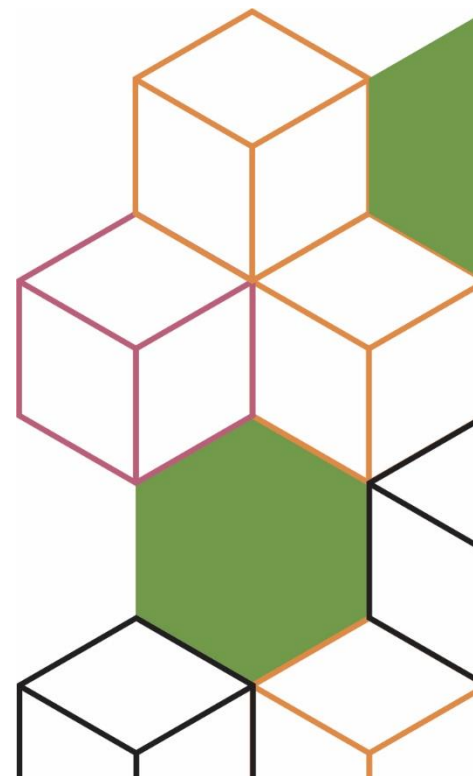


September

2023

Graduate Student
Association

**Submission to the
Framework for
Educational
Excellence at the
University of
Melbourne**



Introduction

This feedback has been collated by The Graduate Student Association (GSA) to respond to the University of Melbourne's [Framework for Educational Excellence](#) in development. GSA is the independent representative organisation for all graduate coursework and research students at the University of Melbourne. The following feedback was developed by GSA's Policy and Advocacy team, with consultation from GSA's elected representatives. Special thanks to Bridie Cochrane-Holley, GSA's Disability and Equity Officer, for her detailed insights.

GSA believes that the sentiment of the Framework captures important dimensions of an excellent education, however, the following points outline where we believe additions or changes are necessary to ensure the Framework has a lasting impact. We also acknowledge that while the framework is to be used as a guiding document, there need to be some more actionable and tangible recommendations to create meaningful change.

Student led

1. As much as possible, and throughout all relevant areas, actions should be student-led as well as staff-led. This will help to ensure that the Framework reaches its goals in the long term.
2. A plan for continuous improvement of the Framework should be in-built which is supported by rigorous feedback mechanisms from both staff and students.

Practical culture change practices

3. To fully address cultural issues, especially those most prevalent in certain schools or faculties, it is necessary for some educational processes to be significantly changed. This relates to extreme expectations of students' time and resources for the completion of assessments and subjects, which can lead to mental ill-health and burnout.

Emerging technologies

4. Transparency around the use of artificial intelligence (AI), especially for use in academic purposes such as assessment grading.
5. Incorporating emerging technologies such as AI for both staff and students as it becomes more relevant. This should be done with transparency and clear expectations and guidelines to maintain academic integrity.

Communication

6. A stronger commitment to communication with students to ensure they understand how decisions are made and internal processes which affect them.
7. Comprehensive training for staff in support services available to students.

8. Ensure resourcing for administrative staff is appropriate for the demand and does not cause significant delays for students.

Accessibility

9. A stronger commitment to remote (online), flexible, and innovative teaching, learning and working practices.

10. Training and support for staff to deliver remote and flexible education effectively.

11. The Framework should recognise that for students experiencing disadvantage, especially those being referred to under 4. *Guidance and support inside and outside the classroom*, practical, ongoing support is necessary.

12. Commitment to disability training to ensure teaching is as accessible and intersectional as possible. Minimum standards could be used to avoid impinging on academic styles.

Assessment and opportunities

13. Assessment options provided which meet student skill sets and access needs, within a set range, that students can choose from to ensure success is not measured by unnecessarily restrictive standards.

14. Review of the Assessment Review Policy to ensure the threshold requirement that students provide sound reasoning for a review is the grounds upon which the review is conducted.

15. Ensure effective assessment-review technology so that the responsibility for upholding academic integrity is on the University, rather than students with disabilities.

16. Broaden internship opportunities and quotas to facilitate more real-world experience for students.

For elaboration, or any questions, please contact Lily Day, GSA's Senior Policy and Advocacy Officer via email at lily.day@gsa.unimelb.edu.au