EROS PROJECT
External Referencing of Standards
EROS in summary

**Partners**  RMIT, Curtin University, QUT, and the University of Wollongong

**Aim**  To develop and pilot an end to end collaborative process for external referencing

**Focus**  Assuring student attainment standards in relation to course and unit learning outcomes

**Outcomes**  Practice principles
Piloted and evaluated process, tools and resources
Eros Project Report and refined resources
# EROS Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Supports both the quality enhancement and quality assurance of course and units.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficient</td>
<td>Efficiently enables the external referencing of assessment methods and grading of students’ attainment of learning outcomes across comparable courses of study.</td>
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<td>Transparent and open</td>
<td>Engages multiple perspectives and facilitates critical dialogue between teaching staff across comparable courses to support consensus building around standards of student learning outcomes.</td>
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<td>Capability Building</td>
<td>Contributes to the professional development of participating staff and discipline communities of practice.</td>
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<td>Sustainable</td>
<td>Provides sustainable end-to-end process for external referencing that can be operationalised and used routinely by participating institutions.</td>
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The Project Activities

Design Stage
- Several face-to-face & online meetings of key stakeholders to establish the process informed by research and emerging principles
- Supporting resources and documentation

Implementation Stage
- Memorandum of understanding
- Institutional Stakeholder engagement strategy (Call for EOI)
- “Matchmaking” – triangulation of courses
- Referencing of standards and reporting

Evaluation and Reporting Stage
- Focus groups and time tracking
- Data analysis and reporting
Pilot areas

- business
- education
- nursing
- psychology
- fashion
- engineering
- french
- marketing
Review materials

- Course learning outcomes and curriculum maps
- Selected final year unit, ULOs and assessment tasks (outlines)
- Selected assessment task details (Scaffold: FA/SA/TL activities)
- Grading scheme – Rubric (Shared understanding of assessment standards)
- 3 Samples of student work - de-identified, stratified random samples of a minimal pass, a grade greater than a pass and a fail for selected assessment
EROS Referencing Process

1. A cross-institutional group is formed and staff sign a participant agreement (Triads or Dyads)

2. Reviewers are provided with review materials for selected subjects.

3. The group conducts a preliminary/introductory conversation online (Match).

4. Reviewers each individually undertake their reviews and draft reports which are made available to participants.

5. The group conducts a feedback conversation online around each set of materials reviewed and the draft reports (Missing Data).

6. Reviewers individually complete and send their external referencing reports.

7. Reviewee completes action plan and review report.
Findings

**Strengths**

- A set of practice principles to underpin the work of external referencing

- A collaborative peer review process that provides insights important to the improvement of the quality of courses and student attainment standards

- A process academic staff found compelling, with enhanced practice based development opportunities and the prospect of ongoing cross-institution collaboration.

- A process that was well understood by academic staff through the supporting information and templates

- A scalable and sustainable process model for the tertiary sector
Findings

Strengths

- A report template that captures in one document the external reference comments and recommendations, and the response of the university to the review
- Based on experience, improvements to the methodology, information and templates of the project
- A narrative on the tension between sufficiency of process to meet a legislative standard, and a process that prioritises course improvement
- Costing models based on the processes implemented
- Documentation of the administrative support roles required to reduce the burden of process on academic staff
## Indicative cost – academic

Based on the hourly rate for a mid point Level C appointment at RMIT including on costs at 27%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours for a <strong>Dyad</strong></th>
<th>Academic Hourly Rate#</th>
<th>Cost per Program review</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14.73</td>
<td>$78.99</td>
<td>$1163</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours for a <strong>Triad</strong></th>
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<th>Cost per Program review</th>
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<td>18.5</td>
<td>$78.99</td>
<td>$1461</td>
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<tr>
<th>No of Higher Education programs offered by a university</th>
<th>No of program reviews per year over a 5 year quality review cycle</th>
<th>$ per year if undertaken as a dyad review</th>
<th>$ per year if undertaken as a triad review</th>
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<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>$46,520</td>
<td>$58,440</td>
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<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>$58,150</td>
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<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$116,300</td>
<td>$146,100</td>
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Administrative tasks

- Planning and implementing the annual scheduling of reviews
- PD workshops with academic staff of programs scheduled for external referencing
- Work with partner universities to identify relevant discipline staff
- Ensure reviews are conducted, meet timelines, and recommendations actioned
- Ensure the systematic documentation and storage
- Reports to the university committees
- System implementation, maintenance and support (e.g. ESA Tool)
Acknowledgements

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Participants: Unit coordinators and course leaders from Business, French, Fashion, Psychology, Marketing, Education and Nursing

The EROS Project team acknowledges the important work of the “Assuring Learning and Teaching Standards through Inter-Institutional Peer Review and Moderation” OLT project in providing many of the resources and methodologies drawn on for the EROS pilot project (Krause et al., 2014; Krause et al., 2013). We would also like to acknowledge the work of Mark Freeman (Achievement Matters) and the Go8 QVS project as these projects have influenced our thinking.
Questions

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