



Australian Government



Office for  
Learning & Teaching

# Teaching development in Research spaces

## *reframing teaching development in the doctoral curriculum*

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# The Project

*Reframing the PhD for Australia's future universities* is designed as a conversation starter to explore the feasibility and desirability of reframing the Australian doctorate. The purpose of the project is to promote discussion throughout the sector regarding the rationale and 'shape' of the Australian PhD, **particularly in relation to teaching**. The project puts Golde & Walker's (2006) notion of disciplinary stewardship to (different) work.

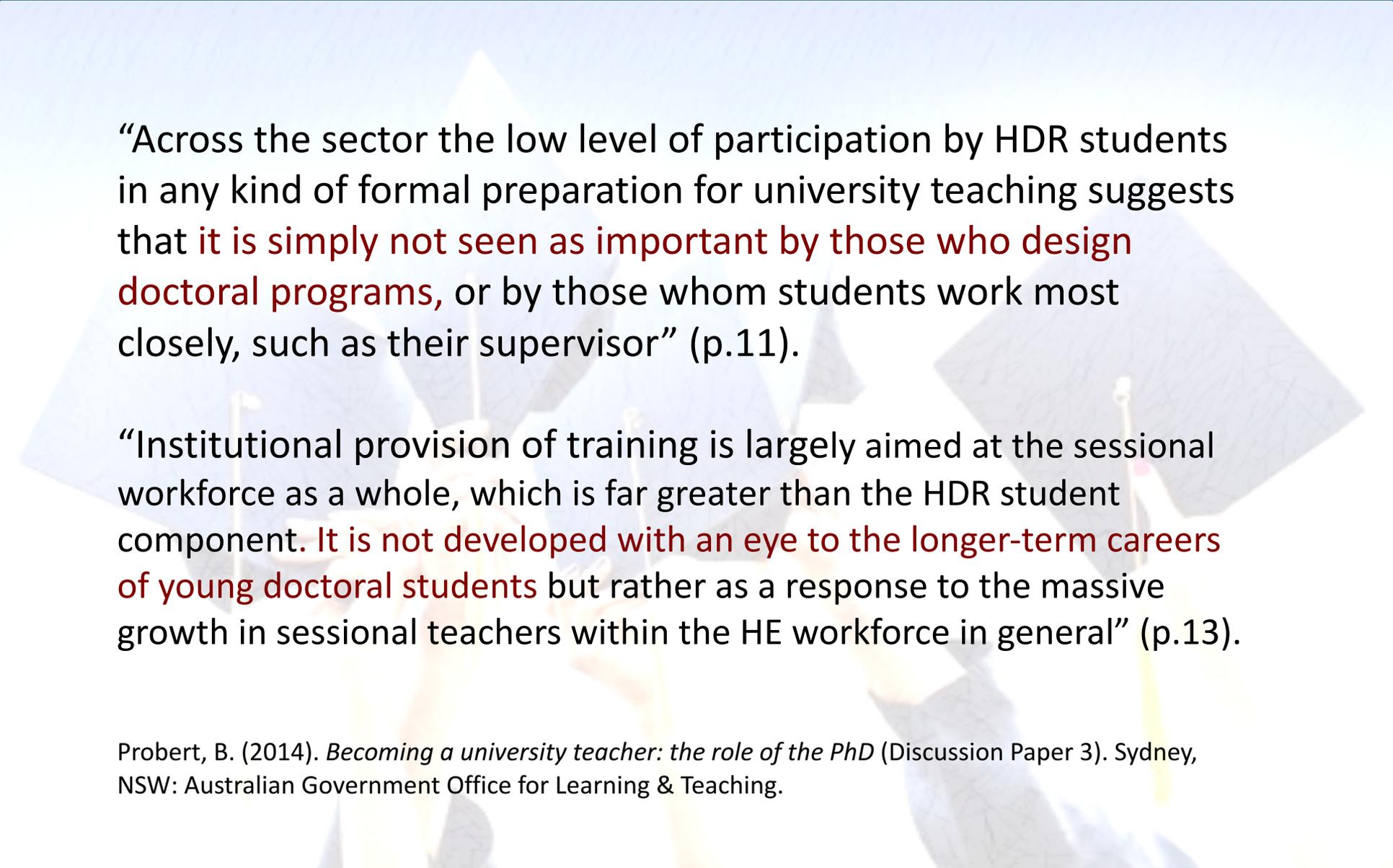
# Briefing Papers

1. Teacher-development strategies and PhD programs
2. Stewardship: a way of analysing, integrating and providing intention to the curriculum of the Australian PhD
3. Embedding teacher-development strategies in the PhD learning spaces
4. Opportunities for developing stewardship in the Australian PhD
5. *Forthcoming*

Visit: <http://reframingphd.com.au/> #reframingphd

# Teaching development in the (Australian) doctorate

- What's the issue? How is it framed as a problem for the HE sector?
- Findings of our literature review
- The project's approach to reframing teaching in the doctorate
- Practical examples (extending the data collected from our institutional project partners)
- What view of teaching/teacher preparation and development?



“Across the sector the low level of participation by HDR students in any kind of formal preparation for university teaching suggests that **it is simply not seen as important by those who design doctoral programs**, or by those whom students work most closely, such as their supervisor” (p.11).

“Institutional provision of training is largely aimed at the sessional workforce as a whole, which is far greater than the HDR student component. **It is not developed with an eye to the longer-term careers of young doctoral students** but rather as a response to the massive growth in sessional teachers within the HE workforce in general” (p.13).

Probert, B. (2014). *Becoming a university teacher: the role of the PhD* (Discussion Paper 3). Sydney, NSW: Australian Government Office for Learning & Teaching.

# Categories of teacher development strategies for PhD students

1. Teacher development through **courses**
2. Teacher development through **practice**
3. Teacher development via **informal learning**

## Issues remain...

1. No description of change in the research agenda of the PhD (teacher preparation and development is in addition to an existing research curriculum)
2. Does teaching preparation (currently designed and conceived) offer a limited view of teaching – foregrounds ‘skills’?

# Doctoral learning spaces (a curriculum?)

1. The research project / thesis
2. Supervision
3. Intellectual climate (in and out of the academy, and online)
4. Skills development opportunities

# 1. The research project / thesis

## Researcher development

Formulating, designing and testing research questions and the processes to address those questions. Developing a deep understanding of the topic and its relation to the field. Conducting research, documenting and writing about the project and shepherding it in some form of thesis. Wrestling with how the project offers a new contribution to knowledge.

## Teacher/teaching development

A PhD student prepares and synthesises the essence of their project and explains it to others who are in a learning situation. The PhD student invites feedback on the explanation and uses that information to assess and improve its effectiveness for next time.

## 2. Supervision

### Researcher development:

Supporting, guiding and challenging the PhD student to develop as a researcher, using the research project/thesis as a vehicle for that learning. According to Lee (2012) supervision includes five elements: *functional* (project management); *enculturation* (induct student into the disciplinary communities); *critical thinking* (questioning and analysis of work); *emancipation* (questioning and analysis of self) and *relationship development* (enthusiasm, nurturing).

### Teacher/teaching development:

PhD students are invited to participate in the peer feedback of other students' written work and research presentations in a group supervision setting. A discussion about criteria and exemplars form part of the negotiation process.

A meeting between the PhD student and supervisor focuses on the interpretation of student feedback results, and how best to respond as a teacher.

### 3. Intellectual climate (in and out of the academy, and online)

#### Researcher development:

Supporting the PhD student to build networks and connections with other researchers in order to progress their current and future research. Students observe, learn and engage in the micro-practices of enacting and challenging the discipline with others (including a variety of audiences beyond the academy). These interactions can shift and/ or expand their projects.

#### Teacher/ teaching development

PhD students use their participation in a departmental grant writing team to learn skills in planning and justifying a new curriculum project, course or unit – a core part of an academics' teaching duties.

## 4. Skills development opportunities

### Researcher development:

An assortment of voluntary learning opportunities: workshops, seminars and short courses that the PhD student chooses to undertake to be an effective contemporary researcher. Topics might include ethics, information searching, intellectual property, writing, curating an online researcher identity, or preparing a CV.

### Teacher/teaching development:

A short course on intellectual property and copyright for researchers can inform PhD students' learning about their responsibilities in identifying, tagging, and acknowledging the proper use of digital curriculum artefacts.

# Possibilities and limitations for teaching preparation within these doctoral learning spaces

- Research contexts are conducive to scholarly discussions about L&T
- Knowledgeable people able to extract lessons for teaching preparation from researcher development processes
- Requires a scholarly view of L&T (thinking, practice, habits and dispositions) rather than a technical one (Kreber 2002)
- Capability to make sense of lessons for teaching at the point of the activity's emergence
- Non-linear view of development (assemblages of sense-making that could be made whole)
- Not necessarily subject based; nor tied to particular student cohorts (or size) or usual L&T institutional routines and rhythms

# References

- Kreber, C. (2002). Teaching excellence, teaching expertise, and the scholarship of teaching. *Innovative Higher Education*, 27(1), 5-23.
- Macfarlane, B. (2007). Beyond performance in teaching excellence. In A. Skelton (ed.), *International perspectives on teaching excellence in higher education* (pp. 48-59). London: Routledge.
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