

## **The European Diploma Supplement**

While there is no intention that Australia will automatically follow all the details of the European Diploma Supplement, it is important that attention be given to the European model and to how it is being implemented in various European countries. Ideally, attempts will be necessary to ascertain the impact of European developments on other major higher education systems, particularly in Asia and North America.

The European Diploma Supplement is a text document with standardised information to describe the content of academic credentials (degrees, certificates, examinations) and related qualifications, and to be attached as a 'supplement' to official higher education documentation of such academic awards. As the UK Higher Education Europe Unit's recent publication *Guide to the Diploma Supplement* explains, the Diploma Supplement describes the qualification students

... have received in a standard format that is easily understood and straightforward to compare. The reader (credentials evaluator, admissions officer, academic, employer, citizen, etc.) should be able to make informed and accurate judgements about the qualification. The Supplement contains information on the nature, level, context, content and status of the studies that were undertaken and successfully completed by the student. In addition, it places the qualification in the context of the structure of the higher education system within which it was issued (UK HE Europe Unit 2006, p 5).

The European Supplement is based on the following outline structure developed by the European Commission in combination with UNESCO:

- 1 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION
- 2 INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION
- 3 INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION
- 4 INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED
- 5 INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION
- 6 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
- 7 CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT
8. INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

(Source: [www.ec.europa.eu/education/policies/rec\\_qual/recognition/ds\\_en.pdf](http://www.ec.europa.eu/education/policies/rec_qual/recognition/ds_en.pdf)). See detailed explanatory advice on the various items.