

Accreditation and the aims of Undergraduate Education

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Psychology is a Hub Discipline

- While our undergraduate education is primarily aimed at providing sufficient background discipline support for professional training, most students do not go onto further training.
- On the other hand psychology adds to, links with, and can contribute to most other disciplines taught at tertiary level. Our discipline is extraordinarily broad in its influence. This breadth adds to the requirement of training in scientific rigour.
- What does this do for accreditation?

UG education and the Standards

- Generally we accredited undergraduate degrees with a three year sequence in psychology which meets the accreditation standards.
- A four year sequence in psychology.
- Or one of the possible postgraduate degrees.
- To accredit an undergraduate degree we need to deal with the need for rigour on the one hand and breadth in the application of the discipline and generally having more applied material in the UG education on the other poses distinct problems.

Accreditation at the UG level

- How do we achieve a satisfactory undergraduate curriculum which meets the goals of the profession and postgraduate training, and at the same time
 1. can provide students going onto other careers with knowledge of the discipline that they can apply to their work and their personal lives.
 2. Meet accreditation standards
 3. Accommodate the changes to the discipline.

Accreditation at the UG Level

- How do we achieve all these things with rigour and without loss of scientific and critical thought.
- And allowing Schools of Psychology some flexibility in the subject matter they teach.
- And avoiding cartoon and magazine level psychology.

What changes would be needed to the Standards

- NO diminution of requirement of critical and scientific thinking.
- Acceptance of more applied (broadly – Not just clinical)
- More experiential learning required and written into the standards.
- If a capstone experience is required in the standards then what this is and how it is expressed will need much work.
- The same applies to a portfolio, and these objectives would need to pass through the various levels of approval so they became a standard or a guideline relevant to a standard.

The process of change

- It has been suggested that we have guidelines attached to the standards to deal with objectives like the capstone experience.
- Changes to the standards themselves would take time
- Involve significant consultation with stakeholders within and outside the profession
- Would need to be accepted by APAC, accepted by the Psychology Board of Australia, and accepted by the The Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council.

Changes to the Standards

We are at the beginnings of these things but changes are going to occur. How and in what form is important for all of us.



The End

Thank You