

Academic Program Quality Unit

# A Future in the Past? Careers in History

History Teachers Association NSW Conference: July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023



# We've All Heard It...



“History is only good if you want to be a teacher or a historian”

“You can't get a job studying history on it's own”

“History is a fun subject, but now choose something for your future”

# It Gets Repeated...

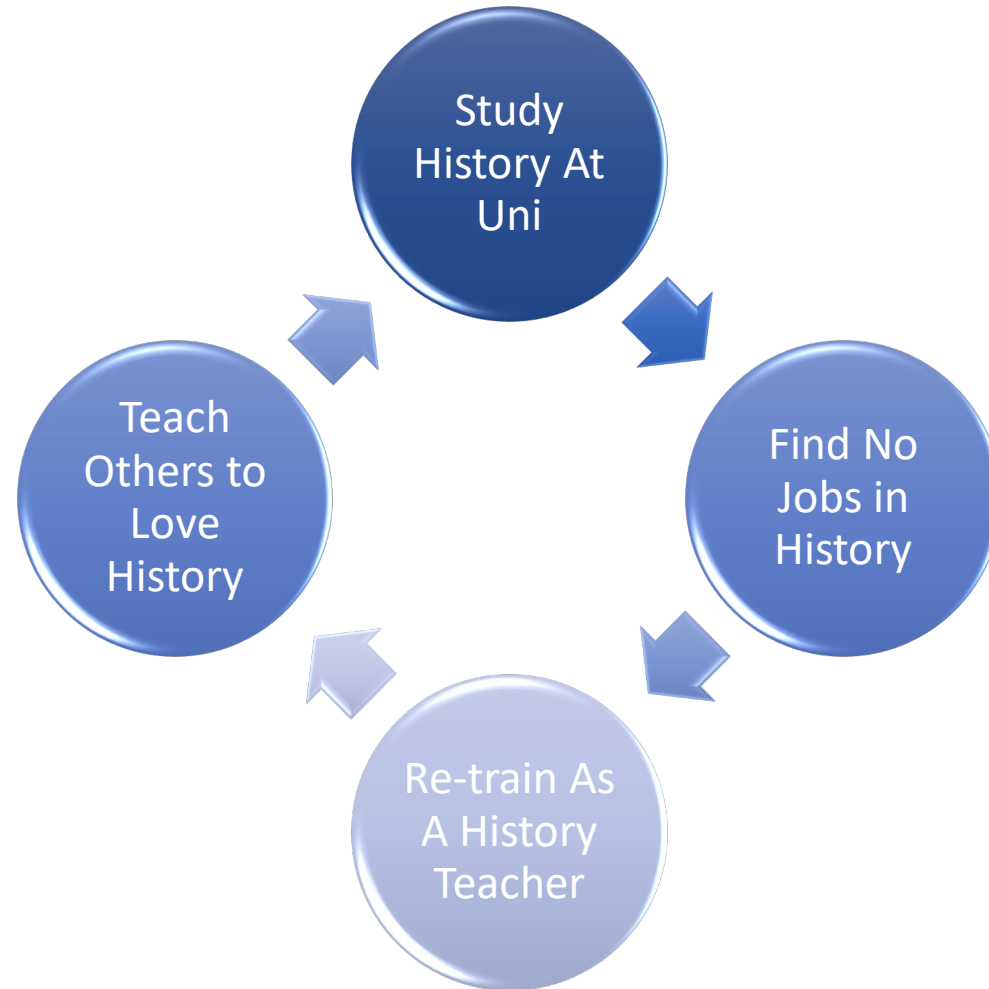


*“We are encouraging students to embrace diversity and not think about their education as a siloed degree.*

*So if you want to study history, also think about studying teaching.”*

Dan Tehan, National Press Club, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020

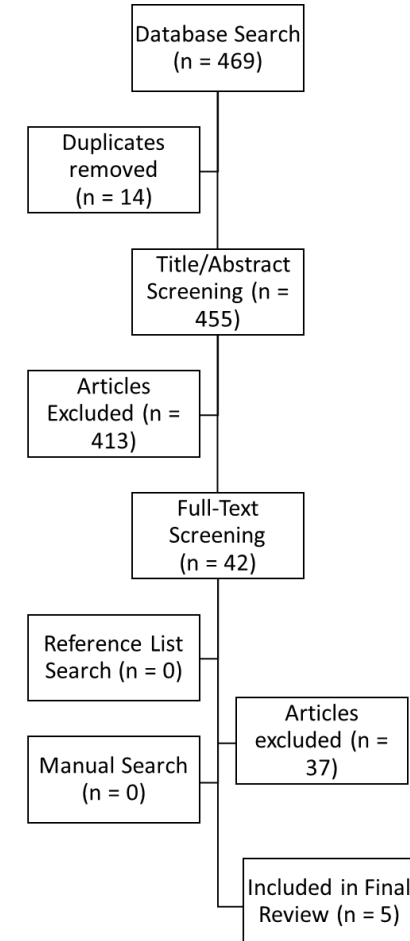
# Feeds Into A Narrative



# What Does the Research Say?

- Not much.

Criterion	Included	Excluded
<b>Databases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gale (all)</li> <li>• InformIT (all)</li> <li>• JSTOR</li> <li>• ProQuest (all)</li> <li>• Scopus (all)</li> </ul>	All other databases
<b>Publication Type</b>	Academic Journals Grey Literature Industry Journals	All other publications
<b>Languages</b>	English	All other languages
<b>Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skill development in history degrees</li> <li>• Career outcomes of history degree graduates outside of education &amp; academia</li> </ul>	All other focuses



# Let's Prove Them Wrong

Jobs and Skills Australia was setup following the 2022 election.

## Remit:

- *We provide advice on Australia's labour market, including advice on workforce needs and priorities and current, emerging and future skills and training needs and priorities (including in relation to apprenticeships).*



**Australian Government**  

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**Jobs and Skills Australia**

# Australian Skills Classification

Intended to be a common language for skills the Australian Skills Classification (the Classification) explores the connections between skills and jobs. The Classification identifies three categories of skills for Australian occupations:

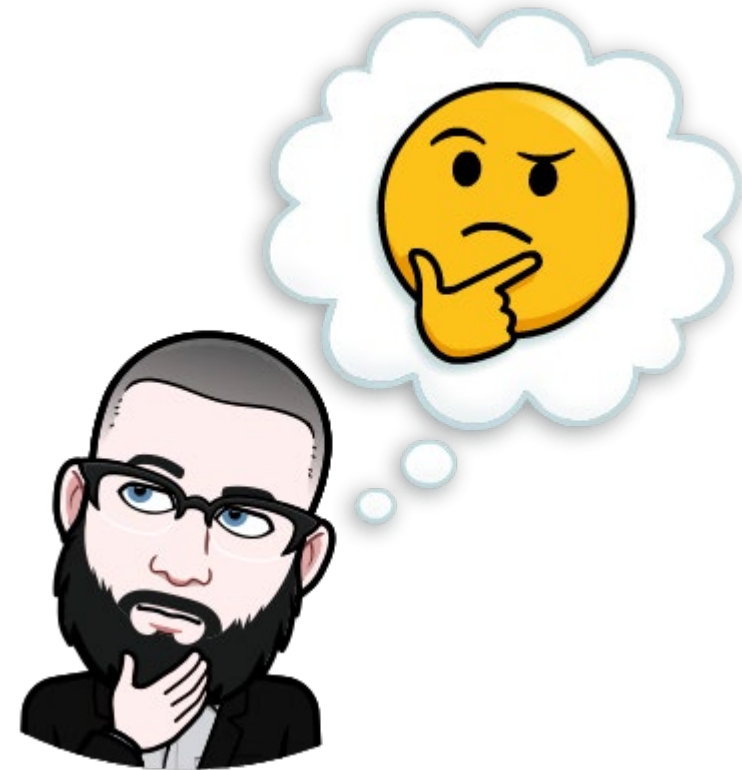
- **10 core competencies** common to all jobs to varying degrees of proficiency
- **specialist tasks** that describe the day-to-day work within an occupation
- **technology tools** – software and hardware used in an occupation.

The Classification also groups similar skills together into skills clusters by allowing the Classification to be explored through the lens of similar skills as well as through the lens of occupations.

Core Competency
Digital engagement
Initiative and innovation
Learning
Numeracy
Oral communication
Planning and organising
Problem solving
Reading
Teamwork
Writing

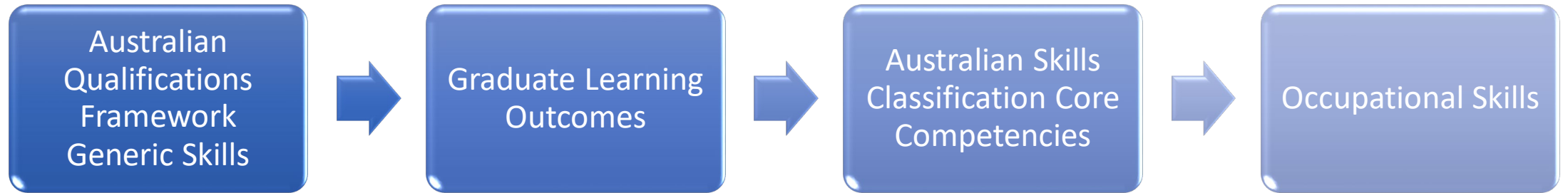
# Question

How are the skills taught in History degrees aligned to the Australian Skills Classification?





# The Process



# What Did We Do?

1. Examined 32 degrees from 27 Australian universities where History was either an explicit major, or comprised of 50% of a major.
2. Collated the Graduate Learning Outcomes from those degrees
3. Aligned each Learning Outcome with one of the 10 Core Competencies from the Australian Skills Classification
4. Identified occupations where at least 5 relevant core competencies were present
5. Excluded occupations where specific and technical skills outweighed core competencies.

# The Results: What Skills Are Developed in History Degrees?

Competency	Number of Learning Outcomes	Presence in Degrees
Learning	73	100%
Planning and Organising	65	100%
Initiative and Innovation	58	100%
Writing	55	100%
Oral Communication	53	100%
Teamwork	42	96.29%
Problem Solving	41	100%
Digital Engagement	16	59.25%
Reading	8	29.62%
Numeracy	7	25.92%

# Results: What Occupations Can History Degrees Lead To?

ANZSCO Category	ANZSCO Category Description	Number of Suitable Occupations
1	Managers	28
2	Professionals	94
3	Technicians and Trades Workers	2
4	Community and Personal Service Workers	7
5	Clerical and Administrative Workers	6
6	Sales Workers	2
7	Machinery Operators and Drivers	0
8	Labourers	0

# Discussion Points

- The study confirms what we know:
  - The study of history is important beyond being a historian or teacher.
  - The skills gained by studying history are highly employable skills.
  - History contains a wide range of skills across multiple industries and occupations
- Where to next:
  - Need to explore the destinations of history graduates. Larger project and larger funding pool required here.
  - Need to make this relevant and usable to YOU.

# Please Help!

History Careers - HTANSW 2023  
Questionnaire

