**Humanities, arts & Social Sciences Symposium**

**Future Proofing Humanities, Arts and Social Science (HASS) Education**

Symposium Chair: Dr Deanne Gannaway, The University of Queensland

We are consistently told that the future world needs flexible, fluid, global workers, who can switch between different kinds of knowledge and different ways of thinking, who can be responsive and innovative (CEDA, 2015; Deloitte Australia, 2016; FYA, 2017). Who better trained in working through multiple choices, in flexible patterns, through and across diverse disciplines than Bachelor of Arts (BA) students – still the way that most Australian students experience HASS. Thus, it could be argued that the foundation of an innovative future can be found in HASS and that BA graduates are catalysts for that future. Yet, HASS education is typically undervalued by industry and parents, kerbing prospective student enrolments. These perceptions threaten the continued survival of many HASS disciplines (Turner & Brass, 2014), as ongoing funding is inextricably linked to student enrolment numbers.

To truly future-proof the Australian economy Australian higher education needs a revaluing of the vital contribution that HASS education can and should make to an unknown future. This symposium introduces examples of how HASS teachers are transforming their teaching to do precisely this. Four academics will showcase their practice; outlining why they have adopted these changes and the outcomes resulting from these changes. The symposium will conclude with an open discussion about future actions for further future-proofing HASS education.

CEDA. (2015). Australia's Future Workforce? Melbourne, Australia: Committee for Economic Development of Australia, Retrieved from <http://www.ceda.com.au/Research-and-policy/All-CEDA-research/Research-catalogue/Australia-s-future-workforce>

Deloitte Australia. (2016). The Future of the Workforce: Critical drivers and challenges. Retrieved from Sydney:

FYA. (2017). The New Basics. Retrieved from <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/The-New-Basics_Update_Web.pdf>

Turner, G., & Brass, K. (2014). Mapping the Humanities and Social Sciences in Australia

Papers:

**Co-designing a novel WIL course with Student Partners for Humanities and Social Science (HASS) students**

*Ms Sophie Plunkett, The University of Queensland*

While Australian Bachelor of Arts (BA) programs are diverse and rich in transferable skills, these outcomes often do not translate transparently to the workplace as a more professions-based program might (Gannaway & Sheppard, 2019). This continues to impact enrolment numbers within the BA as we struggle to demonstrate the value of a HASS graduate to industry, parents and prospective students. In response to relatively low employment figures among BA students after graduation, a Faculty at a research-intensive university designed a discipline-agnostic work-integrated learning course to give BA students the experiences they are seeking.

This course enables students to gain relevant work experience, increase their confidence in their skill set, and learn how to communicate their valuable skills to employers. The course has been designed to allow for students to undertake any practical work-related experience that is relevant to them. Assessment is largely reflective and focuses on the development of professional skills, allowing each student to tailor their assessment to suit their experience.

A collaborative Students as Partners approach (Bovill et al. 2016) was taken to design the curriculum. Student Partners were involved in every decision-making process and held focus groups to better understand what students want from such a course. In doing so, a more authentic, practical and engaging outcome was reached.

Results from the first iteration of the course in Semester 2 2019 are positive; 100% of students reported an increase in confidence in their ability to undertake their practical experience after the preparatory workshops; 82% increase in confidence with engaging with professionals within and external to UQ after the course, suggesting that the design approach was successful. Co-presented by designer and student partner, this presentation will share insights from the experience of developing such a course and in adopting a Students as Partners design approach to curriculum design.

Bovill, C., Cook-Sather, A., Felten, P., Millard, L., & Moore-Cherry, N. (2016). Addressing Potential Challenges in Co-Creating Learning and Teaching: Overcoming Resistance, Navigating Institutional Norms and Ensuring Inclusivity in Student-Staff Partnerships. Higher Education: The International Journal of Higher Education Research, 71(2), 195-208. doi: https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/10.1007/s10734-015-9896-4

Gannaway, D., & Sheppard, K. (2019). Pursuing Employability through Generalist and Specialist Degree Programs. In J. Higgs, W. Letts, G. Crisp (Eds.), *Education for Employability (Volume 2)* (pp. 155-166). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill | Sense. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004418707>

**Student perceptions of how HASS teaches employability skills: A BA wide mapping**

*Dr Eve Klein, The University of Queensland*

This study explored how Bachelor of Arts (BA) courses and majors teach employability skills from a student-perspective. Students worked as co-researchers to conduct a systematic curriculum mapping of the employability skills developed within 43 major and minor program sequences, totalling 176 courses offered as part of the University of Queensland BA. Students mapped learning outcomes and assessment descriptions for core BA courses, aligning published course profile descriptions with the Ten Skills for the Future Workforce (Davies, Fidler, & Gorbis, 2011) replicating a curriculum mapping method established by Klein & Lewandowski-Cox (2019). From the student perspective, BA major and minor programs overwhelmingly prioritised Sense-Making or “the ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance of what is being expressed” (Davies, Fidler, & Gorbis, 2011, p.8) as the key employability attribute in BA courses. Novel & Adaptive Thinking and Social Intelligence were also represented widely across the BA whereas Transdisciplinarity, Collaboration and Virtual Collaboration were the least represented criteria. This data does not necessarily mean that these employability skills are not developed as part of course learning activities. Rather, staff have not articulated these attributes within course learning outcomes and assessment descriptions in a way which is perceptible to students reading published course profiles. This provides insight about what skills, knowledges, and applications of skills and knowledges are foregrounded within discipline areas, and the impact such descriptions have on students and other stakeholders who use course profiles to inform their understanding of how BA programs develop generic employability skills.

Davies, A., Fidler, D., & Gorbis, M. (2011). Future work skills 2020. Retrieved from Institute for the Future for University of Phoenix Research Institute website<http://www.iftf.org/futureworkskills/>

Klein, E., & Lewandowski-Cox, J. (2019). Music technology and Future Work Skills 2020: An employability mapping of Australian undergraduate music technology curriculum. International Journal of Music Education. 37(4), 1-18.

**Teaching future skills: Developing a suite of Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) professional pathway courses**

*Dr Karin Sellberg, The University of Queensland*

How do we prepare our students for a future that is rapidly changing, and the full perimeters of which are still beyond our grasp? The CEDA 2015 report states that “if Australia is to maintain a robust economy that is internationally competitive, we must plan now for the changes, challenges and opportunities we face in developing the right jobs and skills for future generations” (CEDA, 2015). In *The Ten Things You’ll Need by 2020 (and Beyond)* Vivien Luu argues that one of the crucial skills needed in the future work market is “Cognitive Flexibility”, or changeability itself (2016). In this research showcase we will explore how such a skill may be taught.

We will discuss the development and implementation of a suite of transdisciplinary courses in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Queensland in 2017, 2018 and 2019, under the umbrella of the new minor ‘Professional Pathways: Humanity and Society’. Focusing on adaptability and intellectual agility, this sequence of four courses, which are distinct but complementary to other BA majors, aims to enhance student employability and articulate connections between humanities, arts and social sciences disciplines. We use a ‘democratic’ student partnership pedagogy, as formulated by Jan Macarthur and Mark Huxham (2011), to co-develop each iteration of the courses with the student cohort, depending on their background and interests.

From data collected in SeCAT student evaluations, a program-specific student survey presented to all students that have currently completed courses in the minor, and individual student testimonials, we have found that these courses complement the traditional disciplinary-focused courses in the BA, especially developing skills of adaptability and understanding of diversity.

CEDA. (2015). *Australia's Future Workforce?* Melbourne, Australia: Committee for Economic Developement of Australia, Retrieved from <http://www.ceda.com.au/Research-and-policy>

Luu, Vivien. (2016). The Ten Things You’ll Need by 2020 (and Beyond). Sydney, Australia: Career FAQ’s, Retrieved from <https://www.careerfaqs.com.au>

MacArthur, Jan and Mark Huxham. (2011). ‘Sharing Control: A Partnership Approach to Curriculum Design and Delivery’. York, UK: Higher Education Academy, Retrieved from <http://heacademy.co.uk>

Presenters:

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Dr Eve Klein, The University of Queensland

Dr Karin Sellberg, The University of Queensland