



*The Bologna process from the perspective of
higher education research*
CHE, Berlin, December 2010

The perspective from Australia

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A snapshot of the Australian higher education system

- A system of 39 public, comprehensive universities.
- Universities accredit their own courses.
- Strong international reputation for innovation and quality.
- Coordinated international marketing of 'Brand Australia'. Highly successful in international education, with approx. 25% of students from overseas (education is third largest Australian export).
- Major downturn in international student demand for 2011 is cause for concern, with fears of revenue base being eroded.

Government policy attention is presently focused on:

Expansion of participation (40% 25-34yos with Bachelors by 2025)

Social inclusion targets (15% Low SES to increase to 20% by 2020)

Provider and course of study diversification

Articulation and monitoring of standards (creation of TEQSA)

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

Australian universities in Jiao Tong top 500, 2009 and 2010

	2009 RANKING	2010 RANKING
top 50	nil	nil
51-100	ANU (59eq), Melbourne (75), Sydney (94)	ANU (59eq), Melbourne (62,) Sydney (92)
101-150	Queensland, WA	Queensland, WA
151-200	NSW	NSW, Monash
201-300	Adelaide, Macquarie, Monash	Adelaide, Macquarie
301-400	Flinders, Newcastle, Tasmania, Wollongong	Flinders, James Cook, Newcastle, Wollongong
401-500	Curtin UT, James Cook, La Trobe, Swinburne UT	Curtin, La Trobe, Swinburne, Tasmania

The Bachelors/Masters degrees in Australia: the historical relationships

- Australia has had a three-cycle model for some time.
- Bachelors degree has been the traditional professional career entry point, with 3-5 year of study being typical.
- ‘Honours’ an additional year of study in many fields, often research-based.
- Masters degrees the site of diversification and niche marketing (due to deregulated fees), multiple pedagogical purposes:
 1. traditional research Masters, leading to PhD
 2. professional Masters by Coursework (focussed ‘re-training’, career specialisation)
 3. ‘interdisciplinary’ Masters by Coursework (bridging professional fields, introducing candidates to new fields of study relevant to their careers, often undertaken mid-career)

Curriculum reform in Australia in recent years

Intensive phase of undergraduate curriculum reform and renewal is underway. However, not all developments are Bologna inspired and the directions are divergent and market-led:

Examples:

The 'Melbourne Model' is a 3+2 year Bachelors-Masters tandem, with 5 years of study becoming the the pre-professional entry norm.

Other universities are not adjusting their degree cycles and remain focussed on the Bachelors degree and the inclusion of innovative elements, such workplace learning (25% in the case of Victoria Univ.)

Australian engagement with Bologna processes

Australia participated in the first Bologna Policy Forum that took place in April 2009 at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.

An Australian delegation attended the second Bologna Policy Forum held in Vienna during March 2010.

The Bologna Ministerial Advisory Group was established in 2007 as a part of Australia's response to the Bologna Process. BMAG has the objective of assisting both the government and the sector in staying abreast of Bologna developments and anticipating issues for Australia.

The influences of Bologna processes on Australian higher education?

In general, *indirect influence*, no desire or will to fully align.

Bologna is of interest to Australia for multiple reasons, including that it represents a significant internationalisation process and is designed to improve mobility for both students and graduates (around 35000 European students are studying in Australia).

The influences of Bologna processes on Australian higher education?

A major consequence of Australia's interest in the Bologna Process has been the development of an Australian Diploma Supplement, known as the "Australian Higher Education Graduation Statement".

The Graduation Statement will make Australian awards better understood internationally, enhancing the international mobility of graduates from Australian universities. Information is provided on:

- the award
- the university
- the graduate's academic results
- additional course details
- special awards or achievements
- the Australian Higher Education sector

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/proposal_for_a_n_australian_higher_education_graduation.htm

The regional influences of Bologna processes?

SEAMEO-RIHED project to explore the possibilities for 'harmonisation' of higher education among ASEAN nations.

APEC project to develop a possible model for an 'APEC Diploma Supplement'

http://publications.apec.org/publication-detail.php?pub_id=1089

Key issues and questions for Australia

1. What are the future mobility patterns of students from the European higher education area? What are the future mobility patterns of Australian citizens for higher education purposes?
2. Will Australian qualifications continue to be recognised internationally? How does the Australian Qualifications Framework related to international qualifications frameworks?
3. What Asia-Pacific developments should Australia initiate or play a role in? What will be the consequences for Australia of the rise of China as a higher education force?
4. What are the pedagogical effects and outcomes of the three-cycle model? What influence will the OECD AHELO project have on thinking around outcomes and standards?



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