

CASE STUDY: EMPLOYABILITY

The Issue: There appears to be a general perception amongst students and the larger community that graduates of the BA are not as employable as graduates from professional degrees, as there is no clear career paths associated with an Arts program. One response to this issue has been to add professional elements into Arts programs, such as internships and capstone courses. A further aspect of this issue is getting Arts students to understand the skills they have acquired throughout their BA, so they can learn how to market themselves and those skills.

Professional elements in Arts Programs

Swinburne University of Technology has instituted a capstone professional course, in the final year of its Arts program. This course is aimed at bringing the students learning over the previous years together while also providing students with the opportunity to learn more work related skills by completing 2 final year projects.

See also **Work Integrated Learning** case study and dataset for details of internships and other vocational activities that have been integrated into Arts programs.

Teaching students to market themselves

A project conducted at **Deakin University** Arts Faculty required philosophy students to write CVs to prove that their skills were highly marketable. The outcomes of this project is, however, hard for students to find where it currently sits on the faculty web page. The Careers and Employment division of the University has developed a document "Where will my Arts degree take me?" which is available through links from the Arts Faculty website.
<http://www.deakin.edu.au/current-students/services/careers/resources/arts-degree.doc>

This one page document, listed as a Career Guide, specifically sets out the skills students acquire in their Arts degree and lists possible pathways to employment in various areas.

Tracking Employment of BA Graduates

The lack of empirical data on where BA graduates end up in the workforce is a problem, the only nation wide study, the Graduate Destinations Survey, completed just 6 months after graduation and is therefore not particularly helpful in tracking long term career paths. The **University of South Australia** has undertaken its own project on employment of its BA graduates over the longer term. Similarly **Victoria University** has began its own project tracking the employment of BA graduates 3 years after their graduation.

Disclaimer: The information described above emerged from interviews, discussions and observation of publicly available materials during the BA Scoping Project which commenced in March 2007 and concluded in August 2008. As a result, the practices described in this case study may not reflect current practices or institutional policy. They are a reflection of the understanding at the time the scoping project was in progress.



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