## Submission to the ACOLA Research Training Review

August 2015

## Introduction

The Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Australian Council of Learned Academies (ACOLA) *Research Training Review*. As one of Australia's four Learned Academies, a key role of the AAH is to provide independent expert advice to government and policy makers, promoting the social significance of humanities scholarship and its importance in shaping effective public policy.

The AAH has been actively engaged in developing policy, research and programmes in support of the next generation of humanities researchers and has made a number of submissions over the past decade on research training and research workforce issues.[1] This submission draws on that earlier work, more recent research undertaken for the *Mapping the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia* report (2014),[2] and consultation with Fellows and humanities early career researchers (ECRs).

A summary of the key messages is below, with responses to the consultation questions following.

## Key Messages

1. Australia's research training system needs to change in order to better reflect and respond to the variety and complexity of contexts into which HDR students will graduate.

2. Any reform of the research training system must not lose sight of the core value of a university-based education, which is distinct from vocational training.

3. The core objective of research training should be to develop deep knowledge and high quality skills and competence in a particular discipline.

4. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to research training – disciplines have different requirements and systems of operating and it will be critical to identify and account for different disciplinary needs.

5. Postgraduate training plays a critical role in building national capacity across the disciplines and the national knowledge base, underpinning the research, education and innovation system, and ultimately the capabilities of the national workforce.

6. Humanities education and training provides skills and capabilities in communication and cultural literacy that will be critical to Australia's future comparative advantage.

7. In the humanities, a major thesis has fundamental value in a rigorous graduate training programme, but this should be complemented with high quality coursework offerings of substance to build capabilities.

8. The research training system should build and maintain areas of research strength and critical mass. Ad hoc planning and a reliance on short-term, project-based funding have diminished our national capacity in unpredictable ways with consequences across the disciplines.

9. A comprehensive research system requires breadth and depth – a diversity of research focus. A national shift in emphasis of research training, from research outputs to graduate skills development, will require priority funding to target high-quality skills development across a diverse range of research fields and areas of interest.

10. The relationship between universities and HDR candidates on the one hand, and industry, public sector organisations and other employers on the other must be based on a principle of reciprocity and mutual benefit. A one-sided effort (from the research sector itself) will not produce the outcomes needed for the nation.

11. Achieving both gender equity and diversity of student background and experience across the research career spectrum must be a priority issue for universities and employers.

12. The decline of the scholarship stipend for postgraduate students relative to cost of living, to the point where it is now below the poverty line, need to be addressed if Australia is to attract and retain quality researchers.

13. Positioning our graduates in an increasingly globalised market means encouraging the acquisition of foreign language skills as a core component of research training.

14. To address many of the key issues facing the nation, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS) researchers will need to draw on the knowledge and methodologies of each other's disciplines to mutually inform their work.

15. Opportunities for multi- and inter-disciplinary collaboration during research training are important for developing research and analytical capacities, and reflect the skills mixes evident in many innovative enterprises in Australia.

16. The high/low cost funding model for research training requires review to better reflect the actual costs of the research training activities it is designed to fund.

## Consultation Questions

**1. What are the research skills and experiences needed to be an effective researcher?**

*1.1 Deep knowledge and disciplinary excellence*

Humanities education and training provides skills and capabilities in communication and cultural literacy that will be critical to Australia's future comparative advantage. It plays a core role in preparing graduates for participation in the workforce and engagement in society at large.

The core objective of research training should be to develop deep knowledge and high quality skills and competence in a particular discipline. For the humanities, disciplinary knowledge that has methodological integrity and coherence is derived by undertaking and completing a sustained original, high-quality research project. There is continuing value, therefore, in a major thesis as part of a rigorous graduate training programme.

*1.2 Generic skills*

To produce high quality, effective and internationally competitive researchers also requires complementary generic skills development, which is grounded in disciplinary training but extending to general training in digital, qualitative and quantitative research methods, and the acquisition of foreign languages (see further detail below).

*1.3 Collaboration*

Experience in collaborating across disciplines, and with wider professional and community networks is also important. Such collaborative opportunities develop research and analytical capacities, and expose postgraduates to potential research partners. HDRs are well placed to develop innovative and collaborative research, but need support in establishing collaborations via mentoring, support for travel, and access to disciplinary and institutional networks.

Collaboration needs to be fit-for-purpose. In the humanities there is a gradient of collaboration, which extends from 'loose cooperation' to a more fully integrated model, depending on the focus of research. Many HDR students pursue more self-directed research topics and thus participate in collaboration differently to those STEM HDR students focused on a specific aspect of a general problem being pursued by a research team.

*1.4 Focus on the research and developing the researcher*

Curriculum design and infrastructure support for research training needs to focus not only on the production of research but also on the development of a researcher. HDR programmes should be structured in ways that develop a range of appropriate research skills. In the humanities an established method for achieving this objective is to provide expert guidance and supervision around production of an original research thesis in a defined area of work. Ideally, the research outcome and the training outcome are mutually reinforcing.

*1.5 New initiatives*

There are promising developments in humanities research training and many of the issues identified in the Discussion Paper are receiving attention in our universities. Masters coursework offerings, such as the Masters of Arts and Cultural Management, many of which have a skills-based component, have increased across the board over the last ten years. Many universities are also developing more structured PhD programmes, for example by incorporating year-long preparatory workshops and electives components to facilitate students' "high-level engagement with key literature and contemporary research".[3] Students receive methodological training and exposure to a diversity of disciplinary and intellectual practice.

## 2.a What broader transferable qualities do HDR graduates need to develop to succeed in a wide range of career pathways?

In terms of the key broad/transferable capabilities the AAH offers the following:

   i.   Collaboration – including multi- and inter-disciplinary collaboration, across sectors and institutions.
   ii.  Engagement – with a wide range of beneficiaries and users of research, in a relationship of reciprocity.
   iii. Communication – with a variety of audiences and through different media, including policy, media, community, industry (inclusive of not-for-profit and public sectors).  In the career lifetime of current HDRs the 'impact' agenda will be important, and the humanities (together with colleagues in the social sciences and sciences) will need to be able to demonstrate benefits and capabilities that accrue from public investment in research.
   iv.  Project Management and Administration – on this point we note that in our consultations with ECRs in the humanities, participants agreed that they find it difficult to balance the competing demands of teaching, research, and management, and are not necessarily equipped by their graduate studies to take on administrative responsibility.
   v.   Leadership – one of the areas identified by an earlier ACOLA project as requiring attention is Australia's management and leadership skills, "including the ability to form and lead teams, negotiation, coordination and ethics".[4] This is backed up by a recent initiative by the Australian Industry Group, which has called for a "revolution" in enterprise leadership in Australia.[5]

In addition, the AAH suggests that a focus on digital, quantitative and languages skills acquisition is warranted. This point is addressed in more detail below.

## 2.b Should these skills be assessed, and if so, how?

Assessment of a HDR student should no longer focus entirely on a dissertation and it is appropriate that broader skills be assessed as part of the normal parameters of course assessment. A one-size-fits-all competency-based assessment process should be avoided.

Individual skills-based assessment of students is one part of the picture, but we also need to think broadly about how our research system incentivises institutions to create environments that encourage capability development in HDR programmes. How are units

and programmes set up with skills, infrastructure, and critical mass to engage in projects and train students in the future? These are questions at the heart of new approaches to research evaluation more broadly. Along these lines, we would point to the Swedish Research Council, which has recently proposed that future research evaluation exercises in Sweden take into account what they term 'quality enhancing factors', in addition to the more standard forms of assessment. These quality enhancing factors look to the future capability and responsiveness of research units and are "assessed on the basis of the criteria potential for renewal and sustainability" with many of the indicators focused on doctoral researchers (as well as broader considerations such as gender and cultural diversity).[6]

Key principles to observe in any assessment regime are flexibility in assessment and 'fit for purpose' indicators, which are responsive to disciplinary and institutional differences.

### 3. What other broader capabilities should HDR graduates develop during their research training?

*3.1 Digital skills*

E-research infrastructure is transforming the way researchers across the disciplines undertake and analyse research, and our HDR graduates must be equipped with the skills to operate in an increasingly digital research environment, to understand and work with digital data, tools and structures. Access to research infrastructure and both discipline-specific and more generic training in digital skills is essential. The 2015 Review of Research Infrastructure specifically calls for skills-based training of researchers as a national priority. Our current research training system could do much more to develop humanities graduates with high-level digital skills, especially in using analysis tools on large amounts of data, but even in using sophisticated data management tools for their own research.

*3.2 Language skills*

The deficit in our language and cultural capabilities is a national priority that demands more than a research or teaching investment focus – it is about choices made at a national level. While there are some exemplary sector-led initiatives Australia needs a comprehensive, coordinated strategy to redress skills deficits in languages and intercultural communication. The current policy attention at schools and undergraduate level needs to extend all the way to research training.

The international engagement of Australian researchers would be facilitated by the inclusion of a languages requirement into research training. As currently structured, HDR courses do not allow for the time required to learn new languages, or even upgrade existing skills to research levels.  In its submission to the Draft National Strategy for International Education, the Languages and Cultures Network of Australian Universities (LCNAU) recommended the "joint badging of PhDs across different languages and universities in different countries under co-tutelle arrangements". These are "increasingly common and are an effective way of supporting international research collaboration".[7]

The AAH would go one step further and suggest making it easier for institutions to co-badge degrees across all disciplines not only nationally, but also internationally. Currently, co-badging agreements are difficult to negotiate and can be associated with overwhelming

paperwork which discourages them from being pursued. They have the ability, nonetheless, to further connect the Australian research system to the international.

### 3.3 Quantitative skills

The AAH also sees the value in boosting quantitative skills and methods in many areas of the humanities (and possibly across the disciplines), with flexibility as to relevance and application. In the UK, the British Academy has been funded to provide support for languages training and quantitative skills in the humanities and social sciences by establishing the Languages and Quantitative Skills programme to target deficits in these capability areas.[8]

### 3.4 HASS skills for STEM

To address many of the key issues facing the nation, STEM researchers will also need to draw on the knowledge and methodologies of HASS disciplines to inform their work. Training in ethics, effective writing, oral communication, cultural competence, and global perspectives – some of the core competencies of HASS – will help STEM researchers address future challenges and opportunities.

## 4. What skills and capabilities do employers in Australia need from HDR graduates?

### 4.1 Value of a university-based education

Any reform of the research training system must not lose sight of the value of a university-based education as distinct from straight vocational training. As Professor Duncan Ivison FAHA reminds us, "universities are not job training centres". Ivison, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) at the University of Sydney, says that the business leaders he speaks to "are looking for well-rounded graduates – the kind of people who can keep learning, deal with change and contingency, understand context and communicate effectively".[9]

Industry representatives who consider training in the humanities disciplines as vital to our engagement in the Asia region, for example, also support this view. The Business Council of Australia recognises that skills deficits in languages and cross-cultural skills training are holding us back: "Despite our growing presence in the region, our experience and understanding of the cultures, languages, behaviours and customs of emerging economies in Asia requires continual deepening".[10]

There will also be a need to attend to the content of research training in order that we produce researchers with flexible and adaptable skills – grounded in disciplines – but able to work effectively in an interdisciplinary world.

### 4.2 Building an innovative workforce

If Australia's research system is to build capability across the national workforce, including contributing to public sector innovation and playing a role in underwriting future industries, we will need to mobilise innovative potential across all disciplines. The ACOLA SAF 04 report, *The Role of Science, Technology, and Research in Lifting Australia's Productivity*, found that innovation involves more than technical skills: it also needs "people who understand systems, cultures and the way society uses and adopts new ideas", i.e. HASS knowledge and creativity.[11] Further work under way as part of the ACOLA SAF 10 project,

*Capabilities for Australian Enterprise Innovation*, is specifically taking this research further and investigating the technical and non-technical skills mixes that high-performing enterprises use to develop their innovative capabilities.

### 4.3 Reciprocity and mutual benefit

The relationship between universities and HDR candidates on the one hand, and industry, public sector organisations and other employers on the other must be based on a principle of reciprocity and mutual benefit. A one-sided effort will not produce the outcomes needed for the nation. Industry, public sector organisations and other potential employers must be prepared to better articulate their needs, and collaborate with universities to address them.

### 4.4 Graduate destinations

In addition to developing a better understanding of the needs and expectations of employers, more work also needs to be done on ascertaining where students are going post-HDR to ensure appropriate research/skills training. Currently, the data on graduate destinations yields limited meaningful evidence of career paths for humanities graduates because the graduate destinations survey is conducted too soon after graduation.[12] Longer term data is required across all disciplines but particularly for those disciplines whose graduates are not as closely tied to structured career paths provided by professional training programmes. Improving data collection and analysis will help better understand the opportunities, and improve policy and programme design and evaluation.[13]

**5. What research skills and capabilities are needed to ensure Australia's research system remains internationally competitive?**

Australia needs to play to its research strengths and comparative advantages, including what makes it an attractive destination for international students. The Australian research system is known for its focus on quality and independent inquiry. A focus on cultural diversity also gives our system an edge in the 'market' for international education and research.

To not only meet current and foreseeable demand, but to fuel and create future research-driven industries we need:

- Academic excellence
- A diverse and creative research base
- Long-term support for basic research
- Collaborative capabilities
- Project management and team work capabilities
- Communication and language expertise

Research has always been a collaborative process, and in today's globalised world is more international than ever. Researcher mobility programmes are an essential component to ensure international competitiveness and build our national capacity. A well-trained and internationally connected research and teaching workforce will enable Australia's access to the vast amount of knowledge discovery which takes place outside our borders, and provide us with the skills to take advantage of new discoveries.

Developing Australia's capabilities in languages and intercultural literacy will be vital to facilitating the outward mobility of Australian students and researchers, and will also improve the integration of international students and researchers into Australia.

6. **What research skills and capabilities are needed from HDR graduates to ensure Australia is ready to meet current and future social, economic and environmental challenges?**

Maintaining a strong capacity in the humanities disciplines will provide the underpinning capabilities to understand change and the challenges facing the nation. Recognising, understanding and giving voice to the complexity of social issues is a key role of the humanities disciplines. Humanities perspectives are critical contributions because these challenges are deeply human issues and involve attitudes that are steeped in culture, and in history.

The AAH's recent publication, *The Power of the Humanities* (2015), illustrates the contribution that humanities researchers make to national wellbeing and prosperity, and to addressing societal challenges, both in their own right and in concert with colleagues in the STEM disciplines, and with industry, community and government collaborators.[14]

The challenges Australia faces are complex and will also require multidisciplinary approaches and interdisciplinary research. Researchers should be trained from the earliest stages to consider research problems from such perspectives. HDR students should be supported to pursue collaborative research where possible, allowing for cross-institutional supervision and research and encouraging mobility. The role for policymakers is to ensure that policy and funding mechanisms – at the institutional and individual research level – do not discourage or act as disincentives to multidisciplinary research.

A comprehensive research system requires breadth and depth – a diversity of research focus. Directing funding and priorities too narrowly runs the long-term risk of missing opportunities and limiting our capacity to respond to unforeseen challenges. The Science and Research Priorities (SRPs) cannot be the sum total of focus, as the range of priorities for Australia's future prosperity extends beyond the SRPs into areas of social and cultural transformation, such as tackling income and social inequality, domestic violence, and educating for the future.

7. **What features of the research training system should be retained to ensure our graduates are internationally competitive?**

Fundamentally, the training of effective high quality researchers is reliant on Australia's ongoing capacity for research excellence across the system. Funding, research infrastructure and support for collaboration underpin our production of excellent research, and it is to this research our students must be exposed so as to equip them with the skills to produce outstanding research themselves. The undertaking and completion of a sustained original and excellent research project is the outstanding feature of the PhD programme, providing in effect the fundamental 'on-the-job' training to be an outstanding researcher.

The AAH considers that a strong grounding in discipline-based training gives our system its core capacity. A number of the issues raised in the paper about capability development, increasing coursework elements, and extending opportunities for collaboration and engagement are already being addressed by many institutions, so it will be a matter on building on these initiatives.

**8. How should the research training system be structured to produce high quality researchers who can contribute to Australia's future prosperity and wellbeing?**

*8.1 Programme structure*

The current PhD structure requires review. While a major thesis, geared towards the completion of a sustained original research project, still has fundamental value in a rigorous graduate training programme, the structure of the programme must also allow for research training to be complemented with high quality coursework offerings.

Australian universities are already looking to international directions and trends in research training, with particular consideration to the inclusion of a high-level coursework component as standard. As it stands, our system is uncompetitive, already being at least one year shorter than both the American and European systems. There is an inherent problem with the three-year PhD, which is not long enough to make up for the shortfall in preliminary training (at Honours or Masters level) and is compounded by the fact that the PhD lacks a high-level coursework component. There is growing support across the sector for a 3-2-3 model (as adopted by most of Europe as a result of the Bologna Process), whereby students can progress through an undergraduate Bachelors, to a Masters, to the PhD.

Adding a coursework component to a sustained research project under supervision would address the concern that the Australian PhD as currently structured is not providing adequate methodological training and not equipping students with transferrable generic skills. A coursework component with explicit aims, objectives, content, required skills and assessment tasks which aligns with the expectations and Level 10 learning outcomes of the Australian Qualifications Framework would identify itself to students as a valuable part of HDR training and equip students with the kind of skills relevant to any career.

If a coursework component is incorporated into HDR training, there will need to be system-wide adjustments in terms of thesis production. The additional teaching burden imposed by the introduction of a coursework component will need to be recognised across the system from policy makers down and factored into funding and policy decisions to ensure academics are adequately resourced and trained to meet its demands.

The Academy would also support an adjustment to HDR programmes to allow for a student exchange or industry experience period. Currently, the insurance and liability issues associated with taking leave from the PhD programme to pursue such opportunities can be prohibitive. Many STEM students have the opportunity to spend time doing field-based or laboratory work with companies that provide them with valuable contacts and a broader range of experience that is directly related to their research project and thus does not require leave. These opportunities are more limited for HASS students, but related experiences could be sought with government departments, libraries, archives, museums etc. to make it easier to undertake these within the PhD framework.

*8.2 Needs-based approach to training*

The AAH cautions that given the varied pathways by which students enter HDR programmes, many broader skills may have already been acquired, so flexibility in such training will be vital. The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in the UK acknowledges this in its commitment to a needs-based approach to research training for doctoral students. The AHRC's Research Training Framework for Doctoral Students recommends a continual process of review and reflection throughout training to ensure that a student is equipped with the necessary specific and generic skills required by both the project and their longer-term career goals. The framework notes that it is not intended to be prescriptive, recognising that students enter doctoral study from a variety of backgrounds, and encourages all involved parties to be innovative, flexible and responsive when considering development opportunities.[15] The AHRC itself facilitates a number of development opportunities for doctoral students, including an international placement scheme, policy internships, and a collaborative skills development scheme. Offering these programmes at a national level and encouraging collaborative cross-institutional approaches ensure student access and opportunities are not constrained by their home institution.

*8.3 Quality supervision*

With regard to supervision of HDR students, the AAH notes that high quality supervision, in conjunction with an atmosphere of collegiality and mentoring, is an essential component of the kind of research environment that produces high quality researchers. The ratio of PhD supervision per staff member can be particularly variable within institutions. Universities should be encouraged to implement more structured and rigorous training programmes for PhD supervisors to ensure a baseline standard of supervision competency across the university. Consideration could also be given to a scheme that exempts outstanding research supervisors from administrative burdens to allow them to devote their skills and energy to research training and workforce renewal. A supervisory panel and/or linkage to another institution are a positive, as is regular review and feedback mechanisms.

*8.4 Strategic support*

In the humanities, one of the challenges for future research training is ensuring strategic support to build critical mass in areas of research priority across the research sector.[16]

In the UK the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) offers research training schemes which are focused on building capacity across institutions as follows:

- Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs) block grants are awarded to individual research organisations or consortia of research organisations, to support postgraduate studentships in the humanities and arts. DTPs "provide innovative training environments for doctoral level research, with the opportunity for PhD students to undertake broader training or development opportunities", including "language learning, overseas research visits, or placements with non-academic partners".[17]

- Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs) complement the DTP scheme by providing block grants to consortia of research organisations, for five cohorts of students. They

"provide further capacity for postgraduate funding in priority areas: Design, Modern Languages and Heritage".[18]

In Australia, the Centres of Excellence and the Cooperative Research Centres both offer these sorts of opportunities but HASS participation and success in these programmes has been limited.[19]

Further, distributed research training models should be considered for small disciplines. Trying to fit students in smaller disciplines into broader programmes that don't match their individual programmes well, or which do not give them the optimal interdisciplinary experience, will be counterproductive. Instead, developing cross-institutional programmes for smaller disciplines, such as languages, should be explored.

**9. How can entry and exit pathways to and from research training be better structured?**

There are high barriers to entry for potential HDR candidates with extensive industry experience but insufficient basic research training for admission to PhD candidature. Overcoming these barriers would enhance university collaboration with cultural institutions and industries, including media and creative industries, museums, galleries, libraries, archives, and with educational institutions and government agencies. Provision of targeted scholarships and stipends for intermediate bridging courses to HDR candidature for industry partners would potentially reduce barriers to HDR entry and enhance industry collaboration.

The transition out of research training needs improvement. The increasing casualisation of the academic workforce disproportionally affects recent research graduates and deters many from pursuing academic careers. In our consultations with humanities ECRs, the increasing casualisation of the academic workforce was unanimously raised as a concern. The integration of HDR graduates into industry and government is vital, but equally the research workforce pipeline must be maintained to support our research system.

In the academic workforce, many HASS disciplines show a distinct ageing profile, which when combined with the high proportion of appointments at junior levels raises questions about succession planning, future leadership and the renewal of the workforce for the future.[20] This combines with a 43% increase in the proportion of casual staff compared to full time and fractional full time staff FTE over the 2002-12 period,[21] to indicate an increasingly insecure and competitive environment for recent HDR graduates, with many reporting leaving the sector at least partly in frustration at the lack of continuing appointments. There is also evidence of gendered employment patterns, with significantly more 'teaching only' staff being female. Research workforce statistics also show that there is a universal tapering away of women in senior positions across all research fields, even in female-dominated fields such as education.[22] These issues must be addressed if we are to secure the future quality of the academic workforce.

In terms of specifically addressing gender inequity and the underrepresentation of women in research, we would point to the focus of the ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellowship as an important initiative, which provides for recipients to undertake an ambassadorial role promoting women in the humanities and social sciences. Professor Joy Damousi FAHA FASSA, the 2014 recipient, is running a national mentoring programme targeting female

ECRs. This is a programme for ECRs in the system, but could be adapted to HDRs. The role of mentoring and place of network mechanisms to improve access for under-represented cohorts is taken up further in Question 10, below.

**10. How can barriers to participation in HDR programmes be overcome so that more candidates from non-traditional backgrounds, including indigenous students, undertake research training?**

The Discussion Paper identifies one of the most significant priorities for the future is diversification – focusing on gender and distribution of opportunity to Indigenous and lower socio-economic students. Achieving both gender equity and diversity of student background and experience across the research career spectrum must be a priority issue for universities and employers.

On the issue of Indigenous access and opportunity the AAH would point to the Behrendt review (2012), which includes recommendations specifically directed at the HDR cohort: that universities "incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supervision in their planning and as a competency within their internal training HDR supervisors" and that RTS allocations and Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) funding needs to match universities targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.[23]

A networked-based model can prove very effective in building capacity across institutions across all research levels, inclusive of HDRs. The ARC-funded Indigenous Studies Network is one such initiative. In the humanities the network model has a proven track record of success. The Cultural Research Network and the Network for Early European Research, which were funded under the ARC's Research Networks programme from 2004-2010, incorporated professional development programmes for postgraduates and ECRs. The Cultural Research Network used a combination of traveling masterclasses, 'speed mentoring', travel bursaries, and assistance in developing short-term internships with industry – all aimed at complementing and enhancing existing institutional support structures.

With regard to direct funding support for students, the AAH is aware that many prospective students find the cost of supporting themselves through their studies a prohibitive barrier to further study. In 2014 the APA was $21.21 per week below the Henderson Poverty Line.[24] The Discussion Paper itself notes that the average age at commencement of a doctorate was 33 in 2011,[25] and we can expect students of this age to have commitments that would make an income of this level inadequate support. The AAH would support the removal of special consideration requirements to go part-time, allowing students to supplement their scholarship with work. Such a move may also facilitate greater engagement with industry in HDR programmes, enabling student-industry interaction with a broader remit than would otherwise be compatible with full time study.

## Concluding Remarks

There are many institutions with a role to play in addressing inadequate and ad hoc professional development of our future research base. In addition to Government, universities, and research funding agencies, peak bodies and professional associations play

an important role. There is also a need for more cross-institutional approaches, such as the Regional Universities Network (RUN) initiative to "offer online courses in languages and the creative and performing arts in a bid to offer regional students more choice and create economies of scale".[26] This is an initiative happening at the undergraduate level but it has implications for research training environments too. Industry too needs to take responsibility and become more active in this space, proactively engaging with institutions on HDR programmes.

The Learned Academies also have a role to play. The current project of the Australian Academy of Science (funded via the ARC-Learned Academies Special Projects programme) working with discipline communities to develop decadal plans will assist in planning for research training. Similarly, the AAH has provided sponsorship and other support to three new professional associations/peak bodies in the humanities, which have specifically sought to take a more strategic and collaborative approach to discipline development: The Australian University Heads of English (AUHE), the Australasian Association of the Digital Humanities (aaDH) and the Languages and Cultures Network for Australian Universities (LCNAU). [27]

Finally, the AAH notes that the long-term sustainability of the research training system is critical to its future. How the research training system is funded is inevitably intertwined with its performance. There is significant variation in the actual cost of delivery (supervision, resources, infrastructure etc.) and the current categorisation does not reflect the actual costs of the research training activities it is designed to fund. The current model incentivises universities to pursue enrolments in 'high-cost' areas, and effectively discourages universities from pursuing enrolments in humanities and other 'low-cost' disciplines. The AAH supports a review of the underlying assumptions of the high/low cost model and will discuss this further in our submission to the *Review of Research Policy and Funding Arrangements* being run by the Department of Education and Training.

The AAH welcomes the opportunity to be involved in further consultation, and would be pleased to elaborate on any of the observations contained in this submission.


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President

# ENDNOTES

[1] Submissions since 2008 include: Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH), Submission to *Inquiry into Research Training and Research Workforce Issues* (2008), http://www.humanities.org.au/Portals/0/documents/Policy/Submissions/text/POL2008_4.pdf; AAH, Submission to *Meeting Australia's Workforce Needs* (2010), http://www.humanities.org.au/Portals/0/documents/Policy/Submissions/text/POL2010_3.pdf; AAH, Submission to *Defining Quality for Research Training in Australia* (2011), http://www.humanities.org.au/Portals/0/documents/Policy/Submissions/text/POL2011_7pdf.pdf; AAH, Submission to *Australia's Skills and Workforce Development Needs* Discussion Paper (2012), http://www.humanities.org.au/Portals/0/documents/Policy/Submissions/text/POL2012_3.pdf

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[7] Languages and Cultures Network for Australian Universities (2015), Submission to the *Draft National Strategy for International Education*, p. 4, https://submissions.education.gov.au/forms/Draft-National-Strategy-for-International-Education-public-consultation/pages/item?SubmissionID=IEC1400101

[8] British Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Language and Quantitative Skills Programme, http://www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Languages_and_Quantitative_Skills.cfm

[9] Ivison, D. (2015), 'Five Things to Think About When Choosing a University Course', *The Conversation*, 23 August 2015, https://theconversation.com/five-things-to-think-about-when-choosing-a-university-course-45584

[10] Business Council of Australia (2013) *Action Plan for Enduring Prosperity Australia*, p.30, http://www .bca.com.au/Content/102254.aspx

[11] Bell et al., *The Role of Science, Research and Technology in Lifting Australia's Productivity*.

[12] Turner and Brass, *Mapping the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia*, p. 31.

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