



# ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR MARKETING IN THE AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

Prepared by the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party,  
sponsored by the Australian Business Deans Council.

More information on the project can be found at  
[www.MarketingLearningOutcomes.com](http://www.MarketingLearningOutcomes.com)

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The Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party is grateful for the significant contributions made by members of the marketing community in academia and in practice.

## Background

In August 2011 the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) commenced operations. Established by the Australian government, TEQSA has both a regulatory and quality assurance function. Its primary aim is to ensure that students receive high quality education at any Australian higher education provider.

From January 2012, TEQSA will evaluate the performance of higher education providers against the new Higher Education Standards Framework,<sup>1</sup> which comprises the following five domains:

- Provider Standards,
- Qualification Standards,
- Teaching and Learning Standards,
- Information Standards, and
- Research Standards.

Teaching and learning standards have not yet been developed and it is unclear if they will be given 'threshold' status.<sup>2</sup> The initial discussion paper<sup>3</sup> proposes a separation of teaching standards from learning standards, which are respectively defined as:

- *“those dimensions of curriculum, teaching, learner support and assessment that establish the pre-conditions for the achievement of learning and educational outcomes fit for the awarding of a higher education qualification; and*
- *the explicit levels of attainment required of and achieved by students and graduates, individually and collectively, in defined areas of knowledge and skills.”*

TEQSA will undertake a combination of quality assessments and compliance assessments. Quality assessments can take the form of either a review of a single provider or a thematic review of an issue across multiple providers. Compliance assessments will focus on auditing specific providers against the threshold standards for registration as a higher education provider.

Threshold standards are those minimum standards which all higher education providers in Australia must meet and are based collectively on the provider standards and qualifications standards.<sup>4</sup>

Given that TEQSA will assume its quality assurance responsibilities that will be guided by agreed threshold (or minimum) standards,<sup>5</sup> it is the establishment of threshold learning standards in the discrete discipline of marketing that is the primary subject of this document.

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<sup>1</sup> *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* (Cth).

<sup>2</sup> Lane, B 2011, “Teaching standards to affect provider status, says Carol Nicoll”, *The Australian*, 24 August, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_1](http://is.gd/mlowp_1).

<sup>3</sup> *Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations* 2011, “Developing a framework for teaching and learning standards in Australian higher education and the role of TEQSA”, discussion paper, June, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_2](http://is.gd/mlowp_2).

<sup>4</sup> Please see definitions of key terms in the glossary.

<sup>5</sup> The initial discussion paper by the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations states, “TEQSA is not the only custodian of standards, nor are higher education institutions. This responsibility is distributed and shared more widely, including with disciplinary communities and professional associations” ([http://is.gd/mlowp\\_2](http://is.gd/mlowp_2), p. 7).

Chapter 3, s 1.2 of *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2011* (Cth) provides that there should be robust internal processes for design and approval of the course of study, which take account of external standards and requirements, e.g. published discipline standards ([http://is.gd/mlowp\\_11](http://is.gd/mlowp_11)).

## Discipline Threshold Standards

In 2009 the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) established the Learning and Teaching Academic Standards project, a national collaborative project to develop threshold learning standards for one discipline within each discipline group as a demonstration for development of learning outcomes for other disciplines within those groups. The approach to be followed is highly consultative across all relevant communities in the following broad disciplines:

- architecture and building,
- arts, social sciences and the humanities,
- business, management and economics,
- creative and performing arts,
- engineering and ICT,
- health, medicine and veterinary science,
- law,
- science.

Discipline Scholars were appointed by the ALTC for each of these disciplines to assist disciplinary communities across the Australian higher education landscape to reach consensus on minimum threshold learning standards in 2010. The Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) took a leading role. Accounting is the first discrete discipline for which threshold learning standards have been established within *Business, Management and Economics*. The Accounting Learning Outcomes Working Party was charged with developing threshold learning outcomes for Bachelor Degrees and Masters Degrees (Coursework) in accounting. The *Learning and Teaching Academic Statement for Accounting* was endorsed by the Accounting Expert Advisory Group and then by the Australian Business Deans Council in late 2010. The final version was published by the ALTC in March 2011.<sup>6</sup>

In April 2011 the ABDC established a project under the leadership of Professor Mark Gabbott (Executive Dean at Macquarie University) to develop threshold learning standards for graduates of Bachelor Degrees and Masters Degrees (Coursework) in marketing. ABDC appointed Professor Mark Gabbott to lead the project and establish a broadly representative Marketing Expert Advisory Group and a Working Party to reflect University and Private Provider interests.<sup>7</sup> The ABDC appointed Associate Professor Mark Freeman as ABDC Scholar, previously ALTC Discipline Scholar, to assist with the process. Following a call for expressions of interest, the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party was established, chaired by Professor Andre Bonfrer of the Australian National University.<sup>8</sup> This working party was charged with the development of these threshold learning standards. The project relied heavily on consultation with the marketing academic and practitioner communities in Australia.

## Scope of the Project

### External standards and provider diversity

The marketing profession does not have an established set of externally prescribed standards to which marketing practitioners must subscribe. Consequently the scope and thresholds articulated in this document are not based on requirements external to the higher education sector but rather are reflective of higher education practice in recognising expertise within a generalist program such as the Bachelor of Business.

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Learning and Teaching Council 2010, *Learning and Teaching Academic Statement for Accounting*, December, <[http://is.gd/mlowp\\_10](http://is.gd/mlowp_10)>.

<sup>7</sup> Please refer to Appendix 2 for full details.

<sup>8</sup> Please refer to Appendix 1 for full details.

The threshold standards for marketing do not imply any prescription for student admissions, teaching, assessment or curriculum design. These remain the province of each higher education provider, which continues to individually determine its own programs and activities to support the achievement of the learning standards by its students.

### **Definitions of Bachelor and Masters Degree in marketing**

The qualifications covered by this document are Bachelor Degrees in marketing, which fall within the definition of Level 7 of the Australian Qualifications Framework.<sup>9</sup> The project also covers a subset of those degrees that fall within Level 9, namely Masters Degrees (Coursework). It excludes Bachelor Honours Degrees (Level 8), Masters Degrees (Research) (Level 9) and Doctoral Degrees (Level 10). The learning standards for these research-focused programs will be developed under a separate collaborative project.

Under the AQF definition of level 7, graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing are expected to have broad coherent knowledge and skills useful for professional work and for further learning. In Australia, higher education institutions have two types of degrees that fit AQF Masters Degrees (Coursework), namely Entry-level Masters Degrees and Advanced Masters Degrees. An Advanced Masters Degree serves to deepen pre-existing knowledge and skills. In contrast, students undertaking an Entry-level Masters Degree have typically completed a first degree in a discipline other than marketing. The latter students have developed not only a set of non-marketing knowledge and skills but also generic skills from their first degree and/or work experience. An Entry-level Masters Degree serves to build upon the latter in a marketing context and ensure graduates achieve learning standards required of Masters Degree (Coursework) as defined in AQF level 9.

### **Content within marketing degrees**

A bachelor degree in marketing is defined as any Bachelor Degree that contains a notional duration component of at least 33% of marketing content. Typically, but not exclusively, these degrees carry a marketing reference within their nomenclature such as:

- Bachelor of Marketing,
- Bachelor of Business (Marketing),
- Bachelor of Arts (Marketing),
- Bachelor of Commerce (Marketing), or
- Bachelor of Science (Marketing).

Such degrees typically contain various combinations of marketing subject concentrations in the forms of majors and minors.

A Masters Degree (both entry-level and advanced) in marketing is defined as any Masters Degree that contains a notional duration component of at least 50% of marketing content. Typically, they carry a marketing reference within their nomenclature such as:

- Master of Marketing,
- Master of Business (Marketing),
- Master of Arts (Marketing),
- Master of Commerce (Marketing), or
- Master of Science (Marketing).

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<sup>9</sup> *Australian Qualifications Framework Council 2011, "Australian Qualifications Framework", 1<sup>st</sup> edition, July, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_0](http://is.gd/mlowp_0).*

Where marketing is studied as part of a joint, double or dual degree or a double major then the marketing threshold standards should be applied in conjunction with any other applicable standards.

## Marketing content

Marketing content includes, but is not limited to, topics such as advertising, consumer behaviour, direct marketing, distribution, integrated marketing communications, international marketing, macro-marketing, marketing management, marketing principles, marketing research, pricing, promotions management, sales management, societal marketing and strategic marketing. Marketing content may also include more specialised topics focusing on industries (e.g. marketing of pharmaceuticals or financial products), practices (e.g. social media), or emerging technologies (e.g. Internet marketing) or methods (e.g. marketing metrics). These topics do not necessarily equal separate for-credit units of study. For example, a provider may structure a sequence of case-based workshops throughout the year with each workshop synthesising multiple topics encompassing both marketing and non-marketing content.

## Masters versus Bachelor Degrees

In our definition, the duration devoted to marketing content contained in a Masters Degree is raised to 50%. The reason for the higher proportion devoted to marketing content at this level reflects the fact that the minimal notional volume of learning prescribed in the AQF for a Masters Degree (Coursework) is shorter than for a Bachelor Degree. This applies equally to an Entry-level Masters Degree and an Advanced Masters Degrees.

## Guiding Principles

To assist in the process of development, the working party has committed to the use of seven guiding principles. These are:

1. **Learning standards reflect threshold not aspirational standards:** the learning standards developed will be the minimum expected to be achieved across all providers rather than focusing on ideal, niche or aspirational standards which may be met by only a minority of institutions on a consistent basis;
2. **The learning standards will not include statements about how they will be assessed:** institutions will retain the autonomy to determine their own assessment methods to ensure that students have demonstrably met the standards set;
3. **The number of learning standards will be limited to the minimum necessary to avoid compromising provider diversity while still assuring public confidence:** given the expected TEQSA obligation that institutions will assess and report against the standards, the number of standards should be limited to the minimum number necessary to assure public confidence, in order to streamline the compliance process;
4. **Learning standards will reflect AQF and international standards:** the working party will reflect existing expectations as articulated through the AQF (2011) and international standards (specifically, AACSB and EQUIS) when developing the Australian marketing threshold learning standards;
5. **Learning standards will be developed using an evidence-based approach relevant to contemporary practice which is appropriately documented:** the working party will draw on the experiences of cognate disciplines and existing research to reflect international

best practice in the development of the standards and will document the process for the benefit of future developers of standards;

6. **The process for standards development will be collaborative, iterative and incorporate feedback from multiple sources including industry and academia:** the working party will consult widely to ensure maximum input from marketing academics and practitioners to maximise the relevance of the standards to all stakeholder groups; and
7. **Each threshold learning standard will incorporate an appropriate illustrative example:** the working party will provide relevant examples from marketing practice, with the purpose of clarifying the meaning of the agreed standards for professional and academic marketing communities. These are purely for illustrative purposes and are not intended to be exclusive in any way.

## Development and Consultation Process

The working party developed this document relying both on consultation and secondary sources.

The first draft was constructed from secondary sources, including academic literature and existing statements of learning outcomes for programs that were obtained from Australian higher education providers. The draft also borrowed extensively from *Learning and Teaching Academic Statement for Accounting*.<sup>10</sup> The first draft was presented to the Marketing Expert Advisory Group on 16 September 2011.

The second draft was informed by the feedback received from the MEAG. MEAG endorsed by it and it was made public on the Marketing Learning Outcomes website.<sup>11</sup> During October and November 2011, twelve workshops were held at locations throughout Australia, to engage the marketing community in discussion about the second draft of this document. A separate feedback session was conducted at the ANZMAC conference in Perth on 28 November 2011. The second draft was also discussed in separate sessions with the Western Australia Chamber of Commerce and Industry and with an AMI group in Victoria. The document was also shared with the Education Sub-Committee of the Academy of Marketing in the UK for further feedback on 14 December 2011.

Informed by these discussions and feedback sessions, the third draft was prepared for the MEAG meeting on 15 December 2011.

Discussion at that meeting helped shape the fourth draft, which was the basis for formal feedback collected through a survey of marketing practitioners and academics in February 2012. The survey focussed on the specific learning standards developed to date and allowed respondents to both rate the standards and to provide additional qualitative inputs. Overall, there was a high level of support for the learning standards. Please refer to the Marketing Learning Outcomes website<sup>12</sup> for details of the survey results.

The fifth draft took into account the suggestions and opinions raised in the survey. It was presented to the MEAG on 23 March 2012. After it was endorsed by the MEAG, the final version of this document was presented to the ABDC. After endorsing it in August 2012 it was publicly released to the higher education community in September and submitted it to the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency.

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<sup>10</sup> Australian Learning and Teaching Council 2010, *Learning and Teaching Academic Statement for Accounting*, December, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_10](http://is.gd/mlowp_10).

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.marketinglearningoutcomes.com>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

## The Nature and Extent of Marketing

Before describing the marketing threshold standards, it is important to contextualise marketing as a contemporary business practice. This section discusses what “marketing” is, how it fits in with related disciplines, what careers a typical marketing graduate expects to embark on after graduation, and the role of professional bodies relevant to marketing professionals.

### What is marketing?

The scope and nature of marketing has changed significantly over the past three decades from its initial transaction-based commercial focus through to its current broad, relationship-focused application across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Consequently what constitutes marketing activity and the breadth of the marketing profession is in a constant state of evolution.

One professional association, the Australian Marketing Institute, uses a definition of marketing provided by Roberts and Styles (2000):<sup>13</sup>

*“Marketing creates value – for customers, shareholders and society as a whole. It does this by creating an alignment between what consumers value and what organisations offer. It offers techniques that help firms better understand the needs, preferences and perceptions of their customers (a prerequisite to adding value to them), and ways of using that understanding to focus the value-creating and communicating activities of the firm into areas where they will be most effective”*

Many Australian professional associations rely on the definitions of two major international professional marketing authorities, the US-based American Marketing Association (AMA) and the UK-based Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM).

The AMA (2007) defines marketing as:

*“the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.”*

The CIM<sup>14</sup> has identified that “marketing as a function may now be at the point where it could benefit from subdivisions”. Specifically the CIM<sup>15</sup> outlines three core specialisations within marketing that, when combined, make up the whole discipline. These are:

- **Science**, which involves skills and expertise in statistics, technology, metrics, research, analysis and research and development;
- **Arts**, which covers the creative elements of marketing, including branding, advertising and communication; and
- **Humanities**, which acknowledge the broadened base of marketing and is inclusive of social, ethical, cause-related, and not-for-profit marketing, as well as the triple bottom line, business sustainability and the use of marketing in the public sector.

The CIM’s position is that marketing is

*“The strategic business function that creates value by stimulating, facilitating and fulfilling customer demand.”*

and expands on the role of marketing by stating that

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<sup>13</sup> This definition was kindly provided by Mark Crowe, CEO of the AMI, from internal records.

<sup>14</sup> The Chartered Institute of Marketing 2010, “Shape the agenda. Tomorrow’s word. Re-evaluating the role of marketing”, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_3](http://is.gd/mlowp_3).

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

*“it does this by building brands, nurturing innovation, developing relationships, creating good customer service and communicating benefits.”*

The definitions used by the AMI, AMA and CIM are all consistent with the notion that the role of marketing within the organisation is strategic but that to achieve marketing objectives, a range of discipline-focused and skilled tasks are required at the tactical and implementation levels. It is developing the capacity to understand and undertake these tasks that is at the core of marketing education.

Marketing requires a combination of relevant practical and theoretical skills. For example, in the context of developing a website, marketing graduates are not only expected to be able to edit HTML documents but also know where to best place a banner advertisement on a page and understand why it is most likely to be effective in this position.

As marketing has matured, its application has extended beyond the purely commercial and its initial focus on physical goods to encompass services, not-for-profit organisations, social marketing and government. Whilst the practice of marketing requires modification depending on product and context, the core principles of marketing remain constant across sectors and industries and have remained consistent over time.

These core principles include:

- a commitment to customer orientation,
- a clear focus on goals,
- practice informed by theory,
- strategies driven by customer insight based on research,
- a focus on mutually beneficial exchanges,
- market segmentation,
- recognition of direct and indirect competition, and
- the use of a mix of methods and tactics through the implementation of the marketing mix.

Given the pervasiveness of marketing in everyday life, marketing also has a social impact and therefore social responsibility to ensure that it not only considers short term organisational benefit, but acknowledges and addresses potential adverse impacts on society. As stated by the CIM:

*“With a customer-centric view, marketing brings positive return on investment, satisfies shareholders and stakeholders from business and the community, and contributes to positive behavioural change and a sustainable business future.”*

Based on the international frameworks and discussion of what constitutes marketing, combined with trends within the Australian marketing profession and education system, the working party has taken a broad-based view of the discipline. Specifically the working party recognises the diversity of marketing activities and recognises that marketing encompasses elements of “science” and “art” as articulated by the CIM. It further recognises the importance of marketing as a social influence and is cognisant of the legal, ethical, and social implications of marketing practice. In developing threshold learning standards, all three aspects incorporating the science, art, and social impact of marketing need to be considered.

## **Relationship to Other Disciplines**

Marketing’s complexity can be traced in large part to the fact that it is a derivative discipline which draws heavily on the theories, models and technical expertise of cognate disciplines. The key disci-

plines which influence marketing theory and practice are economics, psychology, sociology and geography.

Specifically, economics has a strong influence on the analytical and statistical orientation of marketing-focused research and market analysis. Psychology theory heavily influences the understanding of consumer behaviour and communications. Sociology similarly impacts on understanding of consumers and the upstream influences on consumer behaviour. Geographical modelling is used in the implementation of regional market analysis and market segmentation.

## Relevant Professional Bodies

Marketing professionals in Australia are represented by, and are eligible to be members of, both generic marketing associations and specialist sub-disciplinary associations. The key marketing associations to which Australian marketers tend to belong are the Australian Marketing Institute (AMI), Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy (ANZMAC), Marketing Association of Australia and New Zealand (MAANZ), Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM), American Marketing Association (AMA/US), the International Special Events Society (ISES) and Meetings and Events Australia (MEA).

Associations which represent specialist sub-disciplines of marketing or cognate fields of employment for marketing graduates include Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA), Australian Direct Marketing Association (ADMA), Australian Association of Social Marketing (AASM), Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS), Australasian Professional Services Marketing Association (APSM), The Communications Council (CC), Interactive Advertising Bureau Australia (IAB Australia), Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA) and Sponsorship Australasia (formerly the Australian Sponsorship Marketing Association).

The Australian Marketing Institute recognises marketing professionals through the implementation of the Certified Practising Marketer (CPM) program. CPM status is awarded on the basis of a combination of marketing qualifications, experience, and ongoing professional development. The AMI also accredits certain tertiary education courses. The Marketing Association of Australia and New Zealand (MAANZ) offers professional accreditation through the Chartered Institute of Professional Practitioners.

## Marketing Careers

Reflecting the diversity of the marketing discipline, marketing graduates are employed in a wide range of positions across the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. Based on an analysis of marketing school websites in Australia, higher educational institutions prepare graduates for employment in organizations of all sizes ranging from small business through to multinational corporations, and at all levels of the organization ranging from tactical through to managerial to strategic. Careers can focus either on business-to-business marketing or business-to-consumer marketing.

Typical roles for marketing graduates can be found in the following areas: communication, public relations and advertising, marketing research and analysis, social marketing, logistics and distribution, retailing, sales, relationship management, new product development and product management, direct marketing, brand management, sponsorship, events management, e-commerce, and electronic marketing.

Marketing graduates may be involved in the following tasks:

- Research related to marketing and marketing activities, to generate a comprehensive understanding of the firms' customers, competitors, core competencies, business and social environment.
- Dividing the markets into segments, identifying and evaluating the different segments, targeting and positioning of the marketer's offerings within the targeted segments.
- Development of strategic and tactical marketing plans in line with overall strategic focus of the organisation.
- Day to day implementation of the marketing plan, including activities such as developing and managing products which satisfy customer needs, managing the logistics and distribution of products, communicating product and brand benefits and developing long term customer relationships.
- Evaluation of the performance of the marketing activities and changing activities where necessary to achieve objectives.
- Reporting of marketing planning and performance to other stakeholders internal and external to the organisation.

Graduates of a Bachelor Degree can be expected to be employed in entry-level positions in any of the above areas but typically receive on-the-job training and this, coupled with their experience, will further develop skills to allow them to transition into leadership roles. Students undertaking an Entry-level Masters Degree often have a background in management and are becoming more involved in marketing. After graduation, graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree can expect to be employed on a career track towards higher-level marketing management positions. Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree are usually employed in higher-level and more specialised marketing positions, which could also lead to more senior roles. In all cases, graduates undertake these roles with an expectation of requiring further self-development and context-specific training and experience to supplement their respective degree.

## Marketing Threshold Standards

### Definition and purpose of threshold learning standards

In this section we present our current compilation of marketing learning outcomes that will reflect threshold standards. The standards are designed to reflect the AQF definition of learning outcomes:<sup>16</sup>

*“Learning outcomes are statements of what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of learning.”*

The TEQSA discussion paper distinguishes learning standards, as what students must achieve, from teaching standards, which focus on inputs and processes to assist students to achieve learning outcomes.

It is important to recognise that no single learning standard is pursued or evidenced in isolation.

For example, consider the task of designing a marketing communications strategy as part of developing a new advertising campaign. This task involves analysis (for example an analysis of what information customers need, and how to target customers), communication (the design of an advertisement to best convey a message) and judgement (judging the best approach to test the advertisement, and working together with a team of professionals across organisation boundaries, to design and implement the campaign).

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<sup>16</sup> Please see definitions of key terms in the glossary.



Figure 1. Graduates must use multiple learning outcomes for any marketing task.

### Distinction across levels in each learning standard

We distinguish across the three degree levels in learning standards based on the difficulty of the activity, the complexity of the context, the body of knowledge and level of autonomy.

The difficulty of the activity increases from routine (e.g. running promotions for existing brands in existing categories) to evolving (introducing brand extensions or launching a new brand to an existing category) to emerging/new (e.g. launching of a new product in a new category or in a different country).

The context can increase in complexity, from straightforward situations (e.g. retailing products in a single category) to more diverse (managing a portfolio of brands) to complex situations (with many relationships, ambiguous relationships, missing data; for example an entrepreneur with limited funding looking for ways to develop their business).

At all levels the body of knowledge is both theoretical and practical. The body of knowledge increases from foundational (e.g. classical models of information processing, or knowledge of the practical framework of the hierarchy of effects model in advertising) to nuanced foundational and contemporary (e.g. contemporary models of psychological licencing) to specialised or in-depth (e.g. theories of non-linear pricing to capture market segments with different values).

Autonomy refers to the level of supervision under which the graduate is expected to operate. These range from being closely supervised by a more senior colleague to more self-directed autonomy wherein the graduate is expected to have greater responsibility for decision making.

Given the above dimensions, we make the following assertions regarding each level of degree:

1. **Graduates of a Bachelor Degree deal with routine tasks, in straightforward contexts, under close supervision and possess broad and coherent foundation knowledge.**
2. **Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree deal with evolving tasks, in diverse contexts, under less supervision than Graduates of a Bachelor Degree, and possess both foundational and contemporary knowledge.**

3. **Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree deal with emerging/new tasks, in complex contexts, under minimal supervision, and possess an advanced (specialised and in-depth) level of knowledge.**

### Learning outcomes

In developing these standards the working party took into consideration the pre-existence of a range of generic graduate attributes articulated within the tertiary education sector. These generic attributes include skills such as the ability to work collaboratively in groups.

The standards proposed here are in addition to these generic graduate attributes and are designed to be specific to the needs of marketing professionals, marketing researchers and marketing educators.

Learning outcome	Level		
	Graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing will be able to:	Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to:	Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing will be able to:
<b>Social responsibility</b>	Evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for routine marketing tasks	Evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for evolving marketing tasks	Evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for specialised marketing tasks
<b>Analysis</b>	Obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence-based decisions for routine marketing tasks in straightforward contexts	Obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence-based decisions for evolving marketing tasks in diverse contexts	Obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence-based decisions in emerging or new marketing tasks in complex contexts
<b>Knowledge</b>	Critically apply a broad and coherent knowledge of foundational marketing theories, concepts, practical principles and processes	Critically apply a broad and coherent knowledge of foundational and contemporary marketing theories, concepts, practical principles, and processes	Critically apply a broad, coherent and in-depth knowledge of foundational and contemporary marketing theories, concepts, practical principles, and processes
<b>Judgement</b>	Exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for routine marketing tasks in straightforward contexts	Exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for evolving marketing tasks in diverse contexts	Exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for emerging or new marketing tasks in complex contexts
<b>Communication</b>	Effectively communicate straightforward marketing ideas in selected personal and group contexts	Effectively communicate diverse marketing ideas in a broad set of personal and group contexts	Effectively communicate complex marketing ideas in a broad set of personal and group contexts

### Notes (with examples)

This section provides background and further explanation of threshold learning standards and high-level examples of possible evidence of achievement. Several examples will be used to assist in clarifying meaning and possible ways toward developing evidence of threshold performance in the learning outcomes. The examples are illustrative of typical marketing tasks that graduates are expected to be able to work with.

We draw from a range of resources to justify and illustrate these threshold learning standards, including academic literature that has examined learning outcomes,<sup>17</sup> combined expertise of members of the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party and input from a number of institutions around Australia. In all cases, examples are merely indicative and neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.

## Social responsibility

We expect graduates of all levels to be able to apply social, ethical, regulatory, moral and legal standards relevant to the profession,<sup>18</sup> understand the impact of applying those standards in everyday work situations and the impact of the resulting marketing activities on society. This learning standard includes understanding the rationale for basic consumer protection standards, regulations, and laws, legal constraints on competitive conduct. Marketing graduates are not expected to be trained in legal practice but rather understand which laws are likely to apply in given situations and know when to seek expert legal advice.

This learning standard also includes understanding the need for business sustainability in terms of long-term versus short-term strategic planning, and understanding the need for balancing the organisation's activities to achieve a mix of corporate goals, including social and financial goals.

### **Graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing will be able to evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for routine marketing tasks.**

For example, graduates should be able to come up with ethical considerations for the design of a communication message for an established product, targeted at young children. They should also be aware of the organisation's need to adhere to relevant consumer protection laws, for example when developing a promotion.

### **Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for routine and evolving marketing tasks.**

For example, graduates should be able to make objective ethical evaluations for an application software service that is able to obtain and store a new type of private information about customers and their behaviour.

### **Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing will be able to evaluate relevant ethical and legal considerations in an impartial way for specialised marketing tasks.**

Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree must be able to make arguments for or against a marketing issue in specialised contexts. For example, graduates should be able to develop ethical evaluations for segmented pricing, taking into consideration how different groups of customers may consider pricing fences and metrics to be unfair.

## Analysis

Analysis involves understanding the marketing environment within which the organisation operates and its various stakeholders (including customers, suppliers, channel members, competitors and

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<sup>17</sup> Gray, B, Whiten, J & Knightbridge, K 2002, "What Skills Do Marketing Students Need?", *ANZMAC 2002 Conference Proceedings*, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_14](http://is.gd/mlowp_14);

O'Brien, EM & Deans, KR 1995, "The position of marketing education: a student versus employer perspective", *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 47–52, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_5](http://is.gd/mlowp_5);

Walker, I, Tsarenko, Ye, Wagstaff, P, Powell, I, Steel, M & Brace-Govan, J 2009, "The Development of Competent Marketing Professionals", *Journal of Marketing Education*, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 253–263, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_6](http://is.gd/mlowp_6).

<sup>18</sup> Members of marketing-related professional associations are expected to adhere to the codes of conduct of those organisations.

investors). Analysis also includes the measurement of performance of the organisation in its past and current activities. In general, analysis is concerned with the design, evaluation and implementation of appropriate quantitative and qualitative marketing research, necessary for the identification of opportunities, strengths, threats, and weaknesses facing the marketer. Obtaining data involves the collection of data using a variety of instruments. Examples of such instruments include observational techniques, internal accounting and sales information systems, customer surveys, in-depth interviews, and focus group interviews. Analysing and interpreting data involves using appropriate ways to transform data in ways that make it useful for addressing marketing tasks.

**Graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing will be able to obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence based decisions for routine marketing tasks in straightforward contexts.**

For example, a graduate of a Bachelor Degree will be able to work on a survey that measures attitudes or preferences toward a brand for a sample of customers. They would then be able to use this data to identify sub-groups of customers for which the organisation's marketing effort is not meeting its goals and identify what adjustments may be needed in the marketing mix.

**Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence based decisions for evolving marketing tasks in diverse contexts.**

Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing are expected to work on more difficult tasks in contexts where there could be a higher paucity of data available for decision making.

For example, a graduate of an Entry-level Masters Degree should be able to work on designing and implementing a market research plan that is useful for identifying which product categories that a firm could target with a brand extension. This could require an assessment of the brand's strengths in related categories, understanding the possible overlap of customers among incumbent and new product categories, and developing a survey to assess the fit of the brand to the new product. It could also include assessing the new competitive challenges faced by having a brand enter a different category, with possible implications for the marketer's core business.

**Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing will be able to obtain, analyse and interpret data relevant to making evidence based decisions for emerging or new marketing tasks in complex contexts.**

Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree are expected to have more advanced abilities as a result of their specialisation in one or more areas.

For example, a graduate of an Advanced Masters Degree may specialise in pricing, and that involves techniques that are more suited for such tasks. This could require that they be able to design and implement a research approach to measure willingness to pay (price sensitivity) for a radically new product where there are no direct competitors upon which to base a reference price.

## Knowledge

The learning standard involving both understanding and application deals with marketing knowledge. It is also covered by AQF and the EQUIS/AACSB accreditation agencies. Examples of such knowledge include the rationale why marketers segment markets, the need for integrated marketing communication, the role of different pricing mechanisms, the role of the customer in the marketing planning process, the role that various channel members play in distribution, the need for and process of branding, media types and vehicles available, marketing analytics and customer performance metrics.

**Graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing will be able to critically apply a broad and coherent knowledge of foundational marketing theories, concepts, practical principles, and processes.**

As an example a graduate of a Bachelor Degree may have a coherent understanding of the models of consumer decision making and critically apply this knowledge to identify the key mechanisms by which to persuade consumers towards a desired marketing outcome.

**Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to critically apply a broad and coherent knowledge of foundational and contemporary marketing theories, concepts, practical principles, and processes.**

For example, graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree could, in addition to the foundation knowledge of the models that explain how consumers make decisions, and critique contemporary theories of persuasion for application in a given situation.

**Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree will be able to critically apply a broad, coherent and in-depth knowledge of foundational and contemporary marketing theories, concepts, practical principles, and processes.**

We expect graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree to have gained a deeper level of understanding of the same topics, reflecting their more extensive training in such topics. For example, a graduate of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing could assess the suitability of alternative communication mixes on persuading consumers to a preferred outcome.

We expect graduates of a Masters Degree (Entry-level or Advanced) to possess a similar broad and coherent knowledge of the philosophical foundations of marketing as that of a graduate of a Bachelor Degree in marketing. However, this could be further supplemented by a practical and managerial understanding of what this means in practice for organisations, or more in-depth knowledge of the application of these philosophical foundations in one or more applied or substantive areas.

## Judgement

Judgment in marketing can include identifying opportunities for product, market and customer development, setting objectives, developing the most appropriate research methods, constructing a marketing communication strategy, and choosing the best supplier or distributor to achieve a marketing objective. At all levels, this learning standard requires graduates to be able to identify options, balance the advantages and disadvantages of different options, appropriately weight the risk and consequences of such options, and make recommendations.

**Graduates of a Bachelor Degree will be able to exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for routine marketing tasks in straightforward contexts.**

The key to this learning standard is to find the best solution for the marketing task a graduate faces. For example, when designing a communication campaign for an existing consumer electronic product, a graduate of a Bachelor Degree should be able to come up with different options for how to run promotions, and justify and recommend the best promotion to meet the organisation's sales objectives.

**Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for evolving marketing tasks in diverse contexts.**

For example, a graduate is able to identify, evaluate and recommend an appropriate message for a brand extension, and make suggestions about how to reallocate the communications budget across the brand's original and extended categories.

**Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing will be able to exercise judgement to recommend appropriate solutions for emerging or new marketing tasks in complex contexts.**

Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree are expected to work on more difficult tasks in making judgments and be able to do so in more complex marketing contexts. For example, graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing are expected to be able to make recommendations for improving the utilisation of a limited communications budget for a new product launched by a small business.

## **Communication**

The communication learning standard is designed to encompass both communication and collaboration, for contexts that are internal and external to the organisation. Collaboration and communication are seen to work together and involve both verbal and non-verbal methods of communication in interpersonal and group situations as well as mass communication. Communication covers one off communication events as well as the ongoing communications required for relationship building and maintenance. Fundamental to effective communication is a need to be cognisant of the diversity of the audience, and requires an understanding of the background, knowledge, motivation and interest of the audience.

**Graduates of a Bachelor Degree will be able to effectively communicate straightforward marketing ideas in selected personal and group contexts.**

Graduates of a Bachelor Degree in marketing are expected to be able to effectively present marketing-related concepts within the organisation's marketing team, to explain the logic and rationale justifying some decision being made, and develop and clearly present rigorous arguments justifying decisions. For example, a graduate of a Bachelor Degree would be able to discuss and justify the choice for a basis for segmentation with other marketing colleagues, and work together with a team of other marketers to discuss the implications of such segments to marketing practice to a diverse audience. Typically, the audience would be internal (e.g. the marketing or project team) or the graduate would be expected to be able to jointly present ideas to a group of stakeholders external to the marketing team.

**Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree in marketing will be able to effectively communicate diverse marketing ideas in a broad set of personal and group contexts.**

Graduates of an Entry-level Masters Degree are expected to be able to work with more diverse marketing ideas and collaborate and communicate in a wider range of contexts. For example, they should be able to explain the rationale for segmenting customers, across multiple product categories and the possible links among product categories to non-marketing employees, to senior colleagues of the organisation, and to audiences beyond the organisation.

**Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree in marketing will be able to effectively communicate complex marketing ideas in a broad set of personal and group contexts.**

Graduates of an Advanced Masters Degree should be able to effectively communicate specific ideas, with minimal supervision, with a wide range of possible audiences. For example, discussing with accounting or finance executives the value of segmenting customers for the purpose of designing and implementing a pricing structure to align the value of the segments to the organisation's financial goals. A key requirement is to be able to explain advanced concepts in a clear and concise manner, possibly to a non-marketing audience.

## Appendix 1. Terms of Reference and Membership of Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party

The ABDC prepared the following terms of reference that guided the outcomes and processes the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party:

- Review relevant pre-reading on current national and international context (e.g. Australian Qualifications Framework, Learning and Teaching Academic Standards for Accounting, UK Quality Assurance Agency benchmark statements, Tuning Business statements, AACSB white paper).
- Develop and refine drafts of threshold learning outcomes for Bachelor and Masters marketing coursework graduates considering academic, professional, industry perspectives.
- Engage actively, constructively and independently in face-to-face meetings and other forums (e.g. teleconference) and respond promptly to email requests for engagement.
- Develop and implement an appropriate process for receiving and dealing with discipline feedback from the academic, professional, industry perspectives.
- Respond appropriately and promptly to feedback for subsequent draft and final versions.

### Members of the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party at the time of completion of the project

Member	Position
Professor André Bonfrer (Chair)	Professor of Marketing, College of Business and Economics, Australian National University
Associate Professor Catherine Sutton-Brady	Associate Professor of Marketing, University of Sydney Business School
Ms Irene Powell	Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of Department of Marketing, Monash University
Mr Jeff Laurie	Head of APM College of Business and Education, Think Education
Associate Professor John Wilkinson	Associate Head of School, School of Marketing, University of South Australia
Dr Stephen Fanning	Marketing Course Coordinator at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia
Professor Susan Dann	Professor and Deputy Head of School of Business (Brisbane), Australian Catholic University
Professor Rebekah Russell-Bennett	Professor of Marketing, QUT Business School
Associate Professor Mark Freeman, CA	Australian Business Deans Scholar and Associate Professor, University of Sydney Business School

## Appendix 2. Terms of Reference and Membership of Marketing Expert Advisory Group

The ABDC prepared the following terms of reference that guided the processes the Marketing Expert Advisory Group:

- Review relevant pre-reading on current national and international context.
- Provide advice to the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party on the direction and development of threshold learning outcomes.
- Review and provide feedback to the Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party on the first and second drafts at face-to-face meetings following consultation with constituencies.
- Facilitate and support engagement and promote the national consultation process to constituencies on the second draft.

### Members of the Marketing Expert Advisory Group at the time of completion of the project

Member	Position
Professor Mark Gabbott (Chair)	Executive Dean, Faculty of Business and Economics, Macquarie University
Mr Joe Talcott	Chairman, Australian Association of National Advertisers (AANA)
Mr Ian Murray	Executive Director, Australian Institute of Export (AIEX)
Ms Lee Tonitto	Chair, Australian Marketing Institute (AMI)
Mr Mark Crowe	Chief Executive Officer, Australian Marketing Institute (AMI)
Mr Paul Fisher	Chief Executive Officer, Interactive Advertising Bureau Australia (IAB Australia)
Mr Daniel Leesong (represented by Ms Genevieve Murphy, Professional Development Manager, TCC)	Chief Executive Officer, The Communications Council (TCC)

### Appendix 3. Acronyms

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AANA	Australian Association of National Advertisers
AASM	Australian Association of Social Marketing
ABDC	Australian Business Deans Council
ADMA	Australian Direct Marketing Association
AHELO	Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes
AIE	Australian Institute of Export
ALTC	Australian Learning and Teaching Council
AMA	American Marketing Association (USA)
AMI	Australian Marketing Institute
AMSRS	Australian Market and Social Research Society
ANZMAC	Australia and New Zealand Marketing Academy
APSMA	Australasian Professional Services Marketing Association
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQUA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
BME	Business, Management and Economics
CC	Communications Council
CIM	Chartered Institute of Marketing (UK)
CPM	Certified Practicing Marketer
DEEWR	Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System
IAB	Interactive Advertising Bureau Australia
ICT	Information and communications technology
ISES	International Special Events Society
LTAS	Learning and Teaching Academic Standards
MAANZ	Marketing Association of Australia and New Zealand
MEA	Meetings and Events Australia
MEAG	Marketing Expert Advisory Group
MLOWP	Marketing Learning Outcomes Working Party

PRIA	Public Relations Institute of Australia
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency (United Kingdom)
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (Australia)
TLO	Threshold learning outcome

## Appendix 4. Glossary of Terms

### Project-specific terms

The terms below are used in the ABDC Marketing Learning Outcomes project.

Academic standards	Benchmarks or expectations of learning that have been established with stakeholders and include all factors that influence the consistency and relevance of qualifications.
Cognitive skills	Include mental skills that are used in the process of acquiring knowledge. These skills include reasoning, perception and intuition. They are defined by the skill dimension, for example, integrate, synthesise, interpret, analyse, evaluate, judge, transform.
Generic skills	Skills not specific to work in a particular occupation or industry but are important for work, education and life in general. Known also as employability skills, general capabilities or transferable skills, these skills have application in study, work and life contexts.
Learning outcomes	The set of knowledge, skills and/or capabilities a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate after completion of a learning process.
Task	A piece of work assigned or done as part of the duty of a practicing marketer.
Threshold	Minimum standard of performance, achievement or attainment.

### AQF glossary terms

The following terms used in this document are drawn from the AQF Glossary.<sup>19</sup>

Activity	see Problem.
Advanced	Knowledge and/or skills refers to the depth and specificity.
Applied	see Technical.
Autonomy	Ability to apply knowledge and/or skills with appropriate degrees of independence for the level of the qualification.
Broad	Broad knowledge/skills include those that cover a general, wide range of area learning or work.
Coherent	Knowledge and/or skills including those that are logically ordered, sound and/or integrated.
Complex	Many competing qualitative perspectives and/or quantitative perspectives characterised by considerable data items, with some possibly missing, many variables and known relationships between most of them.
Comprehensive	Knowledge and/or skills covering a complete area or field of work or learning.

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<sup>19</sup> Australian Qualifications Framework Council 2011, "Australian Qualifications Framework", 1<sup>st</sup> edition, July, [http://is.gd/mlowp\\_0](http://is.gd/mlowp_0).

Creative	Characterised by originality and expressiveness, involves lateral thinking and an ability to bring about change.
Diverse	Several competing or new qualitative perspectives and/or quantitative perspectives characterised by considerable data items, over multiple variables and known relationships between them.
Field	Refers to the main focus of work activities and/or a learning program.
Foundation	Basic knowledge/skills include those that form a starting point or basis for development of learning or work.
Foundation	Broad and coherent knowledge and skills relevant to professional work and further learning.
Integrate	Combine two or more kinds of knowledge and concepts, for example technical and theoretical.
Learning outcomes	Learning outcomes are the expression of the set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.
Levels	An indication of the relative complexity and/or depth of achievement and the autonomy required to demonstrate that achievement.
Major	A set of units of study within an award program combined to form a specialisation.
Mastery	Demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of their field of work or learning.
Problem	A defined task, undertaking and/or application that requires the use of theoretical and/or technical knowledge, cognitive skills, technical skills and/or generic skills.
Profession	A disciplined group of individuals who ascribe to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by, the public as having relevant disciplinary knowledge and skills in a widely recognised, organised body of learning derived from education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise the knowledge and skills in the interest of the general public. While authority to practice in a profession may or may not be regulated by legislation, practice as a 'marketer' is not regulated by legislation in Australia.
Responsibility	Refers to the degree of accountability in applying knowledge and/or skills in work and/or learning contexts for the level of qualification.
Routine	A regular or typical course of procedure with defined and identified boundaries that can be applied to a work practice, task or problem.
Skills	Refer to what a graduate can do. Skills can be described in terms of kinds and complexity. Skills include cognitive skills, technical skills, creative skills and generic skills.
Specialisation	see Major.

Specialised	see Advanced.
Straightforward	Few qualitative perspectives and/or quantitative perspectives characterised by considerable data items over multiple variables and known relationships between them.
Systematic	Knowledge and/or skills are those that are coherent and well-ordered.
Technical	Operational or applied knowledge and skills necessary to perform certain work and learning activities.
Theoretical	Relating to or based on theory.