

Key Outcomes

- Recommendations on a single agreed format and content for an Australian Diploma Supplement for higher education providers to make available to each graduate. This should include explanatory information to help administrators and students, and a glossary of key terms.
- Results of scoping system requirements for a searchable and secure national system for housing diploma supplement data.
- Detailed cost analysis of introducing an Australian Diploma Supplement.
- Discussion of privacy issues and how such issues might be best addressed.
- Recommendations about possible name changes from Australian Diploma Supplement to another title that may more closely reflect the Australian context.
- Detailed recommendations on how the introduction of an Australian Diploma Supplement would meet the needs of international processes and at the same time involve minimum additional workload for universities.
- Recommendations for national implementation.

The project team values your input.

To submit your comments on this project, visit us at
<http://www.une.edu.au/pdal/research/chemp/projects/dipsup/contact.php>

Key Contacts

Executive Officer:

Dr Jeannet van der Lee
Centre for Higher Education Management
& Policy (CHEMP)
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Tel: 02 6773 2091
jvander@une.edu.au

Project Directors:

Professor Richard James
Centre for the Study of Higher Education
(CSHE)
University of Melbourne
r.james@unimelb.edu.au

Professor Lynn Meek
Centre for Higher Education Management
& Policy (CHEMP)
University of New England
vmeek@une.edu.au

Project Manager:

Professor Grant Harman
Centre for Higher Education Management
& Policy (CHEMP)
University of New England
gharman@une.edu.au

<http://www.une.edu.au/pdal/research/chemp/projects/dipsup>

Project Prospectus

DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL DIPLOMA SUPPLEMENT

On 10 January 2007, the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, announced that a consortium of universities had been commissioned to develop a single agreed template for an Australian Diploma Supplement. The consortium represents 14 universities led by the University of New England, the University of Melbourne, and the Australian National University.

Other consortium members are as follows:

- University of New South Wales
- University of Sydney
- Griffith University
- University of Newcastle
- Queensland University of Technology
- University of South Australia
- University of Canberra
- Edith Cowan University
- Victoria University
- Charles Sturt University
- Swinburne University of Technology

In her press announcement, Minister Bishop explained that development of the Australian Diploma Supplement is a government initiative in response to feedback from the discussion paper, *The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps*. The Bologna Process is a part of European reforms that aim to establish a single European Higher Education Area by 2010, focusing on curriculum and quality assurance.

Commissioned by the Department of Education, Science & Training

Project Objectives

The aims of the project are to develop an agreed template for an Australian Diploma Supplement (by whatever name it might be known) and to make recommendations on implementation and management strategies. The hope is to achieve best international practice regarding documentation supplied by universities and colleges to their graduates. It is envisaged that a Diploma Supplement will take the form of documentation issued to graduates by awarding institutions in addition to the degree or diploma. Its purpose will be to make qualifications more portable and their value more transparent by providing descriptions of the nature, level, context and status of the studies undertaken by graduates, as well as information about the education system to which the qualifications belong. The project builds on prior DEST funded pilots.

The Diploma Supplement is a key outcome of the Bologna Process of European higher education reform. An increasing number of Diploma Supplements issued by European universities are now starting to be seen in Australia, facilitating Australian recognition of European educational qualifications.

Central to the project are consultations with higher education institutions and other stakeholders to arrive at a single agreed format for an Australian Diploma Supplement. The project also will estimate system-wide and institutional costs of introducing the Diploma Supplement and scope system requirements for a searchable and secure national system for housing diploma supplement data.

Project Organisation

The consortium is led by Prof. Lynn Meek (Centre for Higher Education Management & Policy - CHEMP, at the University of New England) and Prof. Richard James (Centre for the Study of Higher Education - CSHE, at the University of Melbourne), with the support of a Project Team drawn from consortium members.

A Project Steering Committee has been established, including representatives of DEST, the lead universities and other stakeholders. A Project Advisory Committee drawn from all consortium members will provide further input into the work program and recommendations.

Key consultations will include:

- An initial workshop/teleconference to be held in February/March 2007 involving project directors, project staff and contact persons from all consortium members to present project plans, discuss project design and seek detailed advice.
- A major workshop with all universities and Table B higher education providers to be held in early May 2007.
- Subsequent workshops to consult on draft recommendations with consortium members, other higher education providers, employers, professional associations and student representatives.
- Between 1 August and 30 September 2007, further workshops and consultations with consortium members, other higher education providers and other stakeholders on the recommendations to be provided to DEST by 2 November 2007.

Key Questions

1. What are the main purposes and uses of an Australian Diploma Supplement? Who would find it useful, and what benefits might a supplement bring to students, employers and higher education institutions?
2. What form, both in agreed format and content, might an Australian Diploma Supplement take? To what extent are the items included in the European specifications suitable for inclusion and might a Diploma Supplement consist of a core of mandatory or strongly recommended items, and other items that could be included at the discretion of institutions? In what ways might a Diploma Supplement be distinctive?
3. How could an Australian Diploma Supplement be introduced to meet the needs of international processes and at the same time involve minimum additional workload and provide some flexibility for universities to include additional information should they wish to do so?
4. What information is currently provided to Australian graduates, and are there Australian examples of recent innovations in response to European and other developments?
5. Is there a need for a secure national system housing the diploma supplement information?
6. What are the implications of an Australian Diploma Supplement for the national Higher Education Information Management System, and institutional student/academic data systems?
7. If the Diploma Supplement is implemented, what costs and workload issues would be involved?
8. What should an Australian Diploma Supplement be called, if implemented?