



Fourth Annual Report

2014-2015





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Members of the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board

Meagan Browne BSc, MAppSc(Org Dynamics), MAppSci(Toxicology), GCert Industrial Hygiene Science, DipEd
Director Operations Support, WorkSafe Victoria
Regulator/policy body representative

Professor Mike Capra BSc, MSc, PhD, FSIA
University of Queensland
Safety Institute of Australia representative

Professor David Cliff BSc(Hons), PhD, GDipEnvStud, GDipOutdoor Ed, GDipBusAdmin
CPMSIA, CChem, MRACI, MEIANZ, MCombustion Institute, MAusIMM, Member of Mine Managers Association of Australia
Professor of Occupational Health and Safety in Mining and Director, Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre,
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OHS academic

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Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of Australia representative

Associate Professor Timothy Driscoll BSc(Med), MBBS, MOHS, PhD, FAFOEM, FAFPHM
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Dr Sue Reed BSc, MEngSc, MSc(OccHyg), PhD, CIH, COH, FAIOH, FSIA, MAA
Associate Professor, School of Exercise & Health Sciences, Edith Cowan University
Australian Institute of Occupational Hygiene representative

As of December 2013 Dr Reed was replaced by:

Jane Whitelaw MSc, GDApSci OHS, MAIOH, COH
Post Graduate Program Coordinator, Occupational Health, University of Wollongong

Leo Ruschena MSc(OccHyg), MIER, BEng, BEcon, GDipOrgBehaviour, CFSIA
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National OHS Coordinator, Australian Manufacturing Workers Union
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John Green BSc(OHS), MSc (Pollution mgt), MSc (Risk mgt and safety tech), LLB, PhD
Director HSEQ and Corporate Responsibility for Laing O'Rourke Australia
OHS professional

Registrar

Pam Pryor BSc, BEd, GDOHM, FSIA



Acknowledgements

Accreditation assessment panels

The Accreditation Board wishes to acknowledge and thank the following OHS academics and OHS professionals who have contributed time to participate in accreditation assessment panels between the commencement of accreditation and June 30, 2015.

Academics

Professor Mike Capra, University of Queensland

Dr Margaret Cook, University of Queensland

Leo Ruschena, RMIT University

Professor David Cliff, Minerals Industry, Safety and Health Centre, University of Queensland

Associate Professor Tim Driscoll, University of Sydney

Associate Professor Susanne Tepe, RMIT University

Professor Dino Pisaniello, University of Adelaide

Dr Jodi Oakman, Latrobe University

Dr Rwth Stuckey Latrobe and Monash Universities

OHS professionals

Meagan Browne, WorkSafe Victoria

Angela Seidel, OHS Manager, PMP Printing

Mike Walsh, Managing Director Mollitiam Pty Ltd

David Skegg, Manager, Health, Safety & Environment, Clyde Babcock-Hitachi (Australia) Pty Ltd

Trevor Love, Principal, AusSafe Consulting

Patrick Murphy, Global HSE Manager, Corporate Functions, Rio Tinto

PJ Fleming, Assistant Director Safety Capability, Defence Centre for Occupational Health & Safety

Phil Turner, JK Tech, University of Queensland

John Green, Laing O Rourke

Ross Pilkington, WorkSafe Victoria

Jo Kitney, Kitney Occupational Health and Safety Pty Ltd

Supporting partners

The Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board could not undertake much of their work without the support of their Supporting Partners.



Auspiced by





1 Report by Registrar and Chairperson

The Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board has now completed its fourth year of operation. Originally established for the sole purpose of accrediting OHS professional education programs the Accreditation Board has taken on a broader role in OHS professional education and OHS capability being active in three main areas:

- Recognising university-level programs that meet the accreditation criteria
- Custodian of the OHS Body of Knowledge
- Development and promotion of OHS capability.

These activities are particularly important in the light of the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022 *Healthy, safe and productive working lives*, which includes the strategic outcome that those providing work health and safety education, training and advice have appropriate capabilities.

1.1 Accreditation of university level OHS education programs

There are currently 14 universities offering a total of 29 OHS professional education programs:

- 5 Bachelor programs (3 having achieved accreditation)
- 13 Graduate Diploma programs (8 accredited, 2 being processed)¹
- 11 Master programs (5 accredited, 3 being processed).

A total of 11 programs have been accredited from RMIT University, Latrobe University, Monash University, Edith Cowan University, University of Newcastle, Queensland University of Technology, University of Queensland and Curtin University with applications from University of Wollongong and University of South Australia being processed. At least one further university has indicated their intention to submit in 2015-16 leaving only 2 universities with eligible programs not yet submitted or having indicated their intention to submit in 2015-16.

Universities with accredited programs are able to display the Accredited Program logo on their web site and related publications. A register of OHS professional education programs is also available on the Accreditation Board website which is becoming a first port of call for potential students.

A formal review of the implementation of accreditation was conducted in the past year. This review was undertaken in two parts. The first part involved review of the accreditation reports and annual reviews to assess the impact of accreditation on the educational program. The second part was conducted by a Masters of Public Health student at the University of Sydney who interviewed university representatives and members of the accreditation assessment panels. The report on the review is publically available on the Accreditation Board web site.

The response to the review may include revised accreditation criteria and adjustments to the process and pricing structure. As part of their stakeholder consultation the Accreditation Board will be conducting an Accreditation Forum in Melbourne on the 26th November. This forum will target OHS educators with OHS professionals and other interested parties by invitation. Attendance in person will be encouraged but arrangements will be made for online participation.

¹ Nine of the Graduate Diploma programs are nested in masters programs.



1.2 OHS Body of Knowledge

The OHS Body of Knowledge for Generalist OHS Professionals has attracted acclaim both in Australia and internationally. It is available free of charge for individual professional, non-commercial use at www.ohsbok.org.au. The copyright of the OHS Body of Knowledge is held by the Safety Institute of Australia with the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board having a custodian role responsible for currency and further development.

The period 2014 to 2015 was a very active period for the OHS Body of Knowledge. This period saw the completion of the four additional chapters funded by Safe Work Australia:

- Principles of OHS Law
- A user centred, safe design approach to control
- Organisational culture
- OHS risk and decision making.

The new chapters were formally launched in October 2014 at an event at RMIT attended by 90 people. The four new chapters are now available on the OHSBoK web site.

The Accreditation Board has developed a seven year review and update schedule for existing chapters and options for funding further chapters are being explored.

Chisholm Institute in Victoria has been the first training body to acquire a license for the OHS Body of Knowledge. Such a license demonstrates Chisholm's commitment to ensuring their students and staff have ready access to leading edge thinking on OHS as part of their online materials.

1.3 Development of OHS capability

As part of advocating and supporting the demand for quality OHS professional education the Accreditation Board has been working with the SIA on the implementation of professional certification by providing advice on the standing of the various qualifications held by those applying for certification.

The International Network of Safety and Health Practitioner Organisations (INSHPO) has developed a Global Framework for OHS Practice. The Registrar is a member of a three-person working party that developed the role, knowledge and skills component for OHS Professionals and OHS Practitioners which has been informed by the Australian OHS Body of Knowledge and the capability statements developed by the Board. Two industry-based projects on OHS capability are now being conducted to develop a user guide for the framework.

1.4 The view ahead to 2016

With most of the universities providing OHS education now having one or more accredited programs the emphasis in 2015-16 will be on the outcomes of the review and adjusting the criteria and process to ensure the continual development of accredited programs. Activity around the OHS Body of Knowledge will focus on the development of a viable funding model to enable the development of additional chapters.



Discussion between the SIA and the Accreditation Board have resulted in a greater alignment of objectives and activities while ensuring independence of the Accreditation Board in standard setting and accreditation decisions.

Pam Pryor
Registrar

July 2015

Mike Capra
Chairperson



2 Core principles

2.1 Purpose statement

To contribute to workplace health and safety by facilitating the education of graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills to enter the workplace as effective entry-level OHS professionals.

2.2 Vision

That OHS professional education is based on strong scientific and technical concepts, evidenced-informed, delivered by suitably competent persons and so recognised by the profession, government, industry and the community.

2.3 Mission

To ensure that OHS professional education is based on educational design and review processes, and delivery of learning appropriate to develop graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills to enter the workplace as an entry-level generalist OHS professional.

2.4 Corporate and business structure

The Accreditation Board is created under the By Laws of the Safety Institute of Australia. As such it is auspiced by the Safety Institute of Australia but is independent in its decision-making regarding standards and accreditation of OHS education programs. The SIA By Laws describing the governance arrangements for the Accreditation Board were revised in December 2012.

Membership of the Board is an honorary non-executive position with travel expenses for meetings and for participation in assessment panels reimbursed. The chair of the Board is determined by the Board members. Members the Board are appointed as individuals based on their expertise and experience related to the activities of OHS professionals and the education of OHS professionals. The Board is supported by a registrar which is a part time remunerated position.

3 Operating environment

3.1 The Australian WHS Strategy and Safe Work Australia

Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-2022, with the vision of a *Healthy, safe and productive working lives* includes the strategic outcome that *those providing work health and safety education, training and advice have the appropriate capabilities*. The activities of the Accreditation Board align with this strategic outcome.

3.2 Higher Education Sector

The Higher Education sector comprises 39 public universities, 14 of which provide OHS professional education programs. While universities are self-accrediting in that they can develop, approve and provide qualifications without reference to outside bodies there are professional education accreditation bodies for most professions. Thus the work of the Accreditation Board aligns OHS with other professions in this area.



Interviews with Heads of School and as part of accreditation have indicated a pressure from the university hierarchy for accreditation.

As with last year, the difficulty in recruiting suitably qualified people to OHS academic/teaching roles particularly at the Associate Professor level continues. This not only presents a challenge to quality education but may impact on achievement of the Australian Strategy objective that those who provide OHS education have appropriate capabilities.

All stakeholders in the Higher Education Sector, including those such as the Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board, are being impacted by the current uncertainty around the implementation of the education policy of the Federal Government and the possibility of changes in Commonwealth/State relationships.

3.3 Vocational Education and Training (VET)

The quality of training in the VET sector generally continues to be an issue with a number of media reports on the matter. While there are some good providers the quality of OHS training in the sector continues to be a concern. While employers are expressing their distrust of VET OHS qualifications especially those delivered in short course online format there is evidence that the competition provided by such programs delivered at low cost is making quality training delivered over a longer period and at a higher cost to the student unviable. Thus the options for quality training are becoming fewer in number.

The Federal Government is in the process of implementing significant change to the VET sector with revised standards for RTOs, and a total restructure of the governance arrangements and organisational structure for bodies developing training packages, qualifications and competencies. While the revised standards for RTOs may lead to some improvement in critical areas it is unclear at this stage whether the changes will lead to improvement on OHS qualifications in the VET sector.

3.4 The OHS profession

The OHS Body of Knowledge for Generalist OHS Professionals, first published in 2012, continues to contribute to the OHS professional profile receiving interest and acclaim both in Australia and internationally.

A profession wide certification process for Generalist OHS Professionals is being implemented by the Safety Institute of Australia in 2015. Certification is the third outcome of the OHS Body of Knowledge project and brings OHS in line with other professions such as accountancy, engineering and dietetics. Accredited professional qualifications are a key requirement for certification.

3.5 Industry demand

While the actual drivers are unclear there is an increasing demand for university level OHS qualifications for OHS roles with Masters qualifications being consistently required for higher level positions. While the demand for good OHS professionals is still strong the qualitative responses in a recent salary survey revealed the following:

- OHS professionals need to be qualified to give the role credibility “just like other professionals in the organisation” but there needs to be a balance between technical knowledge and being a capable business leader who can “engage and execute”



- 35% of organisations found attracting talented professionals within salary banding a key challenge
- Quality of candidates did not match salary expectations
- Difficulty in attracting quality candidates to regional and remote locations
- While the pool of candidates is larger than in recent years companies are spending significant time in identifying and verifying true talent.

4 Background: The first three years

The Australian OHS Education Accreditation Board is a direct outcome of the OHS Body of Knowledge project funded by WorkSafe Victoria. The establishment and first year of operation of the Accreditation Board was funded through seed funding provided by the OHS Body of Knowledge project and a \$10,000 subsidy by the Safety Institute of Australia. The engagement of OHS educators and OHS professionals in the learning outcome workshops led the Board into breaking new ground by using the Australian Qualification Framework to develop profession-specific graduate attributes for bachelor, graduate diploma and masters programs. Being new to accreditation of professional education the Board was also the first to use the new Higher Education Standards Framework to structure the accreditation criteria. While only one program was accredited in the first financial year there was a high level of interest by universities with a further three universities achieving accreditation for six programs in the second year. In the third year the total number of universities rose to 8 with 12 programs accredited.

With the SIA becoming the owner of the OHS Body of Knowledge and the Accreditation Board being ‘custodian’ the scope of activity for the Accreditation Board expanded considerably.

A strategic and operational plan was developed to guide activities of the Board. This plan was based on the premise that in addition to the core activity of accrediting OHS programs the Accreditation Board needed to undertake activities to advocate for and support a sustainable environment for OHS professional education. This plan has been updated on an ongoing basis. Funding and resourcing have been seen as ongoing challenges from the initial development of the plan.

5. Board administration

5.1 Board structure

The Accreditation Board Charter requires that the members of the Board appoint one of their members as the chair for the 12 month period. Professor Mike Capra was appointed to continue as the chair for the period 2014-15.

5.2 Board meetings

The Board held three meetings in 2014-15; one face to face, two by GoToMeetings video/teleconference.

Meeting attendance

Meagan Browne.	3 (1part)
Mike Capra	2



David Cliff	1
Margaret Cook	2
Tim Driscoll	3 (2 part)
David Goddard	2
Bruce King	2
Jane Whitelaw	3
Leo Ruschena	2
Angela Seidel	3
Chris Sutherland	1
Deborah Vallance	2
John Green	1
Pam Pryor	3

John Green was appointed to the Board in September 2014 as an OHS Professional. John was considered an attribute to the Board but unfortunately for the Board John was transferred to the UK by his employer.

5.3 Supporting partners

Originally established for the sole purpose of accrediting OHS professional education programs the Accreditation Board has taken on a much broader role in OHS professional education and OHS capability than envisaged at its commencement. The Accreditation fees and subsidy by the SIA is insufficient to fund this broader role. The Accreditation Board has implemented a Supporting Partner Program to enable organisations who share the vision and goals of the Accreditation Board to contribute to and support the activities of the Accreditation Board. The Accreditation Board considers the partnerships as a relationship of mutual benefit and engagement.

In addition to recognition for their commitment to quality OHS education and the Australian WHS strategy Supporting Partners benefit through access to advice on OHS capability as it applies to their specific situation..

6 Report against Strategic Plan

The strategic plan and operational plan for the Accreditation Board was first developed by the Board in June 2012. The plan was mapped against the strategic outcomes of the Australian National WHS Strategy 2012 -2022 and the strategic plan for the Safety Institute of Australia. The plan has been reviewed at the end of each year and updated as a focus for activities for the following year. The status of actions as at 30th June, 2015 against the strategic plan is summarised below.

1	Program development	Priority	Status	
1.1	Define learning outcomes for new graduate OHS professionals	Important	Active	2015
1.2	Support capability of OHS educators	Important	For review	2015
1.3	Provide OHS Professional Educator Award	Important	Postponed	
1.4	Provide OHS Education Awards (in liaison with SIA)	Important	Ongoing	Annual
1.5	Offer strategic consultancy	Desirable	Active	
2	Program accreditation			
2.1	Maintain accreditation criteria	Critical	New activity?	2015
2.2	Conduct accreditation assessments	Critical	Active	Ongoing



2.3	Monitor accredited programs	Critical	Active	Annual
2.4	Review of accreditation process	Critical	Active	One-off 2014/15
3	Recognition of OHS qualifications and OHS professional development programs			
3.1	Maintain accredited program register	Critical	Active	Annual
3.2	Map equivalence of international qualifications	Desirable	On request	
3.3	Liaise with relevant agencies regarding quality of VET OHS qualifications that are part of practitioner certification	Important	For monitoring	
3.4	Advocate for a sustainable environment for OHS education	Critical	For review	
4	Body of Knowledge			
4.1	Maintain web site	Critical	Active	
4.2	Conduct activities to review, analyse and update OHS Body of Knowledge	Critical	Active	
4.3	Disseminate OHS Body of Knowledge and OHS research to OHS educators and OHS professionals	Important	Active	
4.4	Support research	Important	Consider proposal	
5	Engagement			
5.1	Maintain web site	Critical	Active	
5.2	Conduct accreditation briefings	Critical	As required	
5.3	Engage with and influence relevant Australian groups	Critical	Active	
5.4	Engage with and influence relevant international bodies	Important	Active	
5.5	Provide information on accreditation and OHS education	Important	Active	
5.6	Make conference presentations	Important	On request/ as appropriate	

7 Long term strategy

7.1 Strategic and operational plan

The strategic plan for 2015-16 and ongoing has been reformatted to align with the objectives of the SIA and to reflect the contribution the Accreditation Board makes to the SIA profile and objectives. The plan approved by the Accreditation Board in July 2015 is available on the Accreditation Board web site.

7.2 Opportunities and challenges for 2015 and beyond

7.2.1 Opportunities

While certification of Generalist OHS Professionals will be voluntary this is likely to create demand for accredited qualifications.

The OHS Body of Knowledge and the role of the Accreditation Board as custodian present opportunities for recognition of the work of the Accreditation Board, influencing the profession and the perception of the profession by others.

Supporting partners represent not only a source of income but an opportunity to engage with industry in range of ways.



International engagement, particularly in the project work on developing an international framework for the OHS profession has provided an opportunity to bring an international perspective to the Australian OHS professional scene as well as influencing the international work at the ground level.

7.2.2 Challenges

While the opportunities are broad the major challenge continues to be budget and resources to achieve the strategic and operational plan. Succession planning for the Registrar role should be considered over the next two years.

Internal university, and external factors impacting on the supply of qualified and experienced OHS educators remain a challenge in the operating environment.

8 Financial Report

Income for the year was \$94, 050. This was comprised of the regular sources of income from accreditation fees, supporting partners and the SIA subsidy. Expenditure for the year was \$85,534. This is made up of expenses of \$22,434 plus \$63,100 in human resources.

With an opening balance of \$18,674 and net income of \$8516 the year closed with an equity of \$27,234.



