

[ASEM Forum on Lifelong Learning: 21st Century Skills](#)

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# **Oral assessment and oral communication skills in an oral learning culture**

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# Déroulement

- 21C skills
- Why speaking matters – four research studies
- Developing speaking skills
- The policy context

# 21st Century Student Outcomes

- “to articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using **oral**, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- use communication for a range of purposes (eg to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade)
- communicate effectively in diverse environments

[Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning]

# Research study 1: Law



**“ ...I’ll just write some kind of rubbish, whether it relates to the topic or not. But in the viva you know you’re going to look a fool so you make sure you know what you are saying.”**

**“In a written assignment you can remain quite remote from what you write.”**

**“In an exam you’re just a number but the viva’s personalized and you’re in direct contact with the people who assess you.”**

# Research study 2: Theology presentations



# Research study 2: Theology presentations



## 'David'

- More authentic
- Higher quality learning
- Deeper engagement

## 'Mary'

- More understanding
- More work
- Greater responsibility

## 'Tom'

- More preparation
- More personal
- More understanding
- More learning
- More ownership

# Research study 3: Veterinary science



- “In exams they get you to remember a specific list of something, and so you just rote learn it. You don’t understand it. Whereas a viva is more understanding.”
- “I much prefer the viva ... I think that the oral exam gives you a better chance to get across what you’re actually thinking.”
- “I think it’s been verification for me that I am going to be able to be a vet next year, in terms of speaking to people, looking at something, explaining. I think it’s been quite – it’s a validation”

# Research study 4: Acting



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# Oral assessment and skills development

- [Presenters Podium](#)
- [RADA Communication Skills Training](#)

# The policy environment

- [Australian Qualifications Framework](#)
- [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011](#)
- ~~Office for Learning and Teaching~~

# Australian Qualifications Framework

Bachelors level:

“... communication skills to present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas”

# Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011

## Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015

# The expected learning outcomes for each course of study:

- are specified
- discipline-related and generic
- employment and registration to practise
- skills in independent and critical thinking suitable for life-long learning.

# Higher Education Standards Framework

- “Teaching and learning activities are arranged to foster progressive and coherent achievement of expected learning outcomes throughout each course of study.”
- “Methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed.”
- “On completion of a course of study, students have demonstrated the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination”

# ~~Office for Learning and Teaching~~

- Threshold Learning Outcomes in the disciplines
- AAGLO

# Characteristics of tasks effective in the assessment of Graduate Learning Outcomes

- “Many tasks were multi-component in that written reports were often accompanied by oral presentations which reflected ‘real world’ practice.”
- “All reports are accompanied by an oral presentation” (Engineering)

[Hughes and Barrie 2013]



# Summing up

- Oral communication for work, life, and citizenship
- Oral assessment as a major driver of learning
- Developing oral communication skills
- The policy environment

# Some references

Australian Government 2015. Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2015. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2015L01639>

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