



## **Quick Update: OHS Researchers and Educators**

**November, 2016**

Dear OHS Educators and Researchers

As 2016 draws to a close we have some news items and also information on OHS education accreditation leading into the 2017.

### **Membership of the Accreditation Board**

Membership of the Accreditation Board includes representatives of the five OHS professional bodies (SIA, AIOH, HFESA, ANZSOM and AFOEM) as well as independent OHS professionals, OHS academics, the ACTU, employers and OHS regulators. As part of the refreshment of the Board membership we welcome three new members.

**Genevieve Hawkins** and **Graham Jackson** join the Board as independent OHS professionals. Genevieve and Graham join Angela Seidel. Executive General Manage OHSE and Risk at PMP Limited.

Genevieve is General Manager, Health, Safety and Wellbeing at Coles. Originally trained as an occupational therapist, Genevieve has tertiary qualifications in OHS, change management and management and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and CPMSIA. With more than 20 years working across a range of OHS roles Genevieve brings a wealth of experience to the Accreditation Board as well as a desire to contribute to the quality and relevance of OHS professional education to supporting sustainable businesses.

Graham is Director Safety at Transport NSW. Holding a Master in Health and Safety and Environment Law from the UK, Chartered Membership of IOSH and an Australian Chartered OHS Professional, Graham has worked in OHS, rail and construction safety since the early 90s. Graham brings a broad view to OHS and OHS education that workers, customers and the public are equally important; his philosophy is that people are the solution not the problem in safety.

See <http://www.ohseducationaccreditation.org.au/category/news/> for media release.

With the retirement of Dr Margaret Cook who is taking up the Presidency of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of Australia, the Accreditation Board welcome **Dr Alison Bell** as the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFESA) representative on the Board. Dr Bell is a senior lecturer in the Work Health and Safety program at the University of Wollongong; a Certified Practicing Ergonomist with tertiary qualifications in OHS and education. Alison has had a varied career moving from clinical occupational therapy roles in injury management and workers' compensation to safety management, ergonomics and human factors. Her research interests include work-related musculoskeletal disorders.

See <http://www.ohseducationaccreditation.org.au/category/news/> for media release.

Early in 2017 the Accreditation Board will be calling for expressions of interest from OHS educators who are leading or involved in the delivery of OHS professional education in the Higher Education Sector.

### **Accreditation of OHS education from 2017**

In keeping with our policy of aligning OHS accreditation standards with those of the university regulator, TEQSA, new criteria for accreditation of OHS qualifications will apply from January 2017. The new criteria also take account of outcomes of the review of implementation conducted in 2014-15. These criteria will

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apply in their entirety for new accreditations and will be gradually introduced through the annual review process for programs already holding accreditation.

For programs applying for new accreditation or re-accreditation in 2017 the following documents are available under the *Provider* tab at [www.ohseducationaccreditation.org.au](http://www.ohseducationaccreditation.org.au).

Accreditation Information Pack, 2017

Accreditation Application Pack, 2017

Mapping of accreditation standards 2012-16 to the new standards 2017

Fee schedule, 2017.

As always, the registrar is available via email or phone for further information or clarification of any queries on accreditation.

## **Annual review of accredited programs, 2017**

Accredited programs will be expected to move to address the new standards over time rather than wait until the next accreditation assessment is due; the annual review report will require reporting on specified criteria each year. In line with the risk-based approach applied by TEQSA, the specified criteria to be reported on will be based on identified areas of risk.

In addition to the standard response questions and update on areas for improvement, the annual report to be made in **May, 2017** will require accredited programs to report on the following criteria:

- Credit through recognition of prior learning is granted only if the integrity of the course and qualification are maintained. Where credit recognition is granted the student completes an eligible program ie: at least half of the credit points and one year equivalent full time are OHS units at AQF 7 level or above.
- Student progression through the program is monitored so that trends in rates of retention, progression and completion are monitored as a basis for review and improvement

The annual review process has delivered ongoing improvement in the quality of OHS professional education. Most programs complete the majority of their action items within one year moving to sign off or monitoring in the second year post accreditation.

The Accreditation Board is cognizant that while five years is a common duration for accreditation there is a high potential for significant changes during this period which may impact on the quality of delivery of the program and the student learning experience.

To ensure the ongoing credibility and rigour of OHS accreditation while minimising the impost on universities and course coordinators the Accreditation Board will be implementing a range of review strategies for programs in their second, third and fourth years post accreditation. Such strategies may include but not be limited to:

- Access to the LMS to monitor evidence against nominated criteria
- Online interviews with program coordinators and/or other staff to clarify queries
- Online interview with students to obtain feedback on certain criteria
- On site visit.

Further information on the annual review process will be provided to program coordinators shortly.



## **Accreditation, the Government and TEQSA**

The Australian Government recently commissioned a review of professional accreditation programs in Australia. The objective of this review is to provide an overview of the accreditation landscape, describe current practices and trends and highlight opportunities for more efficient collaboration. Participation by the OHS Education Accreditation Board in the review consultation processes revealed that OHS accreditation processes rate highly on user-friendliness, professional support, flexibility and low cost. The review has identified four issues for accreditation generally:

- Training of reviewers
- Benchmarking
- Risk management approach
- Requirement for robust annual reviews.

TEQSA is also undertaking a review of its processes to more fully engage with professional accrediting bodies. The engagement is being facilitated through *Professions Australia* which supports an Accreditation Forum for its member bodies. Through the Safety Institute of Australia membership of Professions Australia, the OHS Accreditation Board is an active member of the Forum and related consultation activities.

The OHS Accreditation Board is in the process of drafting an MOU with TEQSA. We will keep you updated on this.

A merry and safe holiday season to all and looking forward to 2017 for a productive year for OHS professional education.

Regards

**Pam Pryor, Registrar**

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