postgraduate destinations of philosophy students 2002-08 (GCA)
- staff load in philosophy departments (AAP)
- unit profiles (Forward Thinking).

Case studies

The project included a number of [case studies](#) aimed at identifying: (i) key issues in learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities and (ii) innovative approaches to teaching and learning philosophy. We developed two kinds of case studies: round table discussions and a survey of ALTC citation winners from the philosophy discipline.

Round table discussions

Two round table discussions were held in 2009; one at The University of Adelaide with representatives from Flinders University, Murdoch University, The University of Adelaide, The University of Queensland and The University of Western Australia; the other in Sydney with representatives from Macquarie University, University of Notre Dame, the University of New England, The University of New South Wales, The University of Sydney and the University of Wollongong. The participants in the round tables had been identified by their department heads as being particularly innovative in the areas of teaching, evaluation, and/or assessment (for a full list of



participants see Appendix 3).

The principal aim of the round tables was to identify important issues arising in philosophical pedagogy, and also to note innovative responses to those issues. The round table convenors wrote up commentaries on the discussions, drawing out key issues and strategies. The commentaries cover the following areas:

- teaching philosophy to non-BA students
- innovative assessment techniques
- innovative evaluation techniques.

The commentaries are available [here](#).

Originally the project aimed to visit a small number of Australian philosophy programs to identify key issues and innovations in pedagogy. However, the round table idea provided a considerably more effective means of meeting the objectives of the project. The survey responses made clear both the diversity of experience in philosophy programs, and the number of individuals interested in learning and teaching philosophy. Consequently it was more appropriate to arrange round table discussions with individuals from as many programs as possible.

Round tables were proposed from November-December 2009 for Sydney, Adelaide, South Australian, Queensland, and Melbourne institutions – with the Adelaide round table to include institutions from Western Australia and the Melbourne round table to include Victorian and Tasmanian institutions. Unfortunately, the timing proved too difficult for the Melbourne meeting. Also in some cases those nominated could not be present and another individual with an interest in teaching and learning attended in their place. In the case of one program a number of individuals from the program attended the discussion. All those who were invited to the round tables, as well as ALTC citation winners in the discipline, have been invited to submit an abstract in the philosophical pedagogy stream at the annual AAP conference in July 2010, to be hosted by the School of History and Philosophy at The University of New South Wales.

Summary of ALTC citations winners

In 2008 and 2009, eight philosophy academics were recognised for teaching excellence through the award of six ALTC citations. Some of the issues for which individuals were recognised include: promoting reflective, research-based student engagement; facilitating the development of students as critical or ethical thinkers; and inspiring further study in philosophy. In order to share their experience and strategies, a summary of philosophy academics who have received ALTC citations for teaching excellence has been produced and can be found [here](#).



Project definitions

This report relies on terminology from DEEWR. Most notably it uses the term 'unit' to refer to a subject, course or topic. Units are taken by students as both part of a major in philosophy (primarily by students undertaking a BA), as additional units to make up a BA, or by students enrolled in other degrees, such as management, health and education. Units in the last category are sometimes taught as service units, such as business ethics for accounting students, and are not taken by philosophy majors. While modes of delivery of units vary across the sector, a unit of study in philosophy comprises on average three hours of face-to-face study per week (lectures, seminars or tutorials) for a thirteen week session or semester.

The report uses 'course' to refer to a level of award or degree (such as Bachelor, Bachelor with honours, Masters by coursework, Masters by research, Doctorate by research).

The report makes use of the term 'academic program' to refer to the breadth of philosophy units offered by an institution. This will include an integrated sequence of studies at award course levels through to PhD, starting with a major, as well as service teaching units. A program comprises the full suite of philosophy units available at a university and so is normally larger than a major.

The report makes use of the term 'department' to refer to a set of individuals who together make up the academics who deliver a program. These might be referred to as departments, schools or discipline staff. Not all institutions that teach philosophy units offer a program in philosophy nor have an academic organisational unit for philosophy. In a number of institutions philosophy is offered as a unit of study, without possible award course progression, and without a dedicated discipline staff. Some institutions are a hybrid – for example at present Griffith University offers postgraduate research higher degrees without an associated philosophy major (at undergraduate level) or a discipline-specific academic staff grouping.

See the glossary of terms for further information on terms used throughout this report.

Notes on the data:

AAP Benchmarking Collection. The report uses data from the AAP Benchmarking Collection. The AAP collects data from philosophy programs pertaining to their student and staff load and research inputs (grants) and outputs (publications). This data is provided annually by heads of philosophy programs in Australasia. The collection started with 1998 figures and most philosophy programs participate in the annual collection. The data is self-reported by heads and is most useful for comparisons over time. For a list philosophy programs that contribute to the annual collection, see Appendix 5.

DEEWR Data. The report uses data from the DEEWR higher education statistics student collection; the data was prepared by DEEWR for the AAP. DEEWR reports data from all higher education providers that code units to higher education discipline groups – philosophy (091701). Units of study are coded to the classification without regard to the type of Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) responsible for the unit of study being coded.² For a list of institutions that report

² DEEWR gives the following example: *For example, in the one institution, a "mathematics for engineers" unit might be taught by an Engineering AOU and a "pure mathematics" unit by a Science AOU. Both units could be coded to the detailed fields of education 010101 (Mathematics). Were the "mathematics for engineers" unit to be taught by the Science AOU, or the "pure mathematics" unit by the Engineering AOU, both units would still be coded to the detailed fields of education 010101. See, 'Student help file',*



load in philosophy units see Appendix 4.

The report also uses data from Graduate Careers Australia. This data is drawn from a survey of student responses six months after finishing their course. The ACER 2008 Graduates Pathway Survey tracks outcomes five years out, but reports outcomes only to the broad field of education, society and culture (Coates and Edwards 2009).

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEStatistics/Pages/HEStatisticsCollection.aspx>, accessed 15th January 2010.



PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Project method

The project used quantitative and qualitative data drawn from primary sources, including the following sources for existent data:

- DEEWR: specifically requested student data sets
- GCA: Graduate Destinations Survey (GDS), Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), Postgraduate Destinations Survey, and Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire (PREQ)
- AAP: Benchmarking Collection.

The project also drew upon data from a survey for heads of philosophy programs developed by the project team, a survey of unit offerings in handbooks, interviews with coordinators of distance and Open Universities Australia (OUA) programs, as well as round table discussions with participants named in the surveys for further interview.

The project source material also included a review of literature pertaining to higher education curriculum, teaching and academic work in arts, humanities and social sciences, and graduate employment.

Project stages

PHASE 1

Phase 1 of the project developed a detailed plan for a disciplined based investigation of learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities. The team developed a detailed list of issues which the main project would address. The issues were categorised as follows.

- Significance of the discipline
- Australian university philosophy teachers
- Undergraduate learning and teaching
- Postgraduate learning and teaching
- Staff issues
- Research approach
- Research timetable

Funding for phase 1 was provided by the ALTC.

Team Membership

Dr Ian Ravenscroft (Flinders University) Project Leader
Professor Susan Dodds (then at University of Wollongong)
Ms Eliza Goddard (Australasian Association of Philosophy)
Dr Simon Lumsden (The University of New South Wales)
Associate Professor Catriona Mackenzie (Macquarie University)
Professor Peter Menzies (Macquarie University)



PHASE 2

The project collected and analysed data over the life of the project in a staged process. The diverse range of expertise of the group enabled this process. Their areas of expertise are as follows: Simon Lumsden and Ros Diprose – European philosophy, both undergraduate and postgraduate; Catriona Mackenzie and Susan Dodds – staff issues plus general postgraduate issues; Mitch Parsell and Jennifer Duke-Yonge – distance education; Ian Ravenscroft and Peter Menzies – general undergraduate issues; Eliza Goddard – higher education data collections. The project team was divided into smaller groups on various issues through the life of the project, as described below. Each grouping liaised with the project manager and leader at key stages. Groups also shared work with the whole team at key stages and participated in team meetings. The project leader and project manager met for regular project management meetings. A project website on ALTC Exchange was set up in order to facilitate group communication and to share project documentation (the project subsequently used a Google site).

Stage 1: Project design and data appraisal

July-December 2008

The initial stage of the project involved a project planning phase, including overall project design and agreement about key definitions, main project tasks and a timetable for their completion. These were planned against the project plan as submitted to ALTC. This stage was informed by a review of sources of data, including a review of key stakeholders in the area. In addition a broad literature review was conducted.

At an initial whole team meeting in August 2008 the project team was divided into smaller groups to look into these issues: undergraduate, including honours (Simon Lumsden, Peter Menzies and Ian Ravenscroft); postgraduate and staff issues (Catriona Mackenzie, Ros Diprose and Susan Dodds); and distance/open education (Mitch Parsell and Jennifer Duke Yonge). Each team was responsible for putting together the basic data relevant to each issue and drawing up a list of information that would need to be obtained from programs by questionnaire. The project manager liaised with each team, providing an initial appraisal of the data available, assisting with data enquires, locating sources of data, liaising with GCA, DEEWR etc, and assisting with the list of information for questionnaires for heads of programs. The results of each appraisal section were summarised and distributed to the whole team for consideration and comment, and to inform the next, data gathering phase of the project.

In December 2008 the whole team met to discuss and review the results from the information appraisals on each section and to discuss the ways to proceed to collect data. In addition the team reviewed the overall project design, timetable and project tasks and made any requisite adjustments. The project team was split into smaller groupings:

- Survey team: responsible for designing the survey and analysing the results (Ros Diprose, Catriona Mackenzie, Peter Menzies and Ian Ravenscroft)
- Data team: responsible for handbook searches and analysis, distance education, and OUA offerings (Susan Dodds, Eliza Goddard, Jenny Duke-Yonge and Simon Lumsden, Mitch Parsell)
- Web team: responsible for developing project report web pages (Eliza Goddard and Mitch Parsell).



Stage 2: Data gathering and initial analysis

January 2009 – September 2009

In this stage of the project, data and survey teams worked in parallel.

Following an overall review of the data, including data definitions and consistency across the project, the data base team isolated and defined the data collection tasks. Datasets were requested from DEEWR and GCA. Permission to use data from the DASSH project was sought and the data collated. Permission was sought to access data from the AAP Benchmarking Collection; the AAP data was then collated and arranged in pivot tables. A survey of unit handbooks was designed and results were collated in spreadsheets.

The survey team engaged in the overall design of the survey and the development of questions for each section, as well as an initial review of the responses. The survey was designed and the questions drawn up between December 2008 and April 2009. The survey design team and project manager met in April prior to its circulation and conduct a final review of its contents. The draft was also sent to two heads of philosophy departments (Associate Professor Nick Smith and Professor Graham Oppy) for evaluation. Following their comments, the survey was revised. A final draft survey was then circulated to all team members for comment prior to being distributed. In May 2009 the project leader presented the aims and objectives of the project, with specific reference to the survey, at the annual AAP heads of philosophy program's meeting in Melbourne. Ethics approval for the circulation of the survey was sought from the Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee at Flinders University. The committee gave ethical approval for the survey (project number: 4482; approval date 4 May 2009). The survey was distributed to philosophy programs in Australia in June 2009. The survey was modified for distribution to New Zealand philosophy programs (with appropriate ethics approval). The survey was distributed to New Zealand programs in July 2009.

Questions were asked in four parts: undergraduate, honours, postgraduate, and staff. (For a copy of the survey questions, see Appendix 2.) The team invited heads to engage others in completion of sections of the survey – postgraduate coordinators to fill out the section on postgraduate issues, etc. Survey responses were received from 24 philosophy programs. (for a full list of respondents, see Appendix 1.) One response was received from the Department of Philosophy at the University of Otago. An initial analysis of survey data was conducted, most specifically to isolate elements of innovative or best practice.

In September 2009 at least one representative of each team and including the project leader and manager, met to review and to plan out the next stage, including the shape of the final report(s). The team again split into data and survey teams to continue further analyses of the data and survey information already collected (Stage 3). In addition, collection of information pertaining to best practice was planned, including conducting round table discussions and collecting materials on ALTC citation winners and projects (Stage 4). These two stages were run in parallel with one another.

Stage 3: Further (secondary) data analysis

September 2009 – December 2009

Data:

Data tables from DEEWR, DASSH and AAP were analysed and summaries were produced for student load and further characteristics, and staff load and further



characteristics. Data tables from GCA were analysed and summaries produced for graduate and postgraduate course experience and destinations. The handbook data was analysed for information concerning typical units offered by a program, teaching modes, team teaching, and teaching hours. In addition, providers of distance and OUA education, identified in earlier sections, were contacted with a set of questions. A further review of philosophy programs in Australia and program websites was conducted in order to confirm and check data (in addition to collecting information about the major).

Survey:

Results were collated and summarised by members of the survey team, each taking responsibility for a certain section. These were then incorporated into the summary reports on the issues in Stage 5.

Stage 4: Collecting information on innovative practice and building networks

September 2009 – December 2009

A list of individuals to invite to the round table discussions was made on the basis of nomination by heads, either through the survey or by email. Round tables were held in Sydney (primarily organised and led by Simon Lumsden) and in Adelaide (primarily organised and led by Ian Ravenscroft). Issues that arose during the round tables were identified and written up as case studies. Individuals who have received ALTC citations were identified and contacted for a summary of their award, including a biography.

These individuals were then invited to submit an abstract for the teaching philosophy stream at the 2010 AAP Conference.

Stage 5: Report writing and webpage development

January 2010 – February 2010

Results from Stage 3 were written up in series of summary reports with the following headings: Significance of the discipline of philosophy; Philosophy in Australian Universities; Undergraduate and Honours; Postgraduate; and Staff. These were circulated to the team for comment and review. The final report was written and circulated to the team for comment and review. The materials for the case studies sections including ALTC citation winners and summaries of issues from the round tables were collated and formatted for the project webpage. The project web page was developed and all materials, including supporting data sets, summary reports and case studies were included. All are available on the project website:

www.forwardthinking.aap.org.au

All members of the team were involved in writing parts of the summary reports and case studies material. A subset of the project team – Susan Dodds, Eliza Goddard and Ian Ravenscroft drafted the final reports. Eliza Goddard and Mitch Parsell developed the project website.

Project evaluation

The project used formative evaluation processes and in addition summative evaluation of the final report is presently underway.



Formative evaluation

The project team met for planning and evaluation meetings (in December 2008 and September 2009) at which the objectives and tasks of the project were reviewed. Throughout the time of the project, the project manager and project leader met fortnightly.

The project aims, objectives and tasks were sent to the AAP Council in June 2008 and tabled to members of the AAP at the AGM in 2008. The project stages, and their current development, were tabled and discussed at the annual AAP heads of philosophy programs meeting in May 2009. Feedback from these meetings was incorporated into the project.

Prior to its distribution to heads of philosophy programs the survey also received external evaluation from Professor Graham Oppy (Monash University) and Associate Professor Nick Smith (Macquarie University). Their feedback was incorporated into the survey.

Summative evaluation

The project team has requested summative evaluations from those philosophers who have received ALTC citations and who are not members of the Forward Thinking project team.

Project dissemination

The project website will form the main instrument for disseminating the materials and outcomes of the project. The project deliverables are made available via the project website: www.aap.org.au/forwardthinking. An email announcing the availability of the project resources will initially be sent to project contributors and to heads of programs. Information about the website will be released to the broader academic community via the a-phil email list. A few, limited areas of the site will be password protected because the material contained in them was provided by the AAP which has a policy that restricts this material to heads of programs and individual users by request.

The materials and outcomes of the report will be submitted to AAP Council and distributed to heads or conveners of philosophy disciplines. The report will be tabled at the next annual AAP heads of philosophy program meeting in May 2010. The web address for the project will be widely distributed amongst academic philosophers via the email list a-phil.

In addition, findings from the report will be also presented at the AAP Conference July 2010, this will also allow for further building of the learning and teaching networks from phase 1 and phase 2 of the Forward Thinking project.

FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES

Project findings

The findings identified in this final report are drawn from the summary reports (as discussed under project deliverables). For the complete analysis and supporting



charts and tables please refer to these [reports](#).

Institutional

Philosophy in Australia retains an important role within the Bachelor of Arts in Australia, and philosophy is taught in most universities. Philosophy is taught as part of a major program of study within a bachelors degree in 25 universities. This teaching makes up 90 per cent of the teaching of philosophy (and includes teaching to students who do not major in philosophy, as well as service teaching to non-BA students). At another 13 higher education providers, philosophy is taught as a unit of study only (and sometimes intermittently) without a philosophy department or group of academic philosophers. This teaching makes up just over 10 per cent of total philosophy load.

Undergraduate Issues

Students

There has been growth of about 10 per cent in philosophy enrolments in the period since 2000³, but relatively little growth in the number of students completing a philosophy major. The majority of students who enrol in a philosophy unit at undergraduate level only take one or two philosophy units as an undergraduate. Most of these students are enrolled in BA areas of studies (society and culture or creative arts), but a large proportion come from management and commerce, natural and physical sciences, and education and health. Therefore, one important role of philosophy teaching is to ensure that students who enrol in introductory philosophy gain the benefits of philosophical study from that brief encounter. Those students who take a unit at second or third year in philosophy appear to take philosophy to complement another major sequence of study (history, sociology, politics, law, etc). Again, this suggests that there could be benefit in designing philosophy curricula in light of the curricula of related disciplines to make the links between the areas more visible and attractive.

Among students who have enrolled in a pattern of study that indicates a philosophy major⁴ in the period since 2000, a larger proportion of these are enrolled full time than in the broader Australian undergraduate student body, and, while female enrolments in philosophy units significantly outnumber male enrolments, a student who has completed a pattern of study indicating a philosophy major is more likely to be male than female, more likely to be under 29, and more likely to have been born in Australia than the average undergraduate in Australia. There is a small, but significant percentage drawn from Asia, including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and India. Most undergraduate philosophy is taught on an internal basis. Almost half (42 per cent) of external students are enrolled on a part time basis.

Students who have studied philosophy are happy with their study. They rank the quality of their course in the top 15 per cent of disciplines and academic groupings for arts students in the period 2001–2006. Their satisfaction with their generic skill development is ranked above the average for arts students, with notably higher than average responses to the statements “The course sharpened my analytic skills” and “The course developed my problem-solving skills” (Graduate Careers Australia). Philosophy programs typically evaluate teaching performance through formal evaluation by students.

³ The ALTC/DASSH *Scoping the BA* project notes ‘there has been a steady increase in the number of students across the broader Arts programs, there has been a steady decline in the number of students engaged in Bachelor of Arts programs’ (Gannaway and Trent 2008, p. 24).

⁴ DEEWR data reports how many units a student is enrolled in, but it does not tell us if they are doing a major.



By honours level, there is a noticeable drop in the number of students (most departments would have fewer than 10 students enrolled in honours in a given year) and the gender gap (more male honours students than female) increases.

The main sectors of employment for philosophy graduates are the private sector, education, government, self-employment and the non-profit sector. The main employers of philosophy graduates are education; finance, health and community services; wholesale and retail trade; government administration and defence; and accommodation, cafes and restaurants.

The philosophy major

Across Australia philosophy is mostly taught within a bachelor of arts (see Gannaway and Trent 2008) and is taught by a department (or equivalent) of about six to 10 full time teaching and research academics within the broad structure of a philosophy major, plus one or more targeted service units. The three year BA is typically made up of 24 single semester units, and the philosophy major is a more or less structured program of study that comprises approximately one-third of the degree, or eight units. Most philosophy majors require no more than two units at introductory level, but there are two clear trends in upper level philosophy teaching. One is to provide students with maximal choice and no formal study structure, where students complete six-eight units at 200 (intermediate or second year) or 300 (advanced or third year) level to complete their major from a wide range of electives. The other is to structure the program so as to ensure a progression of learning and to require study of a number (often 3-4) of units at 300 or advanced level. In a smaller number of this latter group of philosophy majors are those that include a 'pre-honours' unit at 300 level (eg The University of Sydney).

Honours

At honours level there are again more or less structured programs of advanced study, which includes a thesis component as a major portion of the program (approximately 50 per cent). Over the past two decades a few coursework masters programs have developed, as either 'niche' courses (eg Masters of Bioethics) or as alternative routes to research higher degree study. Numbers of honours philosophy students, summed across the whole country, have remained steady over the period 2001–2007. It is encouraging to note that some programs report increasing numbers of honours students or good flow-on from majors.

Most programs report small numbers of honours students proceeding to postgraduate study. A notable trend is that practically all departments try to channel their honours students into their own postgraduate programs. There is some concern in the discipline that this practice will have an adverse effect on the training of the next generation of academics. A number of programs report difficulties in offering special honours courses given small staff numbers, and one program reports difficulties in offering solid undergraduate training for honours because of ARC-funded teaching buyouts. Where programs discourage good honours students from looking to study for their PhD at another institution, students may be disadvantaged if they are aren't encouraged to seek out their best academic opportunities for supervision at honours and PhD level.

Developments in the philosophy curriculum

Generally speaking, philosophy programs have not been at the forefront of



developments in curriculum design, embedded graduate attributes, or flexible education strategies. However, there are several exceptions to this generalisation in well-established programs involved in teaching philosophy by distance (eg University of New England, Deakin University and Open Universities Australia providers); programs that have developed philosophy-specific graduate attributes (or qualities); and those that have revised curricula in light of technology (eg the teaching of formal logic). An increasing proportion of academics teaching philosophy have engaged in collaborative curriculum development (eg the team of philosophers at Macquarie University that received ALTC citations in 2008). An increasing number of programs have changed their assessment regimes to include a much wider array of assessment mechanisms beyond the previous domination of seminar paper, essay and essay-based exam.

Assessment and plagiarism

Over the last decade there has been considerable interest in the development of assessment methods in the discipline of philosophy. Only 20 per cent of programs report making no changes to their approach to assessment. The most common areas of change were the introduction of online assessment, the re-introduction of examinations, and reliance on shorter forms of assessment. Two issues appear to be driving the development of new approaches to assessment. First, with the increase of staff-student ratios, many programs are looking for ways to achieve good learning outcomes more efficiently; in particular, they are seeking methods of both summative and formative assessment that are time-efficient. This is clearly a significant part of the rationale behind the increased use of shorter assignments, and is part of the explanation for the increased reliance on online quizzes, which can, in some cases, be graded by computer.

The second issue driving the development of assessment concerns plagiarism. The return to examinations is very often motivated by the need for a form of assessment which is largely secure against plagiarism. Intriguingly, nearly three quarters of programs report relying on examinations to provide a form of assessment in which plagiarism is very difficult. In addition, a clear majority of programs report using specialist plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin, or simply using Google to catch offenders.

Online teaching

Only one out of 24 programs responding to the program survey made no use of electronic resources in teaching. Almost all programs reported using some form of electronic resources, including using discussion boards or email to communicate with students; making audio recordings of lectures available online; using online quizzes; and using electronic submission of assignments. Around half the programs reported that e-resources improved students' access to teaching materials and improved communication with and between students. However, significant numbers of programs reported that the use of e-resources reduced class attendance and in-class interactions. Several also reported that reliance on e-resources encourages poor study habits. A common complaint was that, overall, the new technologies were less time-efficient than traditional teaching methods. Technical problems were also widely reported.

Broadly speaking, there appear to be two opposed positions on e-resources. On the one hand, many staff expressed strong positive attitudes towards the use of e-resources to support learning and teaching philosophy at university. On the other, a considerable number of staff expressed strong negative attitudes towards the use of e-resources, because students may come to view the downloading of online



material to be an easy alternative to attending lectures and actively engaging in tutorial discussion. One academic went as far as to describe the use of e-resources as "an educational cane toad".

Clearly further research on the advantages and disadvantages of the use of online teaching tools is required. It may be that such tools are useful in some teaching areas of the discipline (for example logic and critical reasoning) but of less value in others (for example ethics). It is also possible that important distinctions can be made amongst the wide variety of online resources that are available and their effective deployment in teaching and learning. It may be, for example, that the use of email and discussion boards fosters communication with and between students, but that providing excessively detailed lecture notes online discourages students from independent learning.

A further very striking feature of the project's research in this area was the high level of dissatisfaction with the training provided by universities in the use of online facilities. Only half the respondents reported that the training available in the *construction* of online resources was useful; and only 40 per cent reported that training in the *use* of online resources in teaching was useful. Clearly there is a major issue here which universities need to address.

Postgraduate issues

Coursework higher degrees

About half of Australian philosophy programs offer postgraduate coursework degrees. Masters coursework degrees offered are in Applied Ethics (Australian Catholic University and The Australian National University), Professional Ethics (The University of New South Wales), Psychoanalytic Studies (Deakin), Bioethics (Monash), and Applied Philosophy (The University of Melbourne). Bond University, The University of Adelaide, The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney and the University of New England offer non-specialised masters coursework degrees in philosophy. These postgraduate awards involve one to two years of full time study. They have enjoyed healthy enrolments of between 10 and 25 students. All programs reported that progression from coursework higher degrees to research higher degree is less than 50 per cent. This probably reflects the fact that coursework higher degrees are seen as an end in themselves and are marketed to professionals in these terms.

Research higher degrees (RHD)

RHD (Masters by research and PhD) study in philosophy in Australia generally focuses on thesis research and writing under the supervision of a supervisor or co-supervisor (in a small number of departments, a supervision panel), with only a few philosophy programs requiring any structured (seminar-based) study. The majority of postgraduates are enrolled in the program in which they completed their honours degree. As mentioned above, there is some concern in the discipline that this practice will have an adverse effect on the training of the next generation of academics.

There appears to be a trend towards institutions encouraging academics to undertake formal training as RHD supervisors. In a small number of cases such training is compulsory for all academics engaged in postgraduate supervision, whilst in a few cases new staff are required to undertake formal training before undertaking supervision. More than half of programs place a limit on the number of RHD students an academic can supervise.



Almost all programs surveyed run regular research seminars specifically for their postgraduates, and about one third indicated that they have hosted local or national postgraduate conferences. The programs that run regular postgraduate research seminar and/or conferences also tend to have specific measures in place to encourage and/or train postgraduates to publish during their candidature. Students in most programs are eligible for funds to attend national or international conferences. Most programs provide shared office space and computer access, and students can typically apply for funding to support their basic research needs (usually around \$600 per year). In addition, most programs aim to offer part-time teaching opportunities where possible. In a minority of programs, formal career mentoring is available for RHD students. All programs have in place formal reviews of RHD student progress, usually annually but occasionally biannually. A small number of programs attempt to track RHD student satisfaction.

There is considerable variation in the number of Australian Postgraduate Research Award (APRA) recipients in programs, ranging from zero to fifteen. Some programs report declining APRA success; others report improved APRA success. There is no obvious trend.

Postgraduate student profile

Data on student load from DEEWR shows a significant increase in enrolments at postgraduate level in philosophy – increasing 26 per cent from 2001 to 2008. Of those enrolled in postgraduate courses, the majority are domestic students, enrolled on an internal basis. Student load in research higher degrees makes up almost two thirds of all enrolments in postgraduate degrees in philosophy, with an overwhelming majority of students from the field of education of society and culture. Most philosophy PhD students are enrolled on a full time basis. In contrast, more than half of the Masters by coursework students are enrolled on a part-time basis. Less than a third of students enrolled in a philosophy PhD are women. In contrast, more than half of the students enrolled in a Masters by coursework course are women.

Results from the Postgraduate Course Experience Questionnaire concerning generic skills and overall satisfaction for 2002-08 shows that philosophy postgraduates rate their training highly – an overwhelming majority responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that:

- their research further developed their problem solving skills
- their research helped them develop their ideas and present them in written work
- their research sharpened their analytic skills
- they felt confident about tackling unfamiliar problems
- doing their research helped their ability to plan their own work
- they were satisfied with the quality of the research higher degree experience (GCA).

Nearly one third of recent philosophy postgraduates who responded to the post-completion activities in 2008 were in higher education as an industry of employment.

Staff Issues

Staff profile

Staff load for full time and fractional full time teaching and research staff in philosophy departments, summed across the whole country, has remained stable from 2001-07 (AAP). In 2007, almost 80 per cent of staff were at Levels B, C or D,



with 10 per cent at Level A and almost 10 per cent at Level E. Above Level A nearly all academics in philosophy have a PhD and publish papers in philosophy. In 2007, female staff made up 26 per cent of all full time and fractional (FFT) Teaching and Research staff in philosophy departments. The percentage female FFT teaching and research staff load decreases by level of seniority, just 16 per cent of staff at Level C and above in 2007 were women. These figures are below those for the university sector, wherein women academics comprised 40 per cent of all academic staff in 2005, and the percentage at Level C and above was 26 per cent (Universities Australia, 2007).

In 2006 the proportion of philosophy staff aged 50 and over was 48 per cent (Hugo 2008, p. 26). According to the survey responses about a third of programs appear to have already undergone, or are undergoing, significant generational change and renewal. Of the remainder, most are despairing of being able to replace retiring staff, although a few are more optimistic about being able to do so.

Workload

Every department has a workload formula. Most seem to be determined by the school or faculty. There is a very wide variation in how workloads are calculated. Most seem to use a points model, but some use a face-to-face contact hours model or number of students model. The points models seem better able to take into account research and administration. There is a very wide variation in contact hours (face-to-face teaching), ranging from a low of four to a high of 12 hours. Most seem to be in the range of six-eight hours. Half of the departments report that all staff are expected to carry out the same teaching workloads, regardless of level or research performance. The other half seem to have workload reduction schemes in place for staff who are very active researchers or carry a heavy administrative load.

Teaching/research nexus

Philosophy, unlike some other subjects, requires a high association between teaching and research – in order to teach well, an academic needs to be an active researcher with detailed knowledge of the debates in the area. In part, teaching philosophy requires doing philosophy in the classroom and not simply explaining how to understand previous research. Students don't just *learn about* philosophy, they *philosophise*. Students who become enthusiastic and pursue philosophy in a major and into honours are most often inspired by the teaching of active researchers. There is evidence that those programs that are research-active have larger numbers of students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Some smaller programs with fewer active researchers may find difficulty sustaining upper level and research postgraduate enrolments.

Project outcomes

The project has produced a centrally located accessible database which can be used by heads and conveners in benchmarking and planning for their program.

It has provided a picture of learning and teaching philosophy in Australian universities at undergraduate, honours, postgraduate and staff level which has identified the challenges facing the discipline over the next decades.

We also have the beginnings of a database of innovative teaching and assessment techniques, as well as teaching strategies, for the sharing of best practice and further investigation. The Project team hopes to build on this database in the near



future. Mechanisms for the distribution of information about best practice within the discipline will be explored.

We have also extended the smaller network established in phase 1 of the Forward Thinking project to nominated individuals, some of whom attended the round table discussions. The team aims to expand on these newly established connections through the dissemination of the materials and outcomes of this report. The 2010 AAP conference to be held at The University of New South Wales in July will be an important opportunity for the team to disseminate its findings and further develop networks.



RECOMMENDATIONS & FUTURE FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

Recommendations

The project makes three recommendations to the AAP.

1. That the AAP tables this report and commits to discussing the report with heads of philosophy programs.
2. That the AAP look into ways to facilitate information sharing on best practice, including a stream on philosophical pedagogy annually at the AAP conference and an area for learning and teaching philosophy on the AAP website.
3. That the AAP, using members of the learning and teaching network, establish a working party to review and draw up philosophy-specific graduate attributes, with reference to TEQSA, the QAA philosophy benchmark statement, and other resources.

Future projects

This project recommends three further projects for consideration.

1. Building on teaching and learning networks

The round tables proved very interesting and much interest was expressed in the value of the session and in the possibility of organising similar events, perhaps on an annual basis. Given the project was not able to include all those with an interest in learning and teaching philosophy in this project, we recommend that further work should be done establishing these networks and looking into ways of sharing problems, solutions and best practice. Dissemination mechanisms to be explored could include a dedicated teaching and learning philosophy website; regular national workshops conducted by academics who have led the development of new methods in teaching and learning philosophy; and a teaching and learning 'stream' at the annual national philosophy conference run by the AAP. The aim is to develop a much greater degree of reflection on learning and teaching philosophy.

2. Employability of philosophy graduates

Whilst there is evidence that graduates with philosophical skills are in greater demand, both here and overseas (Cambourne 2008, Drolet 2008, Duffy 2008, Fearn 2009, Gilling 2008, Monaghan 2009 and Shepard 2007), we do not have direct evidence of where philosophy graduates go. A study that explores the areas of employment and the skills respected by employers would be helpful for both the teaching community and the philosophy graduates themselves.

3. Benchmarking philosophy: assessment, academic standards, learning outcomes, and discipline-specific attributes

Given moves in higher education for benchmarking academic courses in terms of quality improvement and standards, further investigation into these areas as they relate to philosophy would be useful. This report goes some way to investigating quality improvement – we can compare the philosophy program in one institution, with that in others. Further areas for investigation are standards and assessment.



4. Teaching philosophy to students with diverse backgrounds

Given the demographic and social make up of philosophy students and moves that will require universities to lift their intake of students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds, further study into ways to increase participation in philosophy units and courses by students from diverse linguistic, culture and social backgrounds is required. This is particularly important given the current reliance on linguistic proficiency for success and progression in the discipline.



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<http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/content.asp?page=/publications/stats/staff.htm>.



GLOSSARY

In most cases the DEEWR definition of a term has been used as the standard. For further information on DEEWR definitions, see 'Student help file' Section 3. <http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Publications/HEStatistics/Pages/HEStatisticsCollection.aspx>.

ACADEMIC ORGANISATIONAL UNIT GROUP

An academic organisational unit group provides a means for standardising academic organisational unit across higher education providers. Academic organisational units are assigned to an academic organisational unit group on the basis of disciplines for which each academic organisational unit has a teaching and/or research responsibility.

ACADEMIC ORGANISATIONAL UNIT

A unit formed by a higher education provider to undertake as their primary objective teaching only, research only or teaching-and-research functions, or which is used for statistical reporting purposes. Such units are referred to by various names, such as 'schools' and 'departments'.

AWARD COURSE

A program of study formally approved/accredited by the higher education provider or any other relevant accreditation authority and which leads to an academic award granted by the higher education provider or which qualifies a student to enter a course at a level higher than a bachelors degree. It includes courses of an equivalent nature undertaken overseas.

COURSE

An award course, non-award course, enabling course, bridging for overseas trained professionals or cross-provider program undertaken at a higher education provider.

DISCIPLINE GROUP

A discipline group is a means of classifying units of study in terms of the subject matter being taught and/or researched in them. For entries see Appendix B - Classification of Higher Education Discipline Groups.

EQUIVALENT FULL-TIME STUDENT LOAD (EFTSL)

One EFTSL is a measure of the study load, for a year, of a student undertaking a course of study on a full time basis.

FIELD OF EDUCATION CLASSIFICATION

A classification of courses, specialisations and units of study, with the same or similar vocational emphasis or principal subject matter of the course, specialisation and unit of study.

MODE OF ATTENDANCE

A classification of the manner in which a student is undertaking a unit of study.

- Internal mode of attendance – a unit of study for which the student is enrolled and which is undertaken through attendance at the higher education provider on a regular basis; or where the student is undertaking a higher degree unit of study for which regular attendance is not required, but attends the higher education provider on an agreed schedule for the purposes of supervision and/or instruction.
- External mode of attendance – a unit of study for which the student is enrolled involving special arrangements whereby lesson materials, assignments, etc are delivered to the student, and any associated attendance at the institution is of an incidental, irregular, special or of a



- voluntary nature.
- Multi-modal mode of attendance – a unit of study is undertaken partially on an internal mode of attendance and partially on an external mode of attendance.

PROGRAM

An integrated course of academic studies. It could include award courses, or programs of study that allow students to qualify to access postgraduate studies – includes the major as well as service units.

SPECIALISATION

The field of education in which a student, who has completed the academic requirements of a course, has specialised. Specialisation is determined by the higher education provider and should take into account major strands undertaken by the student.

TYPE OF ATTENDANCE

Attendance is classified by the higher education provider as being full-time or part-time based on the student load for the student aggregated across all units of study (including work experience in industry units) for all courses being undertaken by the student in the collection year: full-time student load aggregated for all the courses being undertaken by the student in the Collection Year is 0.75 or more. Part-time student load aggregated for all the courses being undertaken by the student in the collection year is less than 0.75.

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OF STUDY

A course of study that leads to the award of a diploma, advanced diploma, associate degree or a bachelor degree (pass, honours or graduate entry).

UNIT OF STUDY

A subject or unit that a person may undertake with a provider or through Open Universities Australia (OUA) that could be undertaken as part of a course of study.



APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMS (that participated in the survey)

- School of Philosophy, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, [Australian Catholic University](#)
- Philosophy Program, School of Cultural Inquiry, The [Australian National University](#)
- Discipline of Philosophy, School of Humanities, The [University of Adelaide](#)
- Discipline of Philosophy, School of Behavioural & Social Sciences & Humanities, [University of Ballarat](#)
- Philosophy, School of Humanities, [Bond University](#)
- Philosophy, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, [Charles Sturt University](#)
- Philosophy, School of International and Political Studies, [Deakin University](#)
- Department of Philosophy, School of Humanities, [Flinders University](#)
- Philosophy, School of Communication, Arts and Critical Inquiry, [La Trobe University](#)
- Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, [Macquarie University](#)
- Philosophy and Bioethics, School of Philosophical, Historical & International Studies, [Monash University](#)
- Philosophy Program, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, [Murdoch University](#)
- Philosophy, School of Philosophy, Anthropology and Social Sciences, The [University of Melbourne](#)
- Philosophy and Religious Studies, School of Humanities and Social Science, The [University of Newcastle](#)
- Philosophy, School of Humanities, [University of New England](#)
- School of History and Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, [University of New South Wales](#)
- School of Philosophy and Theology, [University of Notre Dame](#)
- Philosophy, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, The [University of Queensland](#)
- Philosophy and Cultural Inquiry, Faculty of Life and Social Sciences, [Swinburne University of Technology](#)
- Department of Philosophy, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, The [University of Sydney](#)
- School of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, [University of Tasmania](#)
- Discipline of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, The [University of Western Australia](#)
- University of Western Sydney⁵
- Philosophy Program, School of English Literatures & Philosophy, [University of Wollongong](#)

- Department of Philosophy, [University of Otago](#), New Zealand

⁵ Note, at University of Western Sydney, there is no single major called 'philosophy'. Students can do philosophy in either of two majors: History, Politics and Philosophy; or Religion, Anthropology and Philosophy.



APPENDIX 2: FORWARD THINKING SURVEY QUESTIONS

SECTION 1: UNDERGRADUATE

Structure of the BA and the Philosophy Major

- Q.1 Are students required to complete any specific core units in order to major in Philosophy? YES/NO
If yes, please provide details.
- Q.2 Is there provision for students to count non-Philosophy units toward a Philosophy major? YES/NO
If yes, please provide details.
- Q.3 Does your program teach service units specifically designed for other (non philosophy) programs? YES/NO
If yes, please provide details.
- Q.4 Are units in your program taught (wholly or in part) by staff members from a non-philosophy discipline? YES/NO
- Q.5. Approximately what proportion of units in your program are taught by a team of academics (not including part-time tutors)?
0-20%; 21-40%; 41-60%; 61-80% 81-100%
- Q.6 Does your program teach at more than one campus? YES/NO
If yes, how many?

Curriculum trends

- Q.7 Are there specific areas of Philosophy that were taught in the decade 1991-2000 but are no longer taught or taught in less depth? YES/NO If yes, please give details.
- Q.8 Have any new teaching areas emerged that were not taught, or taught only in passing, in the decade 1991-2000? YES/NO
If yes, please give details.

Developing and Mapping Graduate attributes.

- Q. 9 Have you been integrating the development of graduate attributes into your Philosophy curriculum? YES/NO
If no, please go to question 11.
- Q.10 Have the specified graduate attributes been:
(a) determined by the University,
(b) developed by the Philosophy discipline, or
(c) both?
- Q.11 Are graduate attributes used in unit design (i.e. design of content, assessment methods, teaching methods)? YES/NO
If yes, please give details.
- Q. 12 Are there any particular attributes your program has difficulty embedding in its curriculum? YES/NO
If yes, please give details. If your program has developed a set of discipline-specific graduate attributes, could you please enclose a copy?

Trends in class size

- Q.13 Please indicate any changes in (non-honours) typical class sizes from 2000-2008 (average numbers or range):



	2000	2008
First year lecture		
First year tutorial		
2 nd /3 rd year seminar course (no tuts)		
2 nd /3 rd year lecture		
2 nd /3 rd year tutorial		

Online teaching (of internal units)

Q. 14. Are web-based learning and teaching tools typically used in the internal delivery of first, second, or third year units? YES/NO

If yes, which online tools are typically used (please tick):

	Discussion boards and email	Audio/video lectures	Electronic submission of essays	Online quizzes	Other
1 st year					
2 nd year					
3 rd year					

Q. 15 What are the advantages, if any, of using online teaching resources in your program? Please describe:

Q. 16 What difficulties, if any, has your program encountered in using online teaching resources?

Please describe:

Q. 17 Is there training/support available for staff in the construction of online teaching resources? YES/NO (If no, please go to question 18.)

Q.18 Have most staff in your program availed themselves of the training/support provided? YES/NO

Q.19 Do staff typically find the training/support helpful? YES/NO

Q.20 Is there training/support available for staff in teaching with online resources? YES/NO (If no, please go to question 21.)

Q.21 Have most staff in your program availed themselves of the training/support provided? YES/NO

Q.22 Do staff typically find the training/support helpful? YES/NO

Q. 23 Are there any internal units taught solely online? YES/NO

If yes, please briefly describe.

Innovations in teaching

Q.24 Have there been any innovations in teaching modes in your program? YES/NO

If yes, please describe:

Q.25 Is there a member of staff you could nominate for further interview on the topic of innovations in teaching? Name and contact details:

Casualisation of teaching

Q.26 Where do your casual staff mostly come from?

a) Your program's current postgraduate students; b) Your program's former postgraduate students; c) Postgrads from other Philosophy programs; d) Retired staff; e) Other (please specify)



Q.27 Have you had any difficulties hiring qualified casual staff? YES/NO
If yes, in what areas?

Assessment modes

Q.28 What developments and trends in assessment modes have occurred since 2000?
(For example, online quizzes, re-introduction of exams etc.)

Q.29 Is there a member of staff you would nominate for further interview on the topic of trends in assessment? Name and contact details:

Plagiarism

Q.30 Please indicate which (if any) of the following methods for controlling plagiarism are used by your program.

a) Specialist plagiarism detection software; b) Google; c) Examinations; d) Other (please specify)

Evaluation of teaching and student satisfaction

Q.31 What methods are used to evaluate teaching performance?

a) Peer evaluation; b) Formal student evaluations; c) Other (please specify)

Q. 32 Can you nominate a staff member who uses innovative evaluation procedures or who has exceptional teaching evaluations for interview? Name and contact details:

Career choices after graduation

Q.33 Does your Program, Faculty or University track career choices of students who have majored in Philosophy? YES/NO

If yes, please provide the name and contact details of the person who has access to this information.

General

Q.34 Has there been any major change to your BA degree or to your program in the period 2001-8 that should be taken into account in interpreting the data gathered here? (eg a new BA degree structure, a major Faculty restructuring, excluding staff movements and curriculum trends). YES/NO If yes, please describe:

Q.35 Are there any major changes planned for your BA degree or your program in the next five years (2009-2013)? YES/NO If yes, please describe:

Q. 36 Is your program involved in teaching philosophy to primary or secondary schools? YES/NO If yes, please give brief details.

Q.37 Is there an active student philosophy society at your university? YES/NO

Q.38 Is there anything you would like to add in relation to undergraduate issues that is not covered by the questions above? If so, please add your comments here.

SECTION 2: HONOURS

Q.1 What are the requirements for admission to honours in your program?

Q.2 Is there a mandatory pre-honours unit? YES/NO

If yes, please give details.

Q. 3 Are any components of your honours program compulsory? YES/NO

If yes, please give details.



Q. 4 What are the assessment requirements for an honours student? (How many essays? What is the standard length of essays? Is a thesis required? What is the standard length of the thesis? How are marks for these pieces of work weighted?)

Q.5 Please describe how honours work is examined. For example, how many markers are involved in examining each piece of work? Are examiners external to your institution? Are supervisors permitted to examine honours theses? On average, how many different markers would be involved in examining the work of each honours student?

Q. 6 Does your program provide honours students interested in postgraduate study with information about their options (eg studying at your own institutions, studying elsewhere in New Zealand, studying overseas)? YES/NO

If yes, please describe.

Q.7 On average over the last 5 years, how many of your honours students have gone on to postgraduate study in philosophy each year? Please provide a number.

Of these, please provide approximate percentages that:

- (a) do their postgraduate study in your own program;
- (b) do their postgraduate study elsewhere in New Zealand;
- (c) do their postgraduate study overseas.

General

Q.8 Does your program pursue any specific strategies for raising honours enrolments? YES/NO

If yes, please provide brief details.

Q.9 Is there anything you would like to add in relation to honours teaching and learning that is not covered by the questions above? Is so, please add your comments here.

SECTION 3: POSTGRADUATE

Part 1: Coursework degrees

Q.1 Do you offer courses at postgraduate level that include coursework (eg. Graduate Diploma, Coursework MA)? YES/NO

If yes, please list the course name and provide an indication of the average enrolment (in each course) for the last 3 years (2006-2008 inclusive).

If no, please go to Q.4.

Name of course	Average enrolment (last 3 years)

Q.2 Do these courses provide a mechanism by which non-Philosophy graduates can transfer into a Philosophy research degree? YES/NO

Q.3 What proportion of students completing coursework degrees subsequently enrol in higher research degrees?

Part 2: Research Higher Degrees (Masters by Research and PhD by Research)

Q.4 Which Research Higher Degrees are available in your program (including named degrees in specialist areas)? (For example, PhD in Philosophy, PhD in Cognitive Science etc.)



Please list the course names below.

Postgraduate scholarships

Q.5 Please give approximate numbers of scholarship holders in your program in each of the following categories

Scholarship	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Postgraduate Awards					
University scholarships					
Other (please specify)					

Supervision arrangements

Q.6 What are the typical supervision arrangements for research students in your department (eg. sole supervisor, joint or co-supervision, supervisory panel, cross-disciplinary supervision)?

Q.7 Is there a maximum number of students any primary supervisor is allowed to supervise? YES/NO If yes, please give details.

Q.8 Does your university require supervisors to undergo specific training or accreditation? YES/NO If yes, please give details.

Q.9 Does your program require a certain level of experience or research expertise before assigning supervision? YES/NO If yes, please give details.

Progress reviews

Q.10 Do you have in place a system of postgraduate review? YES/NO

If yes, how frequently are students reviewed (eg. annually)?

Q.11 What processes are in place for dealing with unsatisfactory progress?

Q.12 What processes are in place for reviewing supervision arrangements?

Seminars and conferences

Q.13 Does your program run postgraduate research seminars in which students present their work? YES/NO If no, please go to Q.16.

Q.14. How frequent are your program's postgraduate research seminars?

Q.15 Is a staff member usually present at your program's postgraduate research seminars? YES/NO

Q.16 Do your postgraduate students engage in cross-university research activities, formal or informal, in your region? YES/NO If yes, please describe.

Q.17 Has your program hosted a local or national postgraduate conference or research workshop in the period 2004-8? YES/NO If yes, please give details.

Q.18 What proportion of your postgraduate students presented a paper at a local or national conference in 2008?

Rates of Postgraduate Publication (while still enrolled)

Q.19 How many publications were produced by your postgraduates in 2008 (including co-authored)?

	Book (A1)	Book Chapter (B1)	Journal Article (C1)
2008			

Q.20 What measures does your program employ for encouraging postgraduate publications (eg. workshops)?



Other forms of postgraduate support

Q.21 Does your Program, Faculty or University provide funding support to postgraduates for the purposes of

(a) conference attendance; (b) overseas study or spending a period of time at another institution; (c) other (specify)

Q.22 Office space and computers

(a) Does your program provide (shared) office space for its postgraduate students?

YES/NO

(b) If yes, how many students are there on average per office?

(c) Does each student have their own desk and computer at university? YES/NO

Q.23 Are postgraduates co-located with academic staff in the program precinct or located elsewhere? CO-LOCATED/LOCATED ELSEWHERE

Q.24 Does your program provide formal guidance (eg. workshops) to postgraduate students about academic career planning, eg. preparation of a CV, writing job applications, interview skills? YES/NO

If yes, please give details

Q.25 To what extent do individual supervisors provide informal guidance on career planning?

Q.26 Do supervisors (or the Coordinator of Higher Degree Research) play an active role in seeking out academic career opportunities for their postgraduate students? YES/NO

If yes, please give details.

Postgraduates and casual teaching.

Q.27 Does your program have a policy to provide casual teaching opportunities for postgraduates? YES/NO

Q.28 Does casual teaching interfere with degree progress? (Please tick one)

(a) Rarely

(b) Sometimes

(c) Usually but not to the point of unsatisfactory progress

(d) Often

Q.29 Does your program restrict access to teaching opportunities if students are not progressing? YES/NO

Q.30 How does your program assess the quality of teaching by postgraduates?

Student satisfaction

Q.31 Does your program measure postgraduate student satisfaction at your University?

(a) during their candidature (eg. in the progress review)? YES/NO

(b) upon completion? YES/NO

If you have access to (non-confidential) information about postgraduate student satisfaction, could you provide us with the information or provide contact details of the best person to ask?

Name and contact details:

Q.32 Can you nominate a staff member who has been exceptionally successful as a postgraduate supervisor (eg as measured by postgraduate student evaluations) for interview?

Name and Contact details:

Postgraduate destination and career choice after graduation

Q.33 Does your Program, Faculty or University track the career destinations of Philosophy PhD graduates? If so please provide the contact details of the person most likely to provide us with this information Name and contact details:



General

Q.34 Is there anything you would like to add in relation to postgraduate issues that is not covered by the questions above? Is so, please add your comments here.

SECTION 4: STAFF ISSUES

Staff workloads

Q.1 Do you have a workload formula? YES/NO

If yes, please give brief details.

Q.2 What is the average number of teaching-contact hours per week (excluding supervision)? Include just teaching and research academics.

Q.3 Is there an expectation that all staff have a similar teaching load irrespective of their research output? YES/NO

Planning for generational change

Q.4 What measures, if any, are you taking in your Program to prepare for generational change?

Professional development and performance review

Q.5 Does your University have in place a system of annual performance reviews? YES/NO

Q.6 Does your University make it compulsory for new staff to undertake a generic learning and teaching training program? YES/NO

If yes, please give a brief description.

Q.7 Does your Program, Faculty or University offer teaching and learning training to casual staff? YES/NO

If yes, please provide details.

General

Q.8 Is there anything you would like to add in relation to staff issues that is not covered by the questions above? Is so, please add your comments here.



APPENDIX 3: ROUND TABLE PARTICIPANTS

Sydney – 12 November 2009, University of Sydney

Dr Karen Lai, The University of New South Wales
Dr Sandy Lynch, The University of Notre Dame Australia
Dr David Neil, University of Wollongong
Dr Cynthia Townley, Macquarie University
Associate Professor Adrian Walsh, University of New England
Dr Caroline West, The University of Sydney

The discussion was facilitated by Dr Simon Lumsden (The University of New South Wales, assisted by Jennifer Duke-Yonge and Peter Menzies of Macquarie University)

Adelaide – 26 November 2009, University of Adelaide

Dr Peta Bowden, Murdoch University
Dr Deb Brown, The University of Queensland
Professor Garrett Cullity, The University of Adelaide
Dr Phil Gerrans, The University of Adelaide
Dr Andrew Gleeson, The University of Adelaide
Dr Dominic Hyde, The University of Queensland
Dr Jennie Louise, The University of Adelaide
Dr Georgina Nin Kirkham, The University of Western Australia
Professor Gerard O'Brien, The University of Adelaide
Dr Jon Opie, The University of Adelaide

The discussion was facilitated by Associate Professor Ian Ravenscroft, Flinders University, assisted by Eliza Goddard (AAP/Flinders University)

Thanks to the philosophy programs at The University of Sydney and The University of Adelaide for organising venues.



APPENDIX 4: LIST OF INSTITUTIONS THAT REPORT PHILOSOPHY UNITS TO DEEWR⁶

Australian Catholic University
Bond University
Campion Institute Limited, NSW
Central Queensland University
Charles Darwin University
Charles Sturt University
Deakin University
Edith Cowan University
Flinders University
Griffith University
La Trobe University
Macquarie University
Monash University
Murdoch University
Queensland University of Technology
RMIT University
Southern Cross University
Swinburne University of Technology
Sydney Institute of Business and Technology
The Southern School of Natural Therapies VIC
The University of Adelaide
The University of Melbourne
The University of New South Wales
The University of Newcastle
The University of Notre Dame Australia
The University of Queensland
The University of Sydney
The University of Western Australia
University of Ballarat
University of New England
University of South Australia
University of Tasmania
University of Technology, Sydney
University of Western Sydney
University of Wollongong
Victoria University

⁶ Note, not all institutions report load in philosophy units in all years.



APPENDIX 5: LIST OF AUSTRALIAN PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMS included in the AAP Benchmarking collection

- School of Philosophy, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, [Australian Catholic University](#)
- Philosophy Program, School of Cultural Inquiry, The [Australian National University](#)
- School of Philosophy, Research School of Social Sciences, The [Australian National University \(RSSS\)](#)
- Discipline of Philosophy, School of Humanities, The [University of Adelaide](#)
- Philosophy, School of International and Political Studies, [Deakin University](#)
- Department of Philosophy, School of Humanities, [Flinders University](#)
- Philosophy and Ethics, Arts, Languages and Criminology, [Griffith University](#)
- Philosophy, School of Communication, Arts and Critical Inquiry, [La Trobe University](#)
- Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, [Macquarie University](#)
- Philosophy and Bioethics, School of Philosophical, Historical & International Studies, [Monash University](#)
- Philosophy Program, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, [Murdoch University](#)
- Philosophy, School of Philosophy, Anthropology and Social Sciences, The [University of Melbourne](#)
- Philosophy and Religious Studies, School of Humanities and Social Science, The [University of Newcastle](#)
- Philosophy, School of Humanities, [University of New England](#)
- School of History and Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The [University of New South Wales](#)
- History and Philosophy of Science, School of History and Philosophy, The [University of New South Wales](#)
- Philosophy, School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics, The [University of Queensland](#)
- Philosophy and Cultural Inquiry, Faculty of Life and Social Sciences, [Swinburne University of Technology](#)
- Department of Philosophy, School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, The [University of Sydney](#)
- School of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, [University of Tasmania](#)
- Discipline of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, The [University of Western Australia](#)
- Philosophy Program, School of English Literatures & Philosophy, [University of Wollongong](#)

