

PRESS RELEASE

6 October 2021

National graduate employment outcomes prove Jobs-Ready Graduate Package arbitrary

Humanities graduate employment outcomes remain in step with previous trends and national averages according to The Council of Deans of Arts Social Sciences and Humanities.

President of DASSH Catharine Coleborne said the *2021 Graduate Outcomes Survey*, released on October 5, shows employment outcomes for the humanities, culture and social sciences sector have dramatically improved since 2018 in line with other disciplines, suggesting widespread responsiveness to the focus on employability outcomes in our degrees.

“DASSH is thrilled to see that between 2018 and 2021 employment rates for humanities students increased from 65.1 per cent to 83.9 per cent, in line with overall average figures”, Professor Coleborne said.

“Humanities graduate employment figures are even higher than some vocational graduate and undergraduate courses in 2021.

“DASSH questions Education Minister Alan Tudge’s statement that this report proves the rationale behind fee changes under Jobs-Ready Graduate Package is already borne out in this data .”

“The report clearly states that while undergraduates with generalist degrees have weaker employment outcomes soon after completing their course, ‘that gap tends to narrow over time’, indicating the Minister has cherry-picked his figures.”

The Minister’s attempt to link the Jobs Ready Graduate Package to employment outcomes is also undermined by employment figures for Law and paralegal studies graduates which have seen fees increased under the policy, Professor Coleborne said.

“The Jobs-Ready Graduate Package increased fees for Arts degrees by more than 100 per cent, meaning some students are graduating with a \$40,000 debt that will take some a lifetime to repay,” Professor Coleborne said.

“The Federal Government’s fee package tends to undervalue the role of critical thinking, analysis and strong communication skills, all of which are obtained through studying the humanities.

“Across the science, technology, engineering and maths fields there is a consensus that these skills are essential for their fields in order to problem solve and communicate outcomes,” Professor Coleborne said.

About DASSH:

DASSH represents more than 250 academic staff who are deans and associate and deputy deans, from 43 universities across Australia and New Zealand. They lead schools and faculties that teach tens of thousands of students as well as several thousand scholars. DASSH supports those who have responsibility for governance and management of research, teaching and learning across those member institutions.

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