

THE SCIENCE THRESHOLD LEARNING OUTCOMES: REVIEW AND UPDATE

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It is now over ten years since the science Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs) were developed (Jones et al., 2011). These provided high-level learning outcomes for bachelor-level science degrees and have been widely used to inform and evaluate curricula (Jones et al., 2021). This experience has generated evidence that national standards can play a key role in curriculum development and quality assurance, improving science degrees and providing accountability. However, much has changed in the higher education over the last ten years, not just from the COVID-19 pandemic, but also because of a growing recognition of the need to incorporate employability and cultural competence into science degrees. The rise of work-integrated learning and indigenisation of the curriculum reflect these trends but neither is evident in the TLOs. The pandemic has also raised questions about the necessity of hands-on practical experience, which may impact learning outcomes for some science disciplines.

The Australian Council of Deans of Science is keen to review and update the TLOs to better reflect best practice and provide a forward-looking approach for the sector. The original TLOs were developed consultatively across the sector and we will aim for widespread consensus for any changes. In this workshop, we will review the TLOs and discuss how well they reflect current practice. Modifications and additions to the TLOs will be evaluated, with the aim of contributing to a revised set of TLOs for the future.

REFERENCES

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