Responses to General Capabilities Framework for Tertiary Education

Tony Shannon
CESA Dean

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/ijbe

Part of the Accounting Commons, Adult and Continuing Education Commons, Adult and Continuing Education and Teaching Commons, Advertising and Promotion Management Commons, Agribusiness Commons, Business Administration, Management, and Operations Commons, Business Analytics Commons, Business and Corporate Communications Commons, Curriculum and Instruction Commons, Educational Leadership Commons, Educational Methods Commons, Educational Technology Commons, Entrepreneurial and Small Business Operations Commons, International Business Commons, Junior High, Intermediate, Middle School Education and Teaching Commons, Management Information Systems Commons, Marketing Commons, Online and Distance Education Commons, Organizational Behavior and Theory Commons, Other Business Commons, Other Education Commons, Other Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons, Secondary Education Commons, Secondary Education and Teaching Commons, Technology and Innovation Commons, and the Vocational Education Commons

Recommended Citation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.61403/2164-2885.1133
Available at: https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/ijbe/vol164/iss1/21

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ISU ReD: Research and eData. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Journal for Business Education by an authorized editor of ISU ReD: Research and eData. For more information, please contact ISUReD@ilstu.edu.
RESPONSES TO
GENERAL CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION
Tony Shannon

INTRODUCTION
The Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE) is consulting on how best to develop a general capabilities framework for tertiary education. This is being done with NOUS, a business management consultancy, and the Assessment Research Centre of the University of Melbourne.

General capabilities, also known as employability skills, transferable skills or soft skills, are the essential currency for employers, students, graduates and providers of education to understand what an individual can do alongside context- or domain-specific capabilities. The framework will be part of the National Credentials Platform (NCP), a digital repository and online portal which will provide students with details of their learning outcomes including transcripts, testamurs and additional academic documentation.

There are many examples of capability frameworks already in use in different industries and contexts, including the Australian Government’s Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework. The value that this new framework will provide is from its integration into the NCP and through providing the detail required to enable providers of tertiary education to assess capabilities reliably. The consistency of the framework, when well communicated to stakeholders and adopted within their practice, will support ongoing articulation of skills supporting employers’ needs and thereby achieving positive labour market outcomes.

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

1. What are the opportunities arising from the application of the framework?
Recognition of prior learning and experience, as well as credit transfer, among institutions, that is fair to the applicant but faithful to the standards of the field.

2. What are the barriers to application of the framework?
The division of tertiary education into higher education and vocational education and training overlooks that they could have more in common than they have in separation. Bifurcation of secondary education disappeared decades ago.

3. Do you have a preference for any particular set of capabilities or definitions?

* These papers are for internal discussion within CESA: on topics related to CESA’s Mission and Vision.
The Shergold Review’s skills categories are more comprehensive than the Australian Skills Classification, but it has to be realised that

- they are only acquired in the context of the development of specific skills,
- and nineteenth century studies of the transfer of training showed that transfer only occurs if the teachers are striving to achieve it.

How can that occur

- if a significant percentage of students in the second year of their Master of Teaching are struggling with Year 9 levels of literacy and numeracy, and
- if a higher percentage of students go from primary education to secondary with very poor readings skills? How will they acquire them in the secondary school?

4. **How could the proposed framework principles and components better meet your needs?**

Clearer and more gradual gradations of the Australian Qualification Framework Levels 5 – 7 with exemplars so that credit transfer and the accommodation of micro-credentials can be accommodated readily and realistically.

5. **What specific elements would you like to see included in the detail of the framework?**

- Consideration of ethical principles with generally agreed criteria.¹
- Functional language and literacy in the context of cognitive processes; for example, the ANZIL Standards as a taxonomy.²

---


CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The issues for consideration are not the methodology or scope of the report in itself but rather the extent to which the findings need to be addressed. For instance,

- What are our distinctive strengths in fostering functional information literacy & numeracy?
- And how do we know?
- What are the identifiable weaknesses of our students in functional Language Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)?
- And how do we know?
- What could we be doing to remedy these weaknesses or gaps?
- What are the specific plans to do so without overburdening those students who are probably least able to cope with any extra load?

There are realistic programs in practice to address some of these issues, in partnership with individual institutions and specific technical skills, such as the twelve-week programme to upgrade membership of the Commercial Education Society of Australia (founded 1910) to Associate level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Oral Presentations</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>Oral Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Career Planning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Teamwork Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Job Application</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Intercultural Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Personal Interaction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Emotional Quotient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Motivation and Engagement</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Written Communication</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FURTHER REFERENCES