

ALIGNING AN AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM WITH THE NATIONAL SCIENCE THRESHOLD LEARNING OUTCOMES

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ABSTRACT

A number of discipline groups have recently published Standard Statements, which contributed to the national regulation and quality assurance framework currently being developed in the higher education sector. In the science discipline, this included a statement describing the nature and extent of science and threshold or minimum levels of achievement (threshold learning outcomes) that can be expected of a bachelor level graduate. The aim of this project was to demonstrate that the nationally agreed Threshold Learning Outcomes (TLOs) for Science can be adapted successfully to the specialist, agricultural science discipline. Here we report on the development of course-level learning outcomes using the process of peer-to-peer professional learning of teaching staff in the School of Agricultural Science and qualitative feedback from a survey of teaching and research staff in the School and more widely in the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture. Key findings are that a statement on the nature and extent of agricultural science needs to capture its multi-disciplinary nature and that TLOs should also incorporate minimum levels of achievement in vocational knowledge. The process will serve as a model for wider dissemination of TLOs within UTAS and other universities.

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