

MEDIA RELEASE

Focus on university teaching to maintain student learning standards

20 July 2012: University academics need to be prepared for teaching if universities are to maintain high standards during the expansion and diversification of the higher education sector, according to a new book to be launched by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

University Teaching in Focus: A learning-centred approach, co-edited by the University of Western Australia's Professor Lynne Hunt and Professor Denise Chalmers, will be launched at the conference of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) in Thailand next week.

"University students need well qualified teachers who challenge them to think and understand differently," said Professor Hunt, speaking ahead of the launch.

"Universities have a responsibility to facilitate students' learning in diverse cultural, political and economic environments," she said.

The student population is expanding and becoming more diverse, and academic standards for entry into university courses are changing as a result of the Australian Government's university attainment targets and the removal of caps on student placements. The additional teaching workload may be taken up by new academics and sessional staff, many of whom have had no teaching training.

"Academics will need support to enhance their teaching if standards of student learning are to be upheld," said Professor Chalmers. "Universities and governments throughout the world increasingly require university teachers to undertake qualifications and professional development programs to prepare them for their teaching roles."

University Teaching in Focus is designed as a textbook to support these teaching development programs, and outlines practical ways that university academics can enhance their teaching.

Written by 22 international experts in higher education, *University Teaching in Focus* provides university teachers with strategies to engage students in lifelong learning, extend their capacity to solve problems, enter the workforce, understand their discipline and interact positively with others in a global community throughout their professional lives.

The book covers:

- effective classroom teaching and developing graduate attributes
- curriculum and assessment
- online, problem-based and work-integrated learning
- inclusive teaching and teaching international and Indigenous students, and
- quality assurance and leadership processes.

Lynne Hunt is Emeritus Professor at the University of Southern Queensland and Adjunct Professor at the University of Western Australia. Denise Chalmers is Winthrop Professor and Director of the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning at the University of Western Australia.

University Teaching in Focus (ACER Press, 2012) will be launched by ICED President, James Wisdom, at the ICED Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, on Monday 23 July. Print copies can be purchased from the [ACER Online Shop](#) or by contacting customer service on 1800 338 402 or via email on sales@acer.edu.au

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