

Plenary sessions

Keynote speaker, Thursday 7 February 2013

Emeritus Professor Alan Robson AM, CitWA, BAgrSc *Melb.*, PhD *W.Aust.*, FTSE, FACE, FACEL, FAIAS, Hackett Professor of Agriculture

Professor Alan Robson recently completed eight years as Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia.

Professor Robson was a Foundation Director of the Board of the Australian Quality Assurance Agency (AQUA) (2000-2003), the Chair of the Biological Science Panel of the Australian Research Council and Deputy Chair Research Grants Committee (1994-1996), and a member of the Committee for the University Teaching and Staff Development (1998-1999), and the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (2000-2004).

He has been Chair of the Group of Eight Universities (2007-2010) and Deputy Chair of Universities Australia (2005-2011); Deputy Chair of the Council of the National Library (1998-2005); a member of the Western Australian Science Council (2003-2009); and the CSIRO Board (2003-2008). He is currently Chair of the Higher Education Standards Panel.



Developing a standards framework for higher education

In this presentation Professor Robson will discuss the development of a new standards framework for higher education with a particular focus on teaching and learning, and enhancing the student experience.

Keynote speaker, Friday 8 February 2013

Professor Herb Marsh, University of Western Sydney and University of Oxford



Professor Herb Marsh holds a joint appointment at the Centre for Positive Psychology and Education at the University of Western Sydney and at Oxford University. He is an “*ISI highly cited researcher*” (<http://isihighlycited.com/>) with 340 publications listed in the World of Science with more than 18,000 citations, and an ISI-H-index = 69, and recently achieved a Google Scholar H-Index of 100. He founded and Directs the SELF Research Centre that has 450 members and satellite centres at leading Universities around the world, and co-edits the SELF monograph series. He coined the phrase substantive-methodological research synergy which underpins his research efforts. His major Research/Scholarly interests include self-concept and motivational constructs; evaluations of teaching effectiveness; developmental psychology, quantitative analysis; value-added and contextual models; sports psychology; the peer review process; gender differences; peer support and anti-bullying.

Student evaluations of university teaching: Recommendations for policy and practice

Students' evaluations of teaching effectiveness (SETs) have been the topic of considerable interest and a great deal of research in universities all over the world. Based on reviews of research by myself and others, SETs are:

- multidimensional;
- reliable and stable;
- primarily a function of the instructor who teaches a course rather than the course that is taught;
- relatively valid against a variety of indicators of effective teaching;
- relatively unaffected by a variety of variables hypothesized as potential biases, such as grading leniency, class size, workload and prior subject interest; and
- demonstrably useful in improving teaching effectiveness when coupled with appropriate consultation.

Although SETs have a solid research base stemming largely from research conducted in the 1980s, it is surprising that research conducted in the last decade has not done more to address critical limitations previously identified and incorporate exciting methodological advances that are relevant to SET research. Perhaps the most damning observation is that most of the emphasis on the use of SETs is for personnel decisions rather than on improving teaching effectiveness. Why do universities continue to collect and disseminate potentially demoralising feedback to academics without more fully implementing programs to improve teaching effectiveness? Why is there not more SET research on how to enhance the usefulness of SETs as part of a program to improve university teaching? Why have there been so few intervention studies in the last decade that address the problems identified in reviews of this research conducted a decade ago? These, and other issues, are addressed in this Public Lecture.

Panel discussion, Friday 8 February

Emerging national standards and their effect on day to day teaching and learning

Three key drivers, the Bradley Report, the new quality approaches of TESQA and the emerging national standards are influencing teaching and learning practice in Australia. These factors suggest that institutions of higher education, both public and private, will need to change how they do things.

But, these drivers seem far removed from the daily work of academics at the 'chalkface'. Will they really change how academics teach? Will academics ignore them? Will they bring any benefits to academics?

This panel session will involve participants at all levels of the academic 'food chain', from national policy makers, through university management and academic development units to practising teachers. They will discuss how universities might respond to the emerging standards agenda by participating in an ABC Q&A style discussion, driven by questions from the audience. What will the future bring?

Conference participants will be encouraged to submit questions in advance, prompted in part by the keynote addresses on Thursday and Friday mornings. Questions will also be invited from the audience.

Facilitator

Associate Professor Rob Phillips, Educational Development Unit, Murdoch University

Panelists

1. Professor Herb Marsh, University of Western Sydney and University of Oxford
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2. Associate Professor Angus Morrison-Saunders, Associate Professor in Environmental Science, Murdoch University

Angus Morrison-Saunders is Associate Professor in Environmental Assessment at Murdoch University, Australia (75%) and Extraordinary Professor in Environmental Sciences and Management at North West University, South Africa (25%). He is also Co-Editor of the journal *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*.

His research focuses on the effectiveness of environmental impact assessment (EIA) and its derivatives such as strategic environmental assessment and sustainability assessment. I am especially interested in follow-up studies of EIA to determine its contribution to sustainability. Other research interests include effective teaching in higher education, sustainable tourism and environmental education.



He has published over 50 journal papers, edited two books, written 17 book chapters and given over 70 presentations at national and international conferences. To source his complete list of publications please go to: http://researchrepository.murdoch.edu.au/view/author/Morrison-Saunders,_Angus.html

3. Professor Sid Nair, Higher Education Development, Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning, University of Western Australia



Sid Nair is Professor of Higher Education Development at the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL). His current role looks at the quality of teaching and learning at UWA.

Dr Nair is a Chemical Engineer by training but his interest in helping students succeed in the applied sciences in higher education led him to further specialise in Science and Technology education. This led him to his many works in improving student life in the higher education system.

His research work lies in the areas of quality in the higher education system, classroom and school environments, and the implementation of improvements from stakeholder feedback. Recent book publications include *Leadership and Management of Quality in Higher Education and Student Feedback: The Cornerstone to an Effective Quality Assurance System in Higher Education and Enhancing Learning*. Upcoming is the book entitled *External Quality Audits: Has it Improved Quality Assurance in Universities?* Currently, Dr. Nair is Editor for the *International Journal of Quality Assurance in Engineering and Technology Education* (IJQAETE) and an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Quality Approaches in Higher Education*.

4. Emeritus Professor Alan Robson, Chair of the Higher Education Standards Panel

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5. Professor Bev Thiele, Pro Vice Chancellor Quality and Standards, Murdoch University

Bev Thiele was responsible for guiding the University through the process of preparing its application to TEQSA for re-registration as an Australian University, one of 10 self-accrediting institutions required to do so in 2012. Professor Thiele's academic career was in teaching and supervision in the areas of women's studies and gender and cultural studies. Her research has been focused on women's social and political issues and in gender and organisational culture. Prior to her present role, she had served as an Academic Chair, a Deputy School Dean, a Director of Postgraduate Research, President of Academic Council, before becoming Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) in mid 2010 – a role she carried through the transition period for the new leadership team. Professor Thiele has recently been appointed to TEQSA's Regulation and Quality Assurance Assessment Reference Group and the recently formed Universities Australia Standing Group on the Australian Qualifications Framework.

