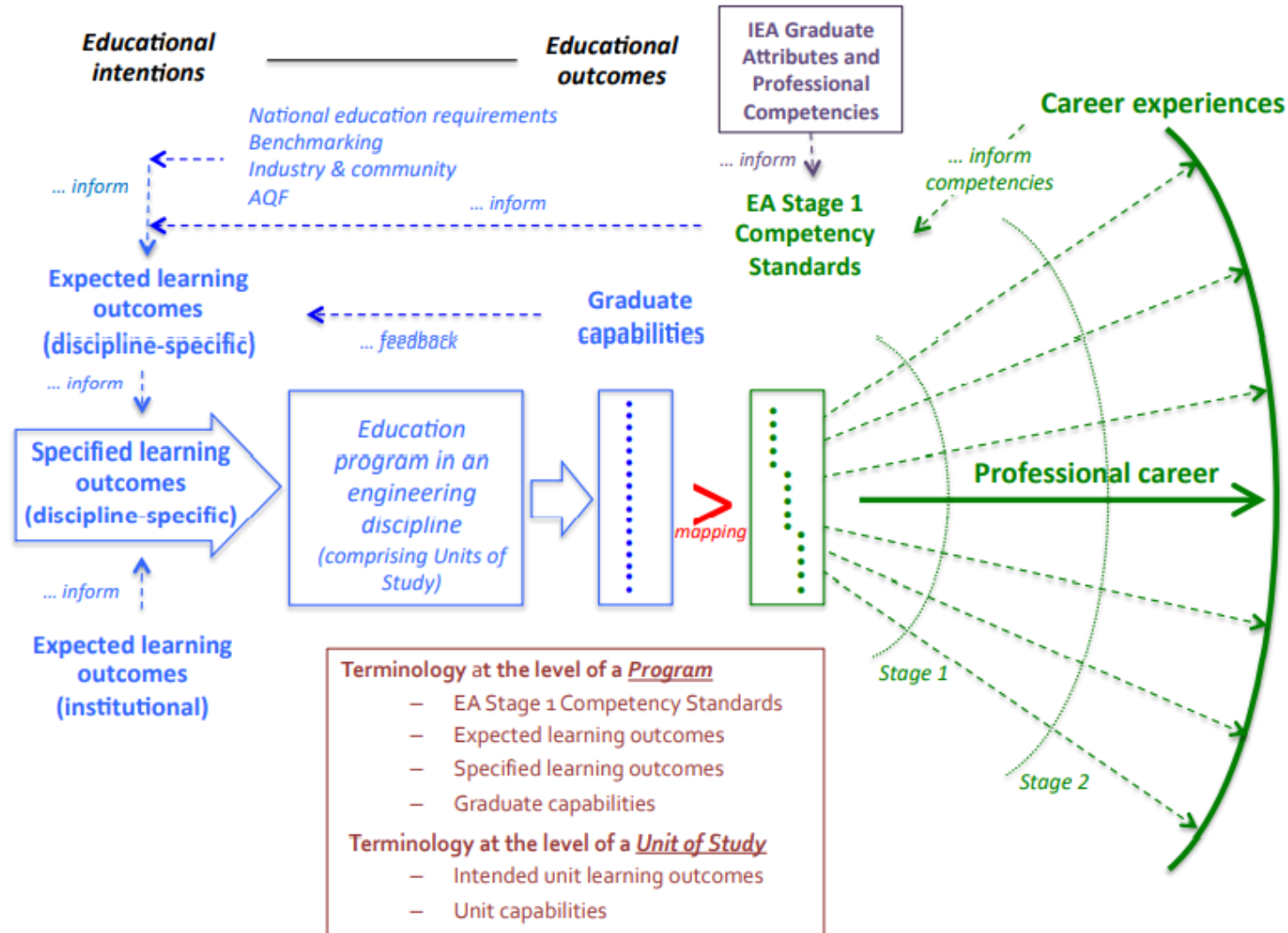




Constructive Alignment

An approach to curriculum
development

? What is CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT ?



AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Questions to Ponder
3. Learning Outcomes
4. Teaching - Learning-Knowing – Learning
5. Constructive alignment

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Select a unit you are teaching:

- What is it that you want your students to “Know” by the end of the semester?
- How did you determine what it is that you want them to “know” by the end of the semester?
- How do you know if they “know” what you want them to “know”?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Good learning outcomes

- Have a clear and unambiguous content
- Contain “action-verb” (a measurable action that can be conducted)
- Are aligned with the position of the course in the curriculum

TEACHING vs LEARNING

Teaching = Input

Learning = Output

What do we want our students to “know” sand “learn”

- Knowledge – Content
- Skills
- Professional Dispositions

WORKING WITH YOUR CURRICULUM

Can involve

- Rapid and major changes in your syllabus / subject
- Students with a wide range of needs and capabilities (all in one group)
- Time pressures to keep up to date with content and resources

ONE WAY TO DEVELOP YOUR CURRICULUM

‘Constructive Alignment’ (Biggs 2003).

... connects the abstract idea of a learning outcome to the things teachers actually do to help students learn, and the things that students do to actually learn.

... An outcome is simply a result or consequence of an action or process.

... A learning outcome is what results from a learning process.

Constructive alignment is an outcomes based approach to designing and delivering a learning and teaching experience

'CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT'

Key questions

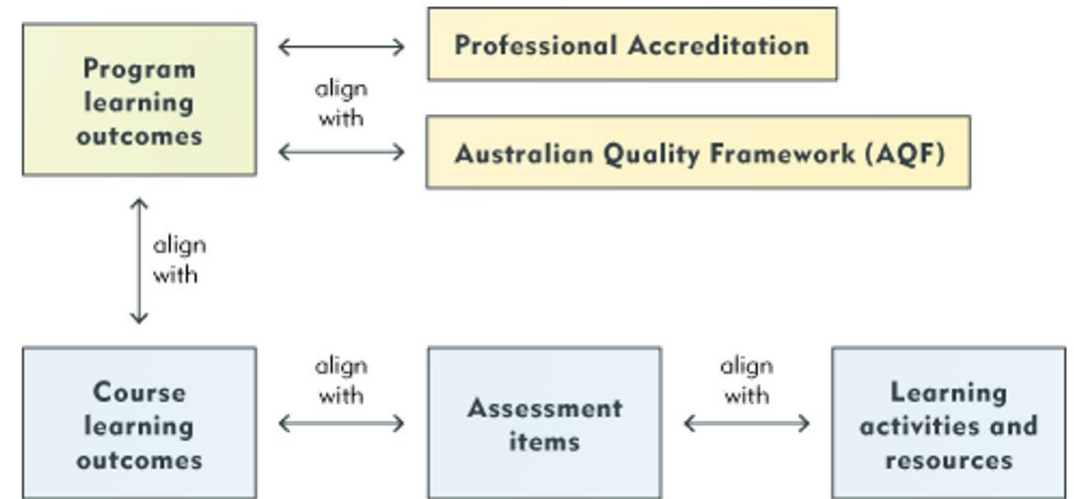
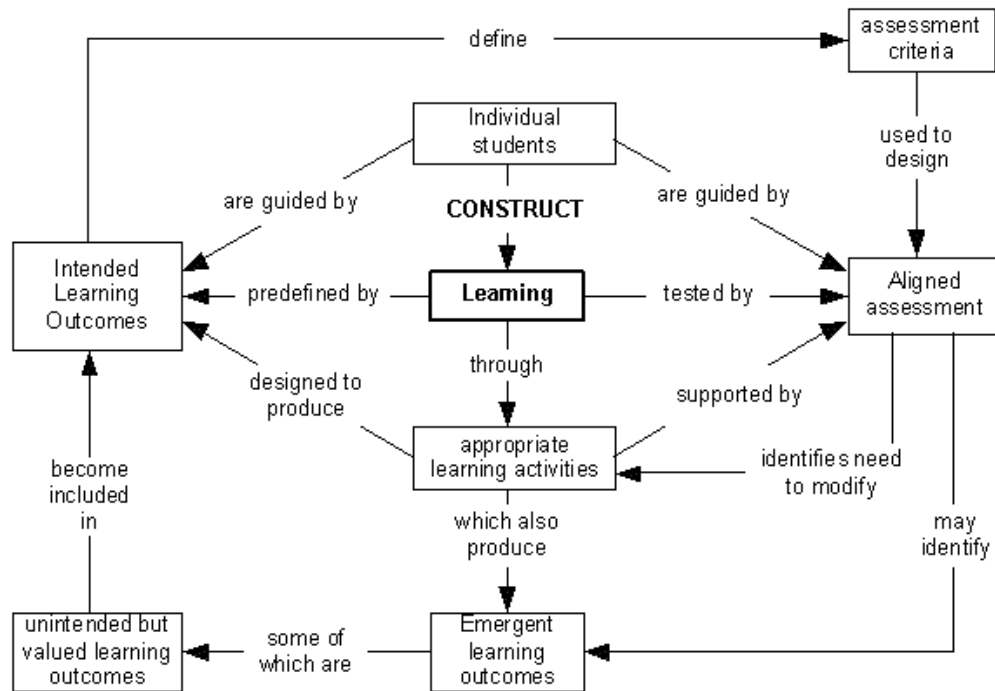
- What do I intend students to learn (what learning outcomes do I want them to achieve)?
- What teaching methods and curriculum design will I use to encourage students to behave in ways that are likely to achieve these outcomes?
- What assessment tasks and criteria will tell me that students have achieved the outcomes I intend?

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Figure 1: Constructive alignment between learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and assessment (adapted from Biggs 1999: 27)

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‘CONSTRUCTIVE ALIGNMENT’

The main steps:

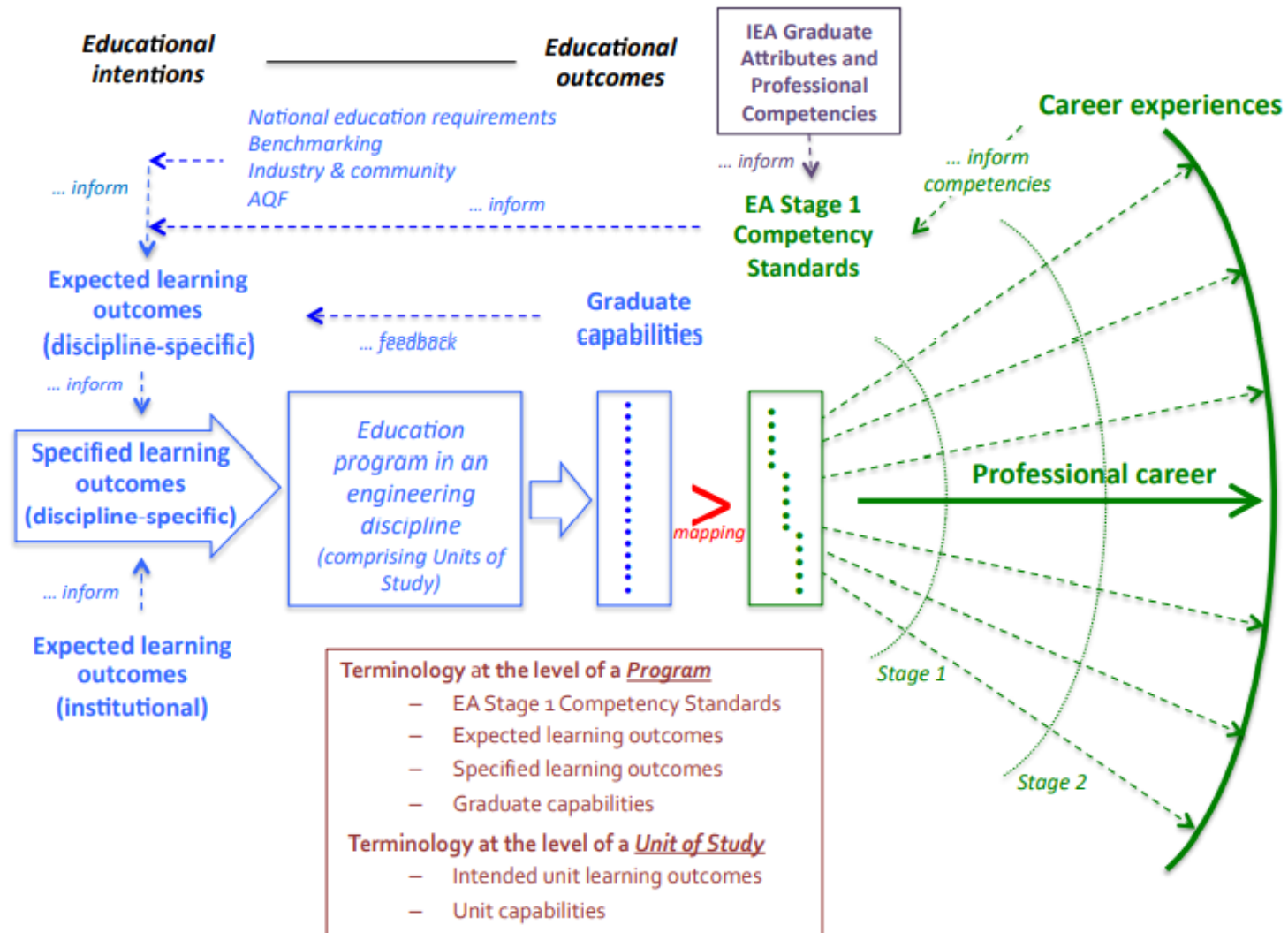
- **Defining the intended learning outcomes (which determine the teaching and curriculum objectives – the steps we take to achieve the learning outcomes.)**
- **Choosing teaching/learning activities likely to lead to, help and encourage students to attain these intended learning outcomes.**
- **Engaging students in these learning activities through the teaching process.**

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The main steps:

- Assessing what students have learnt using methods that enable students to demonstrate the intended learning and, in the case of formative assessment, giving feedback to help students improve their learning.
- Evaluating/judging how well students match learning intentions.
- Awarding marks/grades/certification in line with these judgements.

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REFERENCES

Biggs, J.B. (2003) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. Buckingham: Society for Research in Higher Education & Open University Press.

Biggs, J. B. (2003) *Guide for Busy Academics - Using Learning Outcomes to Design a Course and Assess Learning*. York: LTSN Generic Centre

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Thank You