

Australian PhD System

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EAA Annual Congress 2016
May 11-13, 2016, Maastricht

1. Traditionally:
 - Strong accounting knowledge coming in
 - Little coursework training (general trend towards 1 year of coursework)
 - Thesis often consists of multiple papers, e.g. 2 to 3 experiments

2. Strengths:

- Entry is often via an undergraduate honours thesis or masters research degree
- Prior or year 1 research training:
 - research methods
 - audit
 - financial
 - managerial
- On the job training with a joint student/faculty paper

3. Weaknesses:

- Is 3 to 3.5 years long enough (depends on background)?
- Insufficient statistical and psychology training
- Only works where there is a match between supervisor expertise and student topic

4. Evolving problems:

- Enrolments down in honours/masters by research
 - ∴ lower or different PhD enrolments
- Traditionally many accounting PhDs were accounting faculty with masters degree
- University: one model fits all
 - examination emphasis moving from competency to independence as the main criteria
 - less risk taking with entry

5. Some positive insights:
- Some benefits of accounting training (what are the big issues) prior to research training in base discipline (e.g. psychology)
 - Multi and joint projects have generally been a success:
 - design, writing, presenting, seeing the review process
 - US moving in a similar direction with summer papers, etc.

6. Harmonization across and within countries:
 - Let universities use their comparative advantages
 - Key things to cover:
 - strong knowledge of accounting
 - importance of theory
 - appreciation of different research methods
 - practice at research
 - ability to criticize AND appreciate the strengths of paper