The journey to a criterion-referenced assessment university: Part 1

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In September 2003, the University Academic Board of the Queensland University of Technology endorsed a new assessment policy. Most significantly, the policy stated that “the fundamental approach to assessment … will be criterion-referencing”. These few words served as a catalyst to review and critique existing assessment practices across the university while, at the same time, (re)consider current teaching and learning approaches. The year 2004 was deemed one of ‘consciousness-raising’ with the implementation of criterion-referenced assessment expected in strategic first year units. To assist in this process, Teaching and Learning Support Services trialed a range of strategies in response to academics’ requests for support. This paper highlights the shared journey to date, focusing on strategies implemented, lessons learned, major accomplishments and recommendations offered to support QUT's academics in the transition to a criterion-referenced university.

The QUT Context

Queensland University of Technology (QUT) is one of Australia’s largest universities with an enrolment of approximately 40 000 students. It is located on four campuses (Gardens Point, Kelvin Grove, Carseldine and Caboolture) and has nine Faculties and an International College offering a wide range of programs and courses in:

- Built Environment and Engineering
- Business
- Creative Industries
- Education
- Health
- Information Technology
- Law
- QUT Carseldine (Humanities and Human Services)
- Science

It formed through the amalgamation of a number of predecessor institutions including the Queensland Institute of Technology and Brisbane College of Advanced Education.

The TALSS context

Teaching and Learning Support Services (TALSS) is one of three departments in the Division of Technology, Information and Learning Support, QUT. Primarily, TALSS supports the University in achieving its aspirations in teaching and learning. A recent Regeneration aimed to enhance TALSS operations by enhancing its capacity to:

- develop a culture of scholarly and professional teaching, reflecting deep learning approaches
- strengthen quality of teaching in an integrated model which reaches across design, development, monitoring and evaluation elements
- develop a holistic approach to the planning, design and support of learning environments
- position the university for strategic partnering in response to directions and opportunities emerging in government reforms.

TALSS focuses on supporting the development of the capabilities of Learners and Teachers, resources to support learning and teaching, and environments (physical and virtual) to enhance
student learning outcomes. A close relationship is fostered and maintained with a number of other areas of the University including:

- The Academic Policy and Programs Unit who are responsible for Course Quality Assurance and Policy development in the Teaching and Learning domain
- Assistant Deans, Teaching and Learning (or equivalent) in each Faculty who chair Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees and represent their Faculty on University Teaching and Learning Committee
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) who chairs the University Teaching and Learning Committee.

The journey begins …

Following a report to the University Teaching and Learning Committee in October 2002 about faculty practices in relation to the use of bell curves, the Director of Academic Policy and Programs Unit chaired a Working Party, from October 2002 to August 2003, to review and redevelop the University’s Assessment Policy. Members of the Assessment Working Party (AWP) self-selected and included the Chairs of a number of Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees, staff from TALSS and a QUT Teaching Fellow who had focused on the development of assessment as part of his Fellowship project in 2002.

The AWP consulted widely and also drew on assessment literature and other universities’ policy documents to ensure that QUT’s revised policy would be in line with those of other Australian universities, and with international thinking and trends regarding assessment. The draft new assessment policy was submitted to the University Teaching and Learning Committee in May 2003 and included, for the first time, a clear, philosophical position on assessment with statements on the purpose and principles of assessment, and a section about the QUT approach to assessment which was clearly stated as being one of criterion-referencing. This draft was widely circulated for comment.

The final report from the AWP was presented to the University Teaching and Learning Committee in August 2003. It included the policy itself, along with:

- a rationale for criterion-referenced assessment
- suggested resource requirements for implementation
- information about the canvassing of issues that had been raised during the consultation process including subjectivity in CRA, the relationship between CRA and the current grading system, and the need for the development of Guidelines
- an implementation plan consisting of:
  - a year of consciousness-raising activities, and a focus on implementing CRA in key, first year units in 2004
  - extension of CRA to all first year units, and evaluation of the 2004 experiences, in 2005
  - extension of CRA across all units in the period 2005 to 2007, with a subsequent development of course approval procedures that would look for evidence of CRA implementation from this time on.

The policy was endorsed at the University Teaching and Learning Committee in August 2003 and subsequently by the University Academic Board. It appeared in the QUT Manual of Policy and Procedures with an approval date of 26 September 2003.
2004 – The Year of Consciousness-raising

A range of TALSS-delivered, CRA-themed activities occurred across the university during 2004 (refer Appendix 1 for a brief summary of some of these activities). During some of the earlier workshop-based activities, it became evident that a range of common concerns, queries and issues existed amongst academics in relation to the implementation of CRA. From these conversations, it also became obvious that there did not appear to be clear or simple answers in relation to many of these ‘parked issues’ (refer Appendix 2).

As part of a progress report to the University Teaching and Learning Committee on TALSS-trialed CRA strategies, these issues were tabled for consideration. It was acknowledged by the University Teaching and Learning Committee that academics were hindered in progressing with their assessment-related work without definite guidelines on several aspects of CRA. To this end, a reformed Assessment Working Party, consisting of three Assistant Deans (Teaching and Learning) and a TALSS Associate Director, worked to address several of the most pressing issues in a relatively short time frame. After wide consultation, its report was tabled to the University committee in October 2004, with eight recommendations endorsed in response to issues regarding:

- resources
- terminology
- the QUT grading scale
- the minimum number of performance standards requiring description
- weighting of elements of criteria
- weighting of assessment tasks
- assigning grades for assessment tasks
- the accepted approaches to deriving the overall grade of a unit.

Despite the parked issues and stumbling blocks throughout this consciousness-raising year, the following initiatives in our journey to a criterion-referenced assessment university are worth reflecting upon. They provide different examples of the work to which academics have committed themselves and also demonstrate the potential for sustainability of ‘good assessment’ practices that will enable the journey to a criterion-referenced university to continue in 2005 and beyond.

QUT Teaching Fellowships, Scheme B

In 2002, TALSS introduced a new program to enhance teaching development at QUT. The Teaching Fellowship scheme provides the opportunity for academic staff to be seconded away from their normal duties to focus on a teaching development project. The scheme initially focused on individuals formulating their own teaching development focus and working either full time or half time to complete a major project.

Recently a new program, Teaching Fellowship Scheme B, was introduced which offered the opportunity for Course Coordinators to enter a Community of Practice for one day per week focused on a key priority area in Teaching and Learning. In 2004, the priority area was deemed to be assessment and 12 academics were accepted into the Scheme to complete project work in this area. Representing a range of Faculty and discipline contexts, their one day per week was divided between individual projects and group workshops, seminars and discussions. One of the major outcomes of the 2004 scheme has been the development of various contextualised resources by the Teaching Fellows that will support their Faculty-based colleagues with the implementation of CRA.
At the completion of the Teaching Fellowship projects, each Teaching Fellow becomes a member of the Teaching Fellowship Alumni, committed to involvement, where and when possible, in assisting TALSS to achieve further university-related teaching and learning priorities. The outcomes of the 2004 Teaching Fellowships, Scheme B, are yet to be fully realised, with 2005 brimming with potential as QUT moves forward in its journey to a criterion-referenced university.

**Creative Industries Faculty**

In August 2003, the Creative Industries (CI) Faculty set up a Faculty Assessment Working Party to ensure that it was prepared to meet the requirements of the new Assessment Policy. The Working Party included representative Heads of Discipline areas within CI (one of whom took the role of Chair) and representatives from TALSS and the Library. The Working Party developed and implemented a plan for phasing in CRA that included:

- identification of units to be targeted in the first phase; these were units that had been noted at Examiners’ meetings as having either very high or very low failure rates
- a Faculty-wide presentation about the new policy and the approach that the Faculty planned to adopt
- targeting of a number of Faculty staff to apply for a 2004 QUT Teaching Fellowship, Scheme B
- the incorporation into the Faculty’s template for Unit Outlines, a requirement that Unit Outlines should now include an Appendix outlining the criteria to be used for assessment (but not necessarily standards in the first instance)
- engagement of TALSS to present a two stage workshop process with Unit Coordinators identified with the first phase Units; these workshops provided an overview of CRA and included opportunities for staff to raise issues and questions about CRA and the implementation process.

During this period the Faculty had also instigated a number of curriculum reform initiatives including reviewing curriculum, teaching and assessment responses to the QUT Graduate Capabilities statements for the Faculty as a whole as well as within particular discipline areas. Following on from the initial CRA workshops and as the Faculty realised the potential for the introduction of CRA to prompt reflection on broader issues of curriculum design, it was decided that the Faculty would engage consultancy services from TALSS to facilitate the equivalent of two full days of workshops with each of the 11 discipline areas to:

1. develop discipline specific outcomes that work from the QUT and draft CI Graduate Capabilities
2. review Discipline/Course specific outcomes previously developed
3. review and refine Discipline/Course criteria and broad graduate standards
4. map course outcomes across units
5. discuss collated mapping of units to Discipline/Course outcomes to identify gaps and overlaps
6. in selected units (2-4):
   a. develop authentic assessment tasks
   b. develop specific criteria and standards for authentic assessment tasks
   c. develop innovative teaching and learning approaches that support authentic task/s and the demonstration of criteria
d. rework Unit Outlines and Detailed Unit Outlines to reflect any changes

To date, these workshops have been highly successful in achieving the intended outcomes, involving all full-time academic staff within disciplines (as much as was possible) in the process. The Creative Industries Faculty have since committed further funds to extend this work in 2005.

**QUT International College**

The QUT International College provides a range of courses, including Diploma, Foundation and Bridging, to a diverse range of international students seeking entry into Australian University degree programs.

In January 2004, the Director of the QUT International College (IC) contacted TALSS seeking assistance with the implementation of the new Assessment Policy. As many of the units delivered by the IC feed directly into undergraduate degree courses at QUT, staff were concerned that their students may be disadvantaged if the College did not adopt and implement the new Assessment Policy.

From initial conversations, two assessment-themed workshops were designed and delivered by TALSS (with heavy emphasis on CRA), and were well-attended by College staff. These workshops became a catalyst for further engagement by IC staff in the implementation of CRA and other aspects of the Assessment Policy at the College. One important initiative has been the timetabling of a specific timeslot into all full-time and sessional academics’ workloads to enable them to meet together to discuss assessment-related issues. These Assessment Learning Circles (ALCs) occur weekly for a minimum of one hour, with a TALSS staff member in attendance as often as possible to participate in the conversations and provide further assistance as needed.

The ALCs enable the IC staff to remain very focused on the assessment-related work that needs to be done, and peer review and commentary about each other’s progress and actual work to date have been integral to the ALC format. Some outcomes achieved to date include the:

- development of foundation course criteria – Knowledge; Critical thinking and problem solving; Skills and procedures; and Communication
- alignment of units to course criteria and foundation graduate capabilities, and the updating of unit outlines to reflect this approach
- adoption of a ‘critical friend’ model to examine unit outlines, eg, reviewing the wording and alignment of learning objectives to teaching and learning approaches and assessment tasks, enabling staff to (re)explore the notion of curriculum alignment and its role in course/unit design
- review and (re)development of assessment tasks, eg, clearly articulating links to learning outcomes, supported by criteria sheets and other useful guide/s to completing these tasks; questioning the number, timing and types of assessment tasks; and revising the place/role of formative and summative assessment in the program.

Most recently, the IC academics have been discussing the use of criteria sheets with examinations, as well as the wording of performance level standards – an ongoing challenge. This very dedicated group are emerging as a ‘leading light’ along the road to a criterion-referenced assessment university, with TALSS committed to continuing the support of the College staff in 2005 who, it is hoped, will provide some very valuable CRA-related resources and insights that can be shared across the university community.

**Learning and Teaching Consultants**

As previously mentioned, TALSS recently underwent a Regeneration process which resulted in the development of a new position - Learning and Teaching Consultant (LTC). Each of the LTCs
is aligned to a Faculty and provide a means of support and communication to Faculties around the domains of TALSS work.

As a new initiative, and in response to availability of funds from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) to assist with CRA implementation, it was determined that one such LTC would be a half-time seconded member of academic staff from a Faculty. The focus for this LTC is on the TALSS implementation of Assessment Policy initiatives including the development of online resources to support staff in developing and implementing CRA approaches. A positive outcome of this arrangement has been the home Faculty redirecting the LTC’s remaining work priorities to focus on providing additional, assessment-related support to other Faculty academics. This TALSS/Faculty arrangement has so far proven successful and will continue until June 2005, with plans for this same Faculty to release one more of its academics (who has just completed a TALSS Teaching Fellowship, Scheme B) to provide further assessment-related support to colleagues (the equivalent of one day per week intensive support).

As TALSS has already experienced the merits of seconding an academic from one Faculty to provide expertise in a specific area, there are plans to second academics from four other Faculties, on a part-time basis, into TALSS in 2005.

**Teaching Capabilities Framework**

QUT recently developed a Teaching Capabilities Framework (TCF). The TCF is a statement that frames teaching practice, teaching development and teaching scholarship at QUT. One domain of the framework is Assessing for Learning.

The framework identifies scholarly goals that teachers at QUT can use to inform their teaching. The scholarly goals identified in the Assessing for Learning domain (along with the other three domains of Engaging Learners, Designing for Learning and Managing Learning) are being used to inform staff development activities around the implementation of the new Assessment Policy. Linking outcomes from these activities to specific scholarly goals highlights the importance QUT places on good practice in teaching, learning and assessment while, at the same time, enabling academics to evidence their teaching capability development for the purposes of a teaching portfolio.

*The journey continues …*

One of the major accomplishments to date has been the holistic approach adopted by academics, and some Faculties, with regard to the implementation of CRA. The new Assessment Policy has proved a catalyst for a range of initiatives as well as a multitude of challenging and, at times frustrating but always engaging discussions about teaching, learning and assessment practices.

The major lesson learned (while not uncommon) has been the importance of adequately resourcing any new initiative or policy, particularly with regard to mapping the strategies needed to support staff to ensure the implementation occurs in the way intended. There is still much work to be done but the journey has started, ‘champions’ have been identified, and strategies are in place to continue the work in 2005.

**2005 – The Year of Extension …**

As part of the implementation plan, the aim for 2005 is to extend CRA to all first year units. In addition, evaluation of the experiences of 2004 in relation to key strategic first year units will occur, with this information being used to allow the experimentation with and extension of the Assessment Policy to some higher level units. It is envisaged that Faculties will also carefully plan timeframes for these activities, including the ‘roll out’ of CRA in remaining higher level units between 2005 and 2007.
With endorsed recommendations now firmly in place, further progress can be made particularly in terms of:

- establishing criteria clearly linked to learning objectives
- reviewing the principles of curriculum design and alignment
- embedding a CRA framework in Unit Outlines
- developing authentic and well-worded assessment tasks
- adopting suitably designed criteria sheets
- writing meaningful, descriptive performance standards that support students’ learning
- determining progressive and final results
- reconsidering the role of moderation and Examiners’ meetings in a criterion-referenced university
- reviewing methods of recording, reporting and/or profiling information to improve student learning.

This is by no means an exhaustive list. TALSS staff, including Learning and Teaching Consultants and (where possible) Teaching Fellows, will continue to present information at various forums (including Teaching and Learning Committees and Management Groups), facilitate numerous staff development activities and collect, develop and generate contextualised and critically framed resources to support the implementation of the new Assessment Policy.

The potential for improved student learning, and improved teaching and assessment practices, remain major drivers for TALSS as it continues its journey alongside its partners towards a ‘genuine’ criterion-referenced assessment university.
## Appendix 1  Summary of TALSS’ CRA Activities, 2004

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Target Audience (Faculty/Division)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty/School workshops:</strong></td>
<td>Creative Industries</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction to CRA, Part I</strong></td>
<td>QUT International College</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Law</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td>Business</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Built Environment and Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty/School workshops:</strong></td>
<td>Creative Industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction to CRA, Part II</strong></td>
<td>QUT International College</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generic CRA workshops at GP and KG</strong></td>
<td>Participants from all Faculties (academic and professional staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introductory CRA Workshop - Teaching Fellows</strong></td>
<td>2003/2004 Teaching Fellows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRA Workshop – CAP</strong></td>
<td>Attendees, Casual Academic Program (CAP)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Membership - Faculty Assessment Working Party</strong></td>
<td>BEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introductory CRA Workshop</strong></td>
<td>TALSS IDs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reference Librarians</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participation in Assessment Learning Circles</strong></td>
<td>QUT International College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty/School Retreats</strong></td>
<td>Information Technology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Industries</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Implementation of critical friends framework</strong></td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Industries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>QUT International College</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development of course criteria</strong></td>
<td>QUT International College</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creative Industries</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other activities</strong></td>
<td>Collection of CRA-related resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CRA consultancy activity – individual academics and various Faculty/School groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentations – various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contribution to various committees and working parties, eg, Assessment Working Party, Assessment Management Working Group, Faculty T&amp;L Committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contribution to Teaching Fellowship Program (CRA Cohort)</td>
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Appendix 2  Criterion-referenced assessment – ‘Parked Issues’

The following issues have been raised by academics (full time and sessional) during several workshops facilitated by TALSS between February and May 2004. Academics have unanimously requested that the University provide them with clear answers and guidelines regarding these issues.

In no specific order, the issues are:

1. **Technical language** – there needs to be a shared understanding of what a criterion-referenced assessment (CRA) approach entails as well as the technical terms associated with criterion-referenced assessment such as course or unit criteria, elements of criteria, levels of performance and standards. This can easily be addressed through a range of strategies including the QUT Guidelines on Assessment, workshops, the CRA Resource Kit, website and online resources.

2. **Number of performance levels** – QUT grades students from 1-7. The literature indicates that writing standards for 4-5 performance levels is much more manageable and meaningful. When developing criteria sheets, therefore, grades could be banded together to decrease the number of performance level standards that need to be written. Alternatively, seven separate descriptors could be written for each performance level from 1-7.

   There is no, one ‘correct’ way of doing this. However, academics need assurance that whatever number of performance levels adopted by their Faculty will be acceptable to the University. This needs to be explicitly stated in the QUT Guidelines on Assessment, with appropriate examples and exemplars to assist academics.

3. **Use of numbers, words or letters** – some academics have indicated that they have used an alphabetic scale for performance levels on criteria sheets, for example:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
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</table>

   Others use descriptive words, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Weak</th>
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   This raises the issue of transparency, ie how does A-E (or Excellent-Weak) equate to 7-1, and how are students and tutors educated about this re-calculation? Once again, there needs to be an explicit statement about whether the use of letters or words for performance levels is acceptable and, if so, how conversions are managed.

4. **Weighting of criteria/elements of criteria** – academics require guidance on how best to select essential elements of criteria and then use criteria sheets to clearly indicate each element’s importance in relation to the assessment task. There also needs to be examples that demonstrate how marks and weighting can become obsolete when applying a criterion-referenced approach to assessment.
5. **Course level design** – implementing a criterion based approach to learning and assessment offers Faculties the opportunity to re-examine their course level design, determine 3-4 criteria for each Course offered, and band objectives together under these criteria with the expectation that all Units within the Course will assess students’ learning under these same criteria over the term of the degree. The Faculty of Creative Industries has chosen to proceed this way. However, this ‘whole of course’ approach takes time to plan and implement. Therefore, an exemplar of the model CI has adopted would benefit other Faculties should they choose to proceed this way. Where Faculties choose not to develop course criteria, examples of unit criteria (with banded objectives and links to assessment tasks) would also be useful.

6. **Comparability across Faculties** – many students enrol in double degrees and will expect consistency in assessment approaches across the university. Therefore, there needs to be a common understanding and acceptance of the underlying principles of CRA amongst academics (full time and sessional) to avoid confusion and/or dissatisfaction amongst students.

7. **Place of graduate capabilities** – with the adoption of course and/or unit criteria, there appears to be some confusion regarding the integration and reporting of graduate capabilities within a CRA system. This needs to be clarified in relevant documents.

8. **Standards descriptors** – many courses rely on close links and alignment with Industry. Where Industry standards are embedded in specific units, academics would welcome guidance on how best to indicate this in course/unit criteria as well as examples of how the language when writing standards for performance levels may need to be adapted from ‘educational’ to ‘industry’.

9. **Choice and design of assessment tasks** – the implementation of a CRA approach reinforces the need for sound assessment practices in courses, including the role of authentic assessment, the effective utilisation of formative assessment, the choice and variety of assessment strategies, the linking of learning objectives to classroom activities and assessment, and the integrity of assessment instruments. With these practices in place, the development of appropriate and usable criteria sheets will be easier and less time-consuming. However, it is difficult for many academics to recognise this connection (particularly in subject areas where exams are the norm and weighted heavily) without clear examples of the process and a forum to examine and discuss these issues further.

10. **Assessing performance activities** – academics would welcome examples of language (adjectives, terms and statements) to use when developing criteria sheet standards for the various performance levels to describe the assessment of these types of activities.

11. **Specificity of standards** – a balance is required between overly explicit and too implicit when writing standards’ descriptors on criteria sheets. Importantly, a shared understanding between academics, marking teams and students of the meaning of the elements of criteria, performance levels and standards must be advocated in appropriate forums to ensure the integrity of criteria sheets and assessment of work. A range of examples will help demonstrate this aspect.

12. **Shared understanding within teaching teams** – to ensure that all members of the teaching team (full time and sessional academics) understand what is being assessed and how this will occur, dialogue and discussion of the content and use of criteria sheets is essential. This may result in additional meeting times for the team, pre and post assessment, and must be factored into teaching loads (and budgets).
13. **Moderation processes** – as part of post-assessment meetings, and to ensure integrity of grades, moderation of students’ work would occur. Academics would benefit from a set of procedures when moderating students’ work against the standards (as opposed to students against students). Additionally, students (as part of transparency and accountability processes) would be informed about these procedures.

14. **Must Vs Could** – some academics have indicated a preference for being told what MUST be done, and what COULD be done, when implementing a CRA approach. This requires further discussion.

15. **Use of exemplars** – while all academics have indicated a need for examples/exemplars of criteria sheets, there is a concern that, if not developed/selected appropriately, they may be viewed as a ‘one size fits all’ resource. Therefore, the provision of these resources must be carefully planned and presented.

16. **Bell curve cynicism** – academics welcome the practice of students’ work being graded objectively against set criteria and awarded the grade deserved. However, there exists some disbelief that Faculties will cease applying bell curves to results. This needs to be reinforced in the QUT Guidelines on Assessment and other appropriate forums.

17. **Increased workload** – academics need reassuring that the adoption of a CRA approach will not increase workloads in the long term. Referral to the literature and provision of ‘real’ examples/case studies will assist here.

18. **Increased student complaints** – as above, academics need reassuring that CRA practices, when correctly implemented, will not result in increased student complaints (such as a significant increase in requests for remarks and the challenging of results). Additional guidance and examples on the wording of objectives, assessment tasks and criteria sheets will alleviate this concern as well as reference to the literature and provision of case studies of academics who have successfully implemented CRA with positive outcomes in this regard.

19. **Supporting Unit Coordinators** – as most of the work needed to change to a CRA approach will be undertaken by the unit coordinators, there have been frequent requests for University resources (funding or otherwise) to assist with this process during the transition years (2004-2007). This requires further discussion at the appropriate level.