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Building a stronger future: balancing professional and liberal education ideals in undergraduate tourism and hospitality education

Final Report 2012

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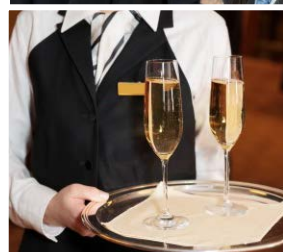
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- Professor Pauline Sheldon, University of Hawaii
- Professor Janet Taylor, Southern Cross University
- Professor John Tribe, University of Surrey

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Executive summary

Overview

Australia has had a range of well-established and internationally recognised tourism, hospitality and events (TH&E) degrees for over 20 years. However, there has been little debate or clarity over what constitutes an undergraduate tourism or hospitality degree, or exactly what such degrees should deliver. The aim of this project was to map the Australian TH&E undergraduate curricula paying particular attention to the balance between professional/vocational education and liberal education. Its purpose was to clarify what constitutes TH&E education in the higher education environment. Whilst the project team recognises the close relationships that some undergraduate programs have with leisure, sports, social science, environment, these programs were not included within the scope of this project.

The project was founded on respect for the diversity of TH&E degree offerings and the independence and autonomy of higher education institutions. It was underpinned by a commitment to establishing collaborative dialogue between industry, higher education providers and the academic community about the future of TH&E education and practice. We therefore seek not to prescribe a TH&E curriculum, but to map the Australian undergraduate curriculum space and to identify strengths and weaknesses and future opportunities. In this way, this project responds to the growing need for a collective vision by setting the groundwork for a collaborative and shared vision as a precursor to the future development of academic standards in the field.

The project used a multi-method data collection framework including a desktop audit of 62 undergraduate TH&E management programs offered at 28 institutions across Australia; 665 student surveys collected at 18 institutions; 128 educators surveys; 13 semi-structured interviews with individuals in higher education management positions; and 71 industry surveys. Despite strong support from the Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF), and the variety of engagement strategies adopted by the study team, industry stakeholders were difficult to engage. Industry is currently under pressure, which may explain the low response rate. However, this only underscores the importance of building strong collaborative dialogue and shared understandings of the potential benefits of greater alignment between industry and higher education. Industry advisory boards provide an important point of connection and could be used effectively in further work around academic standards and graduate attributes.

Four issues papers were produced from this project:

- Issues Paper No. 1 – **Key issues in tourism, hospitality and events curriculum design and development** examined the literature paying particular attention to the balance between liberal and vocational education, and presented a conceptual curriculum space that was subsequently used to frame data collection and analysis.
- Issues Paper No. 2 – **Influences on Australian tourism, hospitality and events education** examined global and local influences on TH&E education and set out implications and opportunities for future curriculum development.
- Issues Paper No. 3 – **A stakeholder approach to curriculum development in tourism, hospitality and events education** articulates the stakeholder approach adopted for this analysis and reports on the data collected from stakeholders with respect to perceived importance and performance of liberal and vocational elements of the undergraduate TH&E curriculum space.
- Issues Paper No. 4 – **Analysis of Australian tourism, hospitality and events education programs** reports on an analysis of 62 undergraduate TH&E management programs currently offered at 28 institutions, mapping these programs to better understand the characteristics of Australian TH&E education.

These Issues Papers and the Final Report, along with other information about the project are available at <http://www.tourismhospitalityeducation.info> and www.olt.gov.au.

Summary of findings

1. **TH&E education in the global higher education space.** Tourism, hospitality and events will continue to be significant components of the Australian services sector and the economy more broadly. Given the increasing mobility of graduates, globalisation and reform processes taking place in higher education across the world, Australian TH&E education must find a new place in a global higher education environment. Undergraduate education programs in TH&E management need to carefully redefine their roles and contributions to society and the economy, particularly given the cyclic nature of growth in the tourism and events sectors and to better position its programs and the contributions of graduates in the future.
2. **Knowledge, skills and ethical professional practice.** All stakeholder groups broadly accept that TH&E education should deliver theoretical and applied knowledge that enables students to develop crafted management skills. However, there is little consensus on the optimum balance between the emphasis on skills and knowledge. The intractable connections and potential contributions of TH&E education to broader societal goals have stimulated calls for a philosophic and reflexive practitioner education that incorporates 'knowing' (theoretical knowledge), 'acting' (technical skills and competencies) and 'being' (ethical professional practice). The conceptual curriculum space developed in this project provides a framework that can be applied at program and sector levels to assist in the planning and development of TH&E curriculum.
3. **Dynamics and flexibility.** There is a range of influences that shape the TH&E curriculum space. The shape and size of an institution's curriculum space is a function of these competing ambitions and priorities which include global-local influences affecting the sector generally; context-specific factors relevant to individual higher education providers; managerial values, ideas and philosophies at play within institutions; and philosophical influences upon curriculum development and design. TH&E curriculum design and development at the institutional level should take into account these influences. The curriculum space for TH&E undergraduate programs will therefore be slightly different for each institution although a number of core elements can be identified.
4. **Homogeneity versus differentiation.** The analysis revealed a high level of homogeneity across TH&E programs and types of institutions. There is opportunity for institutions to consider their positioning and particular strengths (perhaps by examining university mission statements and compact agreements) to distinguish their offerings. The most common unit offerings were: introduction to T&H studies, events management, sustainability of tourism/responsible tourism, introduction to T&H management, T&H service marketing/management, tourism planning, hospitality marketing, tourism/hospitality economics, food & beverage management, and international/global tourism.
5. **Internal barriers to post-disciplinary TH&E studies.** Most TH&E management programs are located within faculties of business and commerce. Budget models adopted in many institutions impede student flows and limit learning experiences across disciplinary boundaries. This sits in contrast to an emerging global consensus that tourism, hospitality and events are both trans-disciplinary and post-disciplinary fields of study. Encouraging inter-disciplinary learning will enhance the development of students with a broader base of skills to fill a range of professional roles. It will also open up graduate opportunities beyond current, narrowly defined industry sectors to a broader range of possibilities.
6. **Accreditation.** There are a number of professional and accrediting bodies with an interest in TH&E, but as yet no consensus about the 'best' accreditation scheme or standard. Given the increasing mobilities of students, educators and graduates, the roles of accreditation bodies and quality standards will become more important in helping students and industry interpret the complex choices available. Further collective discussion about accreditation and its role in securing the future of the field. The significant achievements and role of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and the Tourism & Hospitality Education International Centre of Excellence (THE-ICE) in this dialogue is acknowledged.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Project overview

Despite having a range of well-established and internationally recognised degrees for over 20 years, there has been little debate or clarity in Australia over what constitutes a tourism or hospitality degree, or exactly what such degrees should deliver. The aim of this project was to map the Australian undergraduate TH&E curricula paying particular attention to the balance between professional/vocational education and liberal education. Its purpose was to clarify what constitutes TH&E education in the Australian higher education environment. Whilst the project team recognise the close relationships that some undergraduate TH&E programs have with leisure, sports management, social science and environment, for pragmatic reasons these programs were not included in the scope of this project.

Background and rationale

Australian TH&E education has changed significantly since the first programs were developed in the 1980s and 1990s (see **Issues Paper No. 1**). The number of institutions offering programs in these fields has increased dramatically. Student profiles have also changed significantly. There is more diversity within the student body as a result of different pathways, life experience, ethnicity, location, study mode, aspirations and expectations. Domestic student demand for TH&E programs plateaued while international student intakes have expanded in the last decade. This growth was aided by a skills shortage, with many tourism and hospitality related jobs included on the Australian Government's Skilled Occupation List. However, more recently this international demand has softened, in part due to a strengthening Australian dollar and changes to immigration policy. There has also been strong growth in articulations from post-secondary diploma and certificate courses.

Because there has been no significant downturn (i.e. no crisis in enrolments), TH&E education has perhaps not been as reflective and self-critical as other disciplines. However, issues are emerging, and the difficulty of reconciling them requires strategy and vision. For example, the vocational or professional education requirements of the Australian context need to be considered in the light of liberal, and more recent Bologna-style education models that are gaining momentum across the globe (see **Issues Paper No. 2**). These trends have important impacts upon international competitiveness, market recognition and program positioning. The nature of this convergence between global trends and local imperatives has not been considered in any collective or strategic way by Australian institutions offering TH&E undergraduate degree programs. A structured analysis of these issues will inform and add value to students', teachers', employers' and university managers' decision-making.

Many TH&E degrees were born out of pragmatic and utilitarian Australian traditions that emphasised workforce skills and nation building. Unlike other professional or vocational degrees, such as nursing, town planning or accounting, tourism and hospitality has never been subject to the demands of a single unifying accrediting body. In tourism, alternative accrediting schemes have emerged (e.g. the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNTWO) TEDQUAL, the Tourism & Hospitality Education International Centre of Excellence's (THE-ICE) Quality assurance scheme) but due to a variety of issues, such as cost and the demonstrated market value of such schemes, a broadly accepted scheme has failed to emerge (see **Issues Paper No. 2**). Moreover, business school accreditation schemes are problematic because there are some TH&E programs that are not housed in business schools. Despite these problems, accrediting bodies have an important role to play in defining core curriculum, and in setting standards of knowledge acquisition and skills development. They also play, sometimes inadvertently, an important role in encouraging universities to articulate and focus on core strengths. This in turn fosters clear strategies of differentiation or in some cases, alignment, where universities form partnerships to provide a stronger, 'joined-up' education experience wherein there are strong benefits and greater choice for student learning. Additionally, academic quality standards and, increasingly accreditation, are issues that are of increasing concern (see **Issues Paper No. 3**). This project

gathers important baseline data and provides background to the situation: it is a starting point for further discussions, internally within institutions and among educators across the field.

Aims

The aim of this project was to map the Australian TH&E undergraduate curricula paying particular attention to the balance between professional/vocational education and liberal education. The original project sought to focus on tourism and hospitality education. However, the scope was later broadened to include events given the overlap between tourism, hospitality and events in the curriculum space.

The objectives of the project were to:

1. To understand the dynamics and influences that shape TH&E curricula.
2. To map the Australian TH&E curriculum space.
3. To develop baseline information about Australian TH&E undergraduate education.
4. To explore and document stakeholder interests and values in Australian TH&E education.
5. To inform discussions about the future of Australian TH&E education.

Project context and participants

The project involved collaboration between five partner institutions (Southern Cross University, The University of Queensland, University of South Australia, Victoria University and The Sydney Hotel School).

In order to build a collaborative approach, shared ownership and interest in the project, the project team approached 25 higher education institutions asking for a representative to be nominated who could liaise with the project team. From this approach, 19 institutions identified a 'champion'. Their responsibility was to assist in data collection and communicating project outcomes within their schools/departments. In addition, project team members completed interviews with institutional 'managers' (e.g. deans, chairs of teaching and learning, etc.) thereby raising awareness and establishing a common platform of understanding about the project.

The project team also engaged industry and employers through institutions' industry advisory boards and the inclusion of a Tourism Transport Forum (TTF) representative on the project's reference group. This collaborative network approach to the project assisted in establishing extensive awareness and recognition amongst higher education providers and in some industry circles.

The project also used CAUTHE (the Council of Australasian University Tourism and Hospitality Educators), the peak body representing TH&E educators and its annual conference as a key conduit for project dissemination. Relationships were also built with three international networks: Building Excellence in Sustainable Tourism-Education Network (BEST-EN), the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) and THE-ICE to tap into valuable international thinking and disseminate the findings of this program. The project is richer for this international and national engagement.

Project team

The project was a genuine collaborative effort leveraging specialist and generalist skills within the project team. The roles and responsibilities of project team members are shown Table 1 below:

Table 1: Project Team

Team Member	Key Roles
A/Prof Dianne Dredge <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Project leader and team member: ethics applications; literature reviews; data collection and analysis; dissemination; report writing; liaison with external stakeholders; academic outputs
Dr Pierre Benckendorff <i>University of Queensland</i>	Team member: ethics applications; literature reviews; data collection and analysis of survey data; dissemination; report writing; liaison with external stakeholders; academic outputs
Michele Day <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Team member: literature reviews; data collection; desktop analysis of TH&E programs; dissemination; report writing; academic outputs; liaison with external industry stakeholders
Dr Michael Gross <i>University of South Australia</i>	Team member: literature reviews; ethics applications; data collection; project dissemination; report writing; liaison with external stakeholders; academic outputs; edited book; CAUTHE 2011 liaison
Maree Walo <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Team member: literature reviews; data collection; desktop analysis of TH&E programs; dissemination; report writing; academic outputs; liaison with external industry stakeholders
Paul Weeks <i>The Hotel School Sydney/Southern Cross University</i>	Team member: literature reviews; data collection; desktop analysis of TH&E programs; dissemination; report writing; academic outputs; liaison with external industry stakeholders
Dr Paul Whitelaw <i>Victoria University</i>	Team member: ethics applications; literature reviews; data collection and analysis of survey data; dissemination; report writing; liaison with external stakeholders; academic outputs; liaison with CAUTHE
Karyn Rendall <i>Southern Cross University</i>	Team member: project and research management; project communications (internal and external); management of multi-institutional ethics approvals; website

Reference group

An external reference group of international academics and industry representatives with an established expertise in TH&E curricula and higher education was also appointed. They are:

- Associate Professor Perry Hobson, THE-ICE/Taylor’s University, Malaysia
- Professor Bob McKercher, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- Mr Euan Robertson, Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF in Year 1)
- Ms Adele Labine-Romain (TTF in Year 2)
- Professor Pauline Sheldon, University of Hawaii
- Professor Janet Taylor, Southern Cross University
- Professor John Tribe, University of Surrey

The external evaluator for the project was Professor David Airey, University of Surrey.

Chapter 2 Project approach, outcomes and impacts

Outcomes

Given the limited information about the collective nature of TH&E undergraduate degree programs in Australia, this project sought to establish the groundwork for a national discussion to prepare for the development of academic standards. A total of four issues papers, two refereed journal articles, three conference papers and seven presentations in national and international conferences have been produced to date. Additional outcomes are planned by the project team including a CAUTHE sponsored workshop “Tourism and Hospitality Education Futures” in December 2012. The main outcomes of this project are identified in Table 2.

Table 2: Project Outcomes

Technical reports
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issues Paper No. 1 – Key issues in Australian tourism, hospitality and events curriculum design and development 2. Issues Paper No. 2 – Global and national influences on Australian tourism, hospitality and events curriculum content 3. Issues Paper No. 3 – A stakeholder approach to curriculum development in tourism, hospitality and events education 4. Issues Paper No 4. – An analysis of the tourism, hospitality and events education undergraduate programs 5. Final Report. Building a stronger future: balancing professional and liberal education ideals in tourism and hospitality education
Academic journal papers (to date)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P., Day, M., Gross, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P. & Whitelaw, P. (2012). The philosophic practitioner and the curriculum space, <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>, 39(4): 2154-2176. 2. Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P., Day, M., Gross, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P. & Whitelaw, P. (2013 in press). Drivers of change in tourism, hospitality and event education: an Australian perspective, <i>Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Education</i>, Scheduled for inclusion in issue 2, 2013.
Academic conference papers (refereed)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P., Day, M., Gross, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P. & Whitelaw, P. (2012) Crises, conundrums and curricula: A new golden age for tourism, hospitality and events education? CAUTHE Conference, Melbourne 2012. 2. Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P., Day, M., Gross, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P. & Whitelaw, P. (2011). Conceptualising the perfect blend in the tourism and hospitality curriculum space. CAUTHE 2011, February 8-11 February, Adelaide, Australia. (Best Paper Award) 3. Day, M., Walo, M., Weeks, P., Dredge, D., Benckendorff, P. Gross, M., and Whitelaw, P. (2011). Blending the vocational and the liberal: A snapshot of tourism and hospitality undergraduate degrees at Australian universities. CAUTHE 2011, February 8-11 February, Adelaide, Australia.
Website
Project website http://tourismhospitalityeducation.info
Other presentations
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2012: Plenary Session on Education: The New Golden Age of Tourism and Hospitality, CAUTHE National Conference, Melbourne, 6-8 February 2012 2. 2012. Transformational Leadership in tourism, hospitality and events education in Australia. TEFI Conference, Milan June 28-20. 3. 2011: THE-ICE (Tourism Hospitality Education International Centre of Excellence) International Panel of Experts, Taylor’s University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, November 2011. 4. 2011: Activating change in education at the national level: Australia, Research Plenary at the TEFI World Congress, Philadelphia May 2011. 5. 2010: CAUTHE Project Information Session and invitation to Project Champions, Adelaide, February 2010. 6. 2010: Joint Universities Symposium 17 November 2010, Southern Cross University, Gold Coast “The Future of Tourism and Hospitality Education in Australia” 7. 2009: THE-ICE (Tourism Hospitality Education International Centre of Excellence) International Panel of Experts “Building a stronger future: Developing teaching excellence in tourism and hospitality” The Hotel School, Sydney, October 2009.

Summary of approach and methods

The project adopted a multi-method data collection approach based including the following stages:

Literature review

The project team consulted with the reference group, eminent international scholars in the field, to ascertain the extent of the literature review that was needed, useful themes and key papers, concepts and frameworks. From this initial appreciation of the task, an extensive literature review was undertaken including both international and Australian literature. The literature review was workshopped by the project team and the TH&E curriculum space was conceptualised (see **Issues Paper No. 1**). This literature review and conceptual framework provided the basis for the project's data collection.

The literature review determined key curriculum issues, concerns and values from the perspectives of educators, students, industry and the managers of higher education institutions. The objectives of the literature review were threefold: first, to understand the TH&E curriculum space, particularly the balance between liberal and professional education (see **Issues Paper No. 1**); second, to identify key issues and influences on TH&E program development; and third, to understand the factors that shape stakeholders' perspectives about what TH&E education should be.

Data Collection and Analysis

This stage involved data collection and analysis of the current Australian TH&E education environment in terms of number and type of degrees and content. This was divided into two parts explained in detail in Information Sheet 3¹ and summarised as follows:

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed and administered to measure student, educator and industry perceptions of the curriculum space. The survey was altered slightly to accommodate each of these stakeholder groups. This self-administered questionnaire was developed based on the literature review and consultation with the reference group. The first section of the questionnaire contained a number of demographic questions. The second section included a core set of questions developed from the literature and which focussed in the balance between knowledge and capabilities, graduate attributes, graduate skills and knowledge.

The student surveys were administered at the institutions in which project champions had been identified. Advanced undergraduates, preferably in their second or third year, were targeted. Student questionnaires were completed either in class or online depending on how the champions thought it best to approach the students to maximise the response rate. Eighteen institutions returned a total of 665 student surveys.

Educators were invited to complete the survey online. Participants were recruited by the champions, and by an email invitation sent to CAUTHE members. A total of 128 useable educator surveys were returned.

Industry respondents were recruited by the champions and were invited via email to participate in the online survey. A paper survey was also prepared and distributed at an industry function but only a few surveys were returned from this exercise. Most of the responses came from individuals on industry advisory boards or were affiliated with the higher education providers

¹ www.tourismhospitalityeducation/downloads

participating in the project. A total of 71 industry surveys were received. Further explanation and a breakdown of the data collected are included in **Information Sheet No. 3**.

Desktop audit of TH&E programs

A desktop audit of Australian TH&E undergraduate degree programs was also undertaken in order to better understand aspects such as content, structure and balance between liberal education and vocational skill development. This desktop analysis relied on information available on higher education provider websites, which at times was supplemented by information provided by the institution. Data collection took place between November 2010 and February 2011 but it was noted over the course of the whole project that web pages containing information about programs are dynamic: programs are continually being changed, restructured or even withdrawn.

In all, there were a total of 28 institutions identified offering tourism, hospitality or events degrees during this period (see Table 3). There were 62 separate named degrees (i.e. with tourism, hospitality and/or events in the title of the degree) being offered by these universities with this number increasing to 84 with the inclusion of separate majors within degrees. In all, a total of 1242 individual subjects were identified.

Once tourism and/or hospitality and/or events degrees were identified, detailed information was collected concerning program structure, goals and objectives and subject outlines. Quite often subjects are given creative names, and not always is the name of the subject an accurate reflection of the subject's content. For this reason it was necessary to examine the content of units to get a better understanding of subject content, objectives, and level of skill/knowledge delivery.

The analysis of the data in this report focuses on understanding the depth and breadth of the TH&E curriculum space, particularly in relation to the balance between liberal/social science education and skill/capabilities development. Educational institutions were divided into four clusters: Sandstone Universities (which were established during the colonial period), New Universities (1950-1970), Post-1976 Universities, and TAFE and Private Providers. The reason for examining the curriculum space in each cluster of universities is that, and as discussed in **Issues Paper No. 2**, the historical development of higher education providers reflects not only shifts in higher education policy, but also the aims, objectives and positioning of universities within the Australian higher education landscape. In effect, the location of the curriculum space is likely to be a function of the history, philosophy, resources and aspirations of an educational institution. It is therefore logical that the different clusters would exhibit different curriculum characteristics.

The results of this analysis are contained in **Issues Paper No. 4**.

Table 3: Higher education providers and programs analysed

UNIVERSITY/STATE	PROGRAM
New South Wales	
University of Newcastle	Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Social Science
University of New South Wales	Bachelor of Commerce (Services Marketing – Tourism and Hospitality)
University of Technology, Sydney	Bachelor of Business Bachelor of Management in Tourism Bachelor of Management in Tourism and Hospitality Bachelor of Management in Events and Leisure
University of Western Sydney	Bachelor of Tourism Management Bachelor of Social Science (Heritage and Tourism) Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Hospitality Management)
Macquarie University / International College of Management Sydney	Bachelor of Event Management Bachelor of Hospitality Management Bachelor of International Tourism
Charles Sturt University	Bachelor of Applied Science (Adventure Ecotourism) Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management) <i>Being phased out</i>
Southern Cross University	Bachelor of Business in Tourism Management Bachelor of Business in Hotel and Resort Management Bachelor of Business in Convention and Event Management Bachelor of Business in International Tourism Management Bachelor of Sport Tourism Management Bachelor of Environmental Tourism Management Bachelor of Business in Hotel Management
University of Wollongong	Bachelor of Business Administration (Event Management) Bachelor of Business Administration (Hospitality Management) Bachelor of Business Administration (Tourism Management)
Queensland	
James Cook University	Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Mgt major) Bachelor of Business (Sports and Events major) Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management major)
Bond University	Bachelor of Tourism Management Bachelor of International Hotel and Resort Management
CQ University	Bachelor of Hospitality Management
Griffith University	Bachelor of Business (Tourism and Hospitality Management) Bachelor of Business (Event Management) Bachelor of Business (Hotel Management) Bachelor of Business (International Tourism and Hotel Management) Bachelor of Business (Sustainable Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management) <i>Being phased out</i>
University of the Sunshine Coast	Bachelor of Business (Tourism, Leisure & Events Management)
University of Southern Queensland	Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management)
The University of Queensland	Bachelor of International Hotel and Tourism Management (Event Management major) Bachelor of International Hotel and Tourism Management (Tourism Management major) Bachelor of International Hotel and Tourism Management (Hotel Management major)

South Australia	
Flinders University	Bachelor of International Tourism (Cultural Tourism major) Bachelor of International Tourism (Nature Based Tourism major) Bachelor of International Tourism (Festival & Event Design major)
University of South Australia/ Le Cordon Bleu Australia	Bachelor of Tourism and Event Management Bachelor of Business (International Restaurant Management) Bachelor of Business (International Hotel Management)
Tasmania	
University of Tasmania	Bachelor of Tourism Bachelor of Business Administration (Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business Administration (Hospitality Management)
ACT	
Australian Catholic University	Bachelor of Commerce (Hospitality Management major) Bachelor of Commerce (Tourism Management major)
University of Canberra	Bachelor of Tourism Management
Victoria	
Deakin University	Bachelor of Management (Tourism)
La Trobe University	Bachelor of Business (Tourism and Hospitality) Bachelor of Business (Event Management/Marketing) Bachelor of Business (Event Management) from 2011 Bachelor of Business (Event Management/Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management/Marketing)
Monash	Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Tourism) Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Tourism) Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Sports Promotion & Events Management)
University of Ballarat	Bachelor of Business (Tourism) Bachelor of Management (Tourism) Bachelor of Hospitality (Management)
Victoria University	Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Hospitality Management) Bachelor of Business (International Hospitality Management) Bachelor of Business (Hospitality/Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Event Management) Bachelor of Business (Culinary Management)
Swinburne University	Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management) Bachelor of Business (Tourism and Hospitality Management) plus Adv. Dip. Hospitality
Box Hill Institute of TAFE	Associate Degree in Hospitality Management Bachelor of Hospitality Management
Western Australia	
Curtin University	Bachelor of Commerce (Tourism & Event Major Extended)
Edith Cowan University	Bachelor of Business (Tourism major) Bachelor of Business (Hospitality major) Assoc Deg Hospitality and Tourism Management Bachelor of Hospitality and Tourism Management Bachelor Hospitality Management Bachelor Tourism Management
Murdoch University	Bachelor of Tourism Bachelor of Tourism in Hospitality and Tourism Management Bachelor of Commerce in Hospitality and Tourism Management

Semi-structured interviews with higher education managers

Semi-structured interviews with managers in 13 higher education institutions were also undertaken. Managers were identified based on their role, knowledge and oversight of TH&E academic programs. The mix of respondents included program directors, department or school heads, deans and directors of teaching in learning at the university level. The interviews were conducted using a script with questions and prompts. The focus of the interviews was to explore the various forces that influence the curriculum design process, and the key concerns managers had in thinking about the future. The questions included aspects such as:

- What influence do the interests of educators/students/industry/university managers have on curriculum planning?
- What influence do the interests of educators/students/industry/university managers have on your resources allocation?
- How, if it at all, does Work Integrated Learning feature within your curriculum?
- How are students represented in curriculum design?
- What have been the “environmental” factors that have influenced TH&E higher education in the last 10 years?
- What are the strategic challenges that need to be addressed in the next 10 years in TH&E education?
- What keeps you awake at night when you think of TH&E programs at your institution?

The interviews were conducted over a number of months in late 2011 and early 2012 and most interviews took about 60 minutes. Whilst these interviews provided important insights that informed the development of this project, owing to time constraints this data is not presented in the issues papers but will be the subject of analysis in subsequent publications.

Advantages and limitations of the approach

The research approach described above involved a multi-method data collection process that was both complex in design and delivery. It is one of the most extensive research and data collection exercises examining TH&E education to have been completed in Australia.

Notwithstanding, there are some reflections on the research approach that should be identified:

1. *Project Champions* – The enthusiasm of the project champions and the educators who themselves completed surveys, and who administered surveys to students, was an essential platform for the data collection exercise. The champions have demonstrated ongoing interest and engagement illustrating that the information and results from this project are sought after for both internal and sector wide purposes.
2. *Industry engagement* – There were difficulties engaging industry in this project and the discussion about TH&E education more generally. Various attempts were made to communicate and engage with the industry. Industry advisory board members of various institutions provided the most engaged discussion. The ongoing importance of engaging with industry is highlighted. Industry advisory boards provide an important point of connection and could be used effectively in further work around academic standards and graduate attributes.
3. *Availability of curriculum information* – Information about curriculum and program structure was sometimes difficult to obtain, and was often hidden behind login screens. The desktop analysis represents a 2010-11 snapshot, with some programs already changing their content

and structure in 2012. The curriculum space is dynamic, which adds to the complexity of the research approach. The base line data provides important information for program and institutional planning.

Overview of findings

The extensive literature review and multi-method data collection approach adopted in this study has resulted in the collection of a very large body of data that can be explored from a variety of perspectives and at different scales (e.g. institutional, clusters of institutions and national levels). It is expected that future papers will result from further analysis of this data. For the purposes of this report, and drawing from the literature and data (including the interview data not presented in the technical reports), a number of observations are apparent.

TH&E education in the global higher education space

Australian TH&E education, once a significant growth area in many universities, is finding a new place in a global higher education environment and in the new dynamics of market-led student demand. TH&E will continue to be a significant component of the Australian services sector, the Australian economy and society more broadly. However, graduate opportunities and career trajectories, especially outside the tourism, hospitality and events sectors, are generally not well developed by industry, educators and university managers. While all stakeholder groups tended to recognise the broader potential of TH&E graduates to fill a range of roles outside tourism and hospitality sectors by virtue of their hospitality focus and service ethos, this was often framed as a problem of 'leakage' from the profession rather than a strength and opportunity. Undergraduate education programs need to carefully consider and redefine their roles, missions and contributions to the economy and society, particularly given the cyclic nature of growth in the tourism and events sectors and to better position programs in the context of higher education reforms.

Knowledge, skills and ethical professional practice

It is broadly accepted amongst industry, educators and higher education managers that TH&E undergraduate education should deliver theoretical knowledge and applied skills that develop in students the capacity to engage in an ethical, crafted, creative problem solving management approach. However, the balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skill development remains a point of contention amongst stakeholders. The intractable connections and potential contributions of TH&E education to the achievement of broader societal goals have stimulated growing calls for a philosophic and reflexive practitioner education that incorporates 'knowing' (theoretical knowledge), 'acting' (technical skills and competencies) and 'being' (professional practice).

This project developed a curriculum space framework as a tool to assist in the planning and development of TH&E curriculum. The curriculum space framework is shown in **Figure 1** below and explained in detail in **Issues Paper No. 1**. The research identified a range of pressures that appear to be both constraining this curriculum space and re-orienting it towards a stronger focus on applied skills at the expense of knowledge and a broader conceptualisation of practical wisdom. This has serious and significant implications for hospitality, tourism and events ambition to be accepted as a legitimate field of study worthy of inclusion in the university portfolio and, at the same time, has advantages for emerging private sector undergraduate education providers.

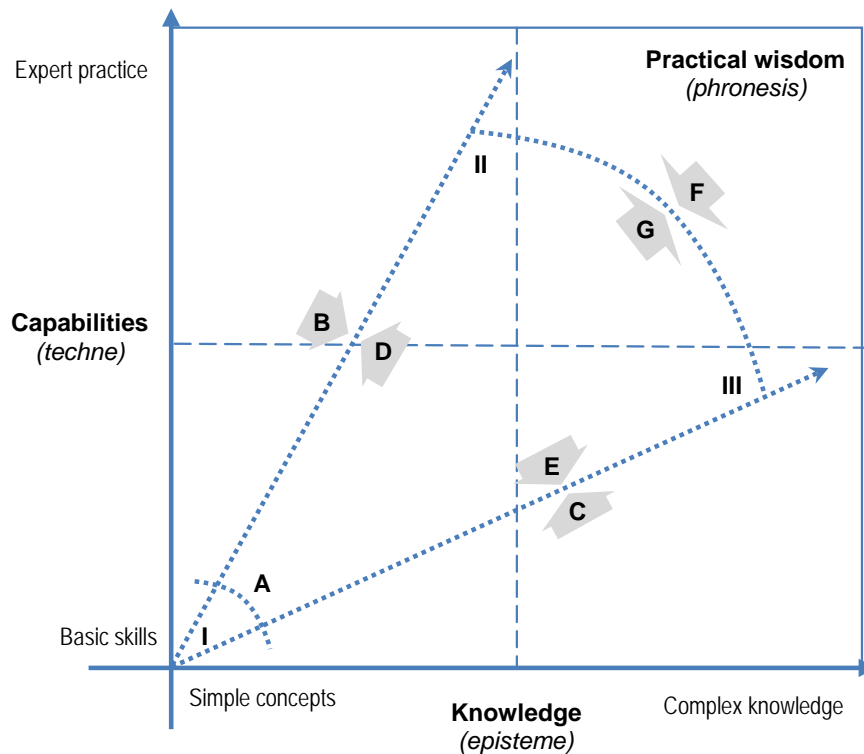


Figure 1: The tourism, hospitality and events curriculum space

Dynamics and flexibility

There are a range of issue drivers and influences that shape the undergraduate TH&E curriculum space. The shape and size of an institution's curriculum space is a function of competing ambitions and priorities of the stakeholders, institutional resourcing and missions, and external pressures such as markets and higher education policy reform. This project identified and discussed four major sets: context-specific factors relevant to the higher education providers; global-local influences; managerial values, ideas and philosophies; and philosophical influences upon pedagogy and curriculum design. TH&E curriculum design and development at the institutional level should take into account these influences. The curriculum space for TH&E undergraduate programs will therefore be slightly different for each institution although a core curriculum can be identified.

Homogeneity versus differentiation

The historical development of TH&E programs reflected the professional and business development needs of hotels, and later the rise of tourism as an economic development tool. As a result, programs are generally located in faculties of business and commerce. Programs also tend to be concentrated in newer universities (established after 1950) and a growing number of private providers. The analysis of current TH&E undergraduate degree programs revealed a high level of homogeneity in degree, majors and subject titles. (The level of analysis does not permit any conclusions about homogeneity of content although common subject matter is evident). There is opportunity for institutions to consider their positioning and particular strengths (perhaps by examining university mission statements and compact agreements) to distinguish their offerings and develop specialisms that cater to particular industry needs.

Further, increasing emphasis on graduate attributes and employment outcomes in Australian higher education may have contributed to a blurring of vocational and higher education in TH&E.

Such performance measures emphasise vocational outcomes such as getting a job, and de-emphasise the knowledge and skills a student has developed that might contribute to innovation and capacity building in the industry. The outsourcing of curriculum development to mobile academics who develop similar (or the same) content for different types of institutions has further exacerbated this situation. The AQF should serve to clarify this situation in the future.

Current curriculum space

The analysis of the current Australian TH&E curriculum space revealed the following key points:

- TH&E undergraduate degree programs are predominantly presented as specialisations within business and/or management studies offered by faculties or schools of business or commerce.
- There is a strong focus on business-oriented units (approximately 40 per cent of the average program) that tend to function as generic, foundation units offered in the very early stages of the program. Specialised TH&E units tend to be offered later in the program structure, particularly in cluster 1 (sandstone) and 2 (new universities est. 1950-1976) institutions.
- TH&E units comprise an average of 45 per cent of all TH&E program content. Analysis of institutional clusters revealed that cluster 3 (post-1976) institutions had the highest level of TH&E specific content, i.e. slightly over 50 per cent on average.
- Cluster 4 institutions (new universities and private providers) had the lowest proportion of specific TH&E content (slightly less than 30 per cent) and the highest proportion of business and commerce content (almost 60 per cent).
- Despite universities' professed claims about developing research skills, there were few instances of dedicated research units on offer across all institutional clusters.²
- Similarly, despite the claims of offering work integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in order to produce work-ready graduates, there were few instances of compulsory industry or internship or work-based learning and WIL models and requirements were varied.
- Overall, events make up the second most common content area (by number of units) followed by sustainable tourism/responsible tourism, which is consistent with increased market demand observed over the past 10 years.
- Events is an important subject area for cluster 3 (post-1976) institutions in particular, making up the second largest group of subjects by volume in these institutions. This finding reflects the situation that events programs have developed predominantly within these institutions over the past 10 years. In contrast, events units do not appear important as a subject area in cluster 4 (new providers) institutions.

The most common subject offerings, which indicate the presence of a core curriculum, were:

- Introduction to T&H studies
- Events management
- Sustainability of tourism/responsible tourism
- Introduction to T&H management
- T&H service marketing/management
- Tourism planning
- Hospitality marketing
- Tourism/hospitality economics
- Food & beverage management
- International/global tourism.

² This finding raises the question of whether research skills are embedded or integrated into other subjects and are therefore less visible in the curriculum. Nevertheless, ensuring research skills are delivered within the curriculum is important.

Under a market model of higher education, the curriculum is the 'product', although the institution's brand and its product are often confused by consumers (i.e. would-be students and their parents) who can't (or don't) differentiate between the curriculum product and the provider's brand. There is room for institutions to consider their positioning and the particular strengths of their programs (perhaps by examining university mission statements and compact agreements) and distinguish their offerings. This differentiation would offer more choice to potential students and allow institutions to play to their strengths more than they currently do under a homogenised curriculum.

Internal barriers to post-disciplinary TH&E studies

Most TH&E programs are located within faculties of business and commerce. Budget models adopted in many institutions impede student flows and limit learning experiences across disciplinary boundaries. This sits in contrast to an emerging global consensus that TH&E are post-disciplinary fields of study. Encouraging cross-disciplinary learning will enhance the development of students with a broader base of skills to fill diverse professional roles. It will also open up graduate opportunities beyond current, narrowly defined industry sectors to a broader range of graduate possibilities.

Accreditation and peak bodies

There are a number of professional and accrediting bodies with an interest in TH&E, but as yet no consensus about the 'best' accreditation scheme or standard. The positioning of programs in business and commerce faculties as well as social science or environmental faculties exacerbates the challenge of finding an appropriate accreditation scheme that can be broadly relevant to all programs. However, given the increasing global mobilities of students, educators and graduates in TH&E, the role of accreditation bodies in providing oversight in terms of quality and relevance will become increasingly important. Such accreditation schemes will also help potential students (and their parents) interpret the complex choices available. Further collective discussion about accreditation and its role in securing the future of the field is important. The significant achievements of THE-ICE and the UNWTO in benchmarking and generating 'discipline' and industry-wide dialogue are acknowledged.

There are also a number of changes and challenges that will need to be contemplated collectively by TH&E educators in the next few years. While some of this contemplation is undoubtedly the focus of discussion within individual institutions, there is also a role for cross-institutional planning and leadership. Organisations such as the Council for Australasian University Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) provide a solid platform for considering cross-institutional issues and challenges that will shape TH&E education. The need for the development of academic standards for all levels of TH&E education is a good example of a cross-institutional challenge that emerges from the influences discussed in this paper. There can be little doubt that the scope and speed of change in the Australian higher education sector is unprecedented. While these changes pose a number of challenges for TH&E education, they also create new opportunities for innovative curricula that enhance student outcomes.

Chapter 3 Dissemination

Communication and dissemination

A Communication and Dissemination Strategy was developed at the outset of the project, and the project team actively sought dissemination opportunities during the course of the project. A network of project champions was also established with 19 higher education providers that provided an important link for data collection and project dissemination.

Project dissemination activities included:

- Workshop at the CAUTHE 2010 conference
- Presentation to joint universities seminar (Bond University, Southern Cross University, The University of Queensland and Griffith University) on 19 November, 2010.
- Special workshop session at CAUTHE 2011
- Paper presentations (x2) at CAUTHE 2011
- Project sponsored morning tea at CAUTHE 2011 including dissemination of information to project champions and recruitment of new champions to facilitate data collection
- ALTC concurrent session with international and local speakers at CAUTHE 2011
- Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) World Congress, Philadelphia May 18-21, 2011
- BEST-EN tourism conference, May 2011
- Invited presentation, THE-ICE International Panel of Experts Forum, Malaysia, November 2011
- Refereed paper presentation CAUTHE 2012
- Plenary Session CAUTHE 2012
- Special Interest Group workshop CAUTHE 2012
- THE-ICE Benchmarking Roundtable Forum III "Curriculum Design
- THE-ICE Benchmarking Roundtable Forum IV "Assessment and learning outcomes and graduate attributes".

Project website

A project website was created during the first year and updated throughout the course of the project <tourismhospitalityeducation.info>. It will remain a conduit for dissemination of further papers and will be linked to the new CAUTHE website currently being developed.

The website has been used to disseminate information on all aspects of the project and includes details of the project team, an overview of the research approach and data collection process, information on project champions, project updates and downloadable versions of project publications. The site also provides links to professional associations and a range of relevant Australian and International tourism resources.

Future activities

The project team is currently pursuing a book manuscript about the TH&E curriculum space. Dr Michael Gross is leading this future output with Professor Airey and A/Professor Dianne Dredge.

This project provides important background for the development of academic standards for tourism, hospitality and events education.

Chapter 4 Linkages

During the course of the project, strong links were established with the following organisations and professional bodies:

- CAUTHE (Council of Australasian Tourism and Hospitality Education), which represents 25 member universities in Australia and New Zealand, and approximately 150 Australian and international academic educators. It holds an annual conference that generally attracts between 200 and 300 delegates. Dr Paul Whitelaw, one of the project team members is current Chair of CAUTHE and A/Prof Dianne Dredge is Vice Chair.

A/Prof Dianne Dredge and Dr Pierre Benckendorff are leading the CAUTHE Special Interest Group on Tourism and Hospitality Education, and are tasked with organising workshops, symposia and other events.

- THE-ICE (Tourism and Hospitality Education-International Centre of Excellence), which is an independent international accreditation body that specialises in tourism, hospitality, culinary arts and events education. In addition to accreditation, the main activities of THE-ICE are confidential benchmarking and letting future students know about the wide range of courses available at accredited members' institutions. The members of THE-ICE are institutions offering accredited courses in tourism, hospitality and events. THE-ICE currently has Accredited Members as well as Associates and also 'Observers of THE-ICE' in a range of countries that include: Austria, Switzerland, France, Germany Italy, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Fiji, Australia etc. THE-ICE is also a full member of the International Network of Accreditation Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).

THE-ICE held its Roundtable Benchmarking Series III in June 2012 and the theme was 'Curriculum Design'. Team member Dr Pierre Benckendorff led the organisation of this event and A/Prof Dianne Dredge participated as an invited speaker. The Benchmarking Roundtable Forum IV was held in September 2012, where Dr Paul Whitelaw presented on assessment and learning outcomes and graduate attributes". Both events provided an important opportunity for further dissemination of the project's findings and discussion about future directions.

A/Prof Dianne Dredge has been appointed an auditor for THE-ICE. Auditors are tasked to assess the capacity and capability of institutions applying for membership to meet THE-ICE standards of excellence.

- TEFI (Tourism Education Futures Initiative). This is an international forum comprising leading international academics and industry representatives. Its main purpose is to provide vision, knowledge and a framework for tourism education programs to promote global citizenship and optimism for a better world. Project reference group members Professors Pauline Sheldon and John Tribe are leaders within this network.

Project team members A/Prof Dianne Dredge and Pierre Benckendorff will be attending the TEFI Summit in Milan (June 2012), the theme of which is Transformational Leadership in Tourism Education. The program incorporates opportunities for the dissemination of project outcomes.

- BEST-EN (Building Excellence in Sustainable Tourism-Education Network) is an international network of tourism educators committed to furthering the development and dissemination of knowledge in the field of sustainable tourism. Dr Pierre Benckendorff is an executive member of this organisation, and has opportunities to disseminate information about the project at the annual Think Tank (June 2012).

Through these peak organisations, opportunities for communication and dissemination were established. Ongoing commitment of project team members to these organisations ensures long-term engagement and dissemination of future papers and other outcomes.

Chapter 5 Evaluation

The external evaluator, Professor David Airey, was appointed to evaluate the development of the project and its outcomes. During the project, Professor Airey travelled to Australia twice and the project team met with him on each occasion, and whilst the project leader was in the UK for other conferences, she also met with him to provide project updates.

Professor David Airey's experience is contained in the textbox below, and illustrates that he is well placed to undertake the project evaluation. Professor Airey's report accompanies the submission of this Final Report.

Professor David Airey, External Evaluator

Professor Airey began his academic career at the University of Surrey in 1975-1985. After eight years with Government Ministry responsible for tourism education, and three years with European Commission, he returned to Surrey in 1997 as Professor of Tourism Management. Professor Airey served as Head of School from 2000-2002 and as University Pro-Vice Chancellor from 2001-2009. In 2004 he was awarded the EuroChrie President's award for outstanding achievement and in 2006 was recipient of the Ulysses award from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for his work in tourism education. In 2007 he became co-chair of the UNWTO Education Council. He retired from his full-time post in 2009 but remains as Professor of Tourism Management at Surrey, combining this with other work both in the UK and overseas. He is an elected Academician of the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences, elected Fellow of the International Academy for the Study of Tourism, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, Fellow of the Tourism Society, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality, and member of the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism and the Tourism Research Centre.

Professor Airey's report is available at www.tourismhospitalityeducation.info and at www.olt.gov.au/project-building-stronger-future-tourism-hospitality-scu-2009