



School of
Education
Profile 2017



UNIVERSITY
OF WOLLONGONG
AUSTRALIA



Faculty
of Social
Sciences



This is who we are

Social Science is about empowering people – particularly those in the community who are most vulnerable – to help them develop their capabilities and live happy, healthy, secure and sustainable lives. Our students learn about human behaviour, the way we interact with our environments, our institutions and with each other. With this understanding they can act to bring about fundamental social change that has a lasting impact of such significance that it can transform the lives of individuals, families and communities for the better.

The Faculty of Social Sciences is a community of academics, students and professional staff who are all dedicated to making a difference through high quality teaching and learning, research and public debate. Our partnerships, community engagement and advocacy are integral to what we do.

Our outstanding Social Science scholars are of national and international standing, renowned for their passion and high performance in undergraduate and postgraduate courses and research excellence.

Our Schools of Education, Psychology, Health and Society and Geography and Sustainable Communities offer degrees and courses that are informed by the latest research, are relevant to contemporary practice and in the case of education, psychology, social work and work health and safety, our degrees are accredited by professional bodies.

Our Early Start initiative aims to give children the best possible start in life through cutting-edge interdisciplinary research, innovative educational programs, experiences and networks that enrich the way we understand and interact with children, families and communities.

Our higher degree research training attracts Australian and international candidates who are keen to work in research centres and schools where students are encouraged to think critically, act and reflect upon their impact. Our researchers are connected to eminent Social Science academics and centres throughout the world, leading global efforts to achieve the betterment of society.

Our graduates are making a difference to the lives of people through social understanding, action and change. I invite you to join us in this pursuit.

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Glenn Salkeld
Executive Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Education



UOW's School of Education is nationally recognised for its innovative preservice teacher education programs, and has long-standing international links in teaching, research and professional experiences. The Federal Government's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching ranked UOW in 2017 as the best university in Australia for Teacher Education.

More than 2,200 students are currently enrolled in our undergraduate and postgraduate programs in teacher education and training, and higher degree programs up to doctoral level. Our programs cover Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Science, Mathematics and Physical & Health Education. Our students are immersed in local schools for real-world professional experience and are provided with opportunities for international teaching experiences. Our graduate employment rate is well beyond that of similar institutions.

The New South Wales Department of Education cooperates in the development and monitoring of our undergraduate programs and provides support for postgraduate students engaged in research and higher degree study. Many staff retain close working links with Commonwealth departments such as the Department of Education, Employment, Training & Youth Affairs (DEETYA) and with international agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and OECD.



Head of School

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Professor Sue Bennett

Professor Bennett investigates how people engage with technology in their everyday lives and in educational settings.

Her aim is to develop a more holistic understanding of people's technology practices to inform research, practice and policy.

Professor Bennett has advanced understanding through original insights that have gained her international recognition in the field of technology in education. She has shown there is a digital divide that can lead to an educational disadvantage for some young people.

She has extensive experience in the design, development and evaluation of technology-enhanced learning for university, community and commercial clients. Before joining UOW, she managed the Interactive Multimedia Unit at Central Queensland University.

At UOW she has worked for more than 15 years to develop the *Information Technology in Education* specialisation during which time she has designed and taught innovative new subjects, co-ordinated the program, and led the teaching team to continuously improve its offerings.

Professor Bennett has also been engaged with her professional community through the peak professional association, *ASCILITE*, as an editor of the *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, and serving on editorial boards and conference program committees, as a reviewer and an examiner.

Her career achievements include a publication track record of more than 100 refereed journal articles, conference papers and scholarly book chapters; extensive research grant funding; and citations in a broad range of key international journals in education, psychology and sociology

Professor Bennett gained her PhD in Education from UOW in 2002.



Dr Steven Howard, Senior Lecturer, School of Education

Dr Steven Howard is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education and is also an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology at the University of Wollongong. He studied at York University, Toronto, Canada, where he completed his B.A. (Honours), M.A. (Psychology) and Ph.D. (Psychology). Dr Howard teaches and researches in the areas of early cognitive development and research methodologies.

Steven's main areas of research surround children's cognitive and self-regulatory development, most recently with a focus on the early years life. Specifically, his research investigates the development of children's domain-general cognitive processes (e.g., self-regulation, executive functions) and the educational implications of these changing cognitive capacities. This includes investigating ways to optimise developmental outcomes given changes in the capacity and control of these abilities.

Steven believes the three core areas of his research that have had the greatest impact so far are:

1. The Fostering Effective Early Learning (FEEL) study, in collaboration with colleagues at UOW and in the UK, which investigated the efficacy of a professional development program with early years educators for improving quality in early childhood education and care and the outcomes of children in those services;
2. The Monitoring to Optimise Development and Early Learning (MODEL) project, which is developing brief, engaging and play-like assessments of children's developmental progress (formative assessment), as a means to democratise assessment and make it usable by and for educators (see, for example, the Early Years Toolbox on the iTunes App Store and on their website: www.eytoolbox.com.au)
3. His current and recent investigations into low to no-cost ways to support the development of early self-regulation (currently the focus of his DECRA funding) seeks to yield strategies that parents and educators can engage in to provide opportunities for children to engage and extend their self-regulatory abilities. This has been demonstrated through the children's picture book Quincey Quokka's Quest, written by Dr Steven Howard.

While the projects are discrete, they each ultimately contribute and aim to enhance the quality of early experiences to support children's development and outcomes. This requires usable assessments to link learning and experiences to each child's developmental progress, as well as evidence-based strategies to facilitate and further support this development.

Dr Howard is also currently engaged in a number of international collaborations. Key members of the FEEL team originate from Oxford University, University College London and University of Sussex (some also have fixed-term fractional appointments at UOW). He continues this international collaboration and is also engaged in a series of projects with researchers in South Africa, looking at the potential for physical activity to not only yield physical and health benefits, but also cognitive benefits.

Although Steven genuinely enjoys the entire research process, he says "there are two aspects in particular that stand out. One is the generation of a new idea – whether it emerges from reading an article, attending a research seminar, or a sleepless night. It creates a sense of excitement about what could be. Then, at the other end of the process, I also enjoy when you first dig in to the data to get a sense of whether you have the results you expected, and all the critical thinking that occurs when you do not".



Associate Professor Lisa Kervin, School of Education

Lisa Kervin has a special interest in the ways children use language in their play, the ways they create text and how educators and families can support these practices.

She is an Associate Professor in Language and Literacy, the Head of Research for the School of Education and is also the Theme Coordinator (Learning, Pedagogy and Technology), for the Early Start Research Institute.

In 2015 Professor Kervin was invited to give the Donald Graves address (co-sponsored by the Australian Literacy Educators' Association and the Primary English Teaching Association Australia).

In the Digital Play project, Professor Kervin and her research team have established a research partnership with 17 families and more than 40 children. As part of this project children created an app for other children.

Samples of some of her current research include:

- 'Conceptualising digital play: The role of tablet technologies in the development of imaginative play of young children' which is an ARC Discovery project involving Associate Professor Irina Verenikina from UOW and Associate Professor Colette Murphy from Trinity College, Ireland
- 'Where are they looking? Combining Eye Movement and Miscue Analysis to examine children's reading on a range of texts'.

Professor Kervin is an active member of the Australian Literacy Educators' Association, International Literacy Association and Literacy Research Association. She completed her PhD (language and literacy) at UOW in 2004.



Dr Anthony McKnight, Lecturer, School of Education

As co-ordinator of Aboriginal education subjects within the School of Education, Dr Anthony McKnight places great importance on the Aboriginal term and concept of 'Country'.

Dr McKnight said Country was central in the lives of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. He is currently a director of a cultural entity called 'Back to Country', which emphasises the placement and importance, including the curriculum, of healing relationships through Country.

Dr McKnight also actively engages Koori Kids with their culture to enhance educational and healthy practice.

He sees Country as vital for the implementing and embedding of Aboriginal perspectives through Aboriginal pedagogical practices along with building respectful reciprocal relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge systems.

Dr McKnight is part of the research team that is researching the effectiveness of the successful Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) that is enhancing Aboriginal students' success in schools.

A chapter within his recently accepted PhD *Singing Up Country in Academia: Teacher education academics and preservice teachers' experience with Yuin Country* was awarded the Betty Watts Indigenous Research Award.

He has also contributed to making an impact in science education, having received an outstanding paper award for 'Using Slowmation for animated storytelling to represent non-Aboriginal preservice teachers' awareness of relatedness to Country', at the 2010 Ascalite Conference held in Sydney.

Dr McKnight is now working on how Country, and in this case the whales, can teach people about the importance of patience in teaching and learning practice.

He is planning a trip to New York to present his thesis at New York State and New York University.



Dr Kylie Lipscombe, Lecturer, School of Education

Dr Kylie Lipscombe is regularly invited to present key addresses in the areas of collaboration, professional learning communities and literacy education.

Dr Lipscombe's position as Strand Coordinator of Educational Leadership in the School of Education is reflected in her current teaching roles. She teaches in the areas of foundation leadership and management, mentoring beginning teachers, leading, developing and managing people, and leadership in curriculum, instruction and assessment.

She is known for her practical insights on educational leadership and system transformation and has had the opportunity to collaborate with key international scholars and practitioners, enabling her to infuse global educational leadership perspectives into dynamic, real-world teaching experiences at UOW.

Over the past 18 years, Dr Lipscombe has undertaken a number of educational leadership roles across a variety of organisational contexts. She has experience working in primary, secondary and tertiary settings, as well as system education organisations. Her insights are drawn from her experiences as classroom teacher, lecturer, school leader, consultant, author, and curriculum writer.

She currently works closely with the NSW executive committee for the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) and has served on the National Board of the Australian Literacy Educators' Association. She has advised to the Centre of Professional Learning Communities and is currently investigating the re-culturing practices educational leaders enact when transforming their organisation's collaborative practices.

As an accredited Cognitive Coach and senior training associate in professional learning communities (PLC), she has supported more than 200 educational organisations through the process of re-culturing as a professional learning community.

Dr Lipscombe's teaching and course design includes cutting edge knowledge, energy and innovative insights offering students visionary pedagogy and sophisticated understandings of educational leadership.



Associate Professor Sarah O'Shea, School of Education

An exploration of educational equity in the higher education environment including the retention of students who are first in their families to come to university is central to Associate Professor Sarah O'Shea's research.

She has set her goal to improve university outcomes for diverse learners.

In 2016, Professor O'Shea was awarded an ARC Discovery project exploring the persistence and retention of students who are the first in their families to go to university. This national study builds upon an Australian Government Teaching and Learning Fellowship (2015-2016) and consolidates a decade of work in the student retention field, which has focussed on students from a diversity of backgrounds.

This includes a five-year partnership with AIME (Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience) which has involved more than \$520,000 in national funding and included research activities across Australia with Indigenous young people, university mentors as well as key staff and stakeholders.

Since 2011, Professor O'Shea has obtained more than \$1 million in research funding.

During her career, Professor O'Shea has received numerous awards for teaching excellence including a national Australian Award for University Teaching Citation for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning (2012).

Professor O'Shea has more than 20 years' experience teaching in universities as well as the Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Adult Education sector. She has also published widely on issues related to educational access and equity. Her publication record includes 27 peer reviewed journal articles, three scholarly books and five book chapters.

Her PhD (2009) explored how older female learners, all of whom were first in their family to attend university, managed their transition.

Professor O'Shea herself was one of the first in her family to go to university and hence understands the pressures, expectations and challenges that often accompany this achievement.

She highlights the fact that 51 per cent of university students in Australia now are the first in their family to on to tertiary education.

As part of her research she has been involved in students across three universities being interviewed and surveyed and it was found that about 50 per cent of those first-in-family students had considered leaving.

Professor O'Shea points out that one of the key elements that can help students who feel a sense of disconnection to the university culture is their families.



Dr Roselyn (Rose) Dixon, Senior Lecturer in Special Education, School of Education

Helping individuals with cognitive and physical impairments experience the world in a more positive way is a key focus for Senior Lecturer in Special Education Dr Roselyn (Rose) Dixon.

Her current main areas of research are education programs in rural and remote Indigenous communities for students with a disability. Dr Dixon explores the social emotional learning in students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Her work involves the integration of digital technologies and pedagogy for students with ASD.

Dr Dixon's other areas of expertise are disability and the law and the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

She has played a leading part in the development of a multi-sensory room which offers its users a unique experience tailored to their own needs, with primary senses stimulated through the use of sensory-based materials such as fibre optic arrays, bubble tubes, music, colour, lighting, touch and aroma.

The joint research project, part of UOW's Global Challenges Program, was established between UOW and CareWays Community.

As project leader, Dr Dixon said the team wanted to ensure the final project was increasing services and support for people living with a disability by improving quality of life, promoting better health outcomes, reducing challenging behaviours and providing respite time.

She said overall what this initiative provides for the community is a safe and secure environment to explore sensory stimulation for a range of differing disabilities, for people with dementia, for therapists and even pregnant women.

Since 2008, Dr Dixon has been the Postgraduate and Undergraduate Academic Program Director of Special Education at UOW.



Dr Dana Perlman, Senior Lecturer, School of Education

Dr Dana Perlman is heavily involved in researching outcomes from *Recovery Camp* which is an Australian-first therapeutic recreation program for people with a lived experience of severe mental illness.

It is also a program which greatly benefits future health professionals including nursing, psychology, dietetics, and exercise physiology students. For them it is an immersive, experiential, clinical learning experience that focuses on strengths not illness.

Many people with a mental illness have low self-esteem, lack confidence, and are socially isolated. The *Recovery Camp* provides a means for participants to challenge themselves in a safe environment, connect with others, and re-discover their self-worth. Generally occurring over five days, all participants are involved in a structured program, which includes both challenging and rejuvenating experiences, such as an 18-metre giant swing, flying fox, rock climbing, archery, tai chi, bush dancing and art.

According to Dr Perlman, research to date suggests *Recovery Camp*, now in its fourth year, increases self-efficacy and self-determination, while decreasing social isolation, among participants with a mental illness.

In addition, future health professionals are empowered to learn translational clinical skills, bolstering their ability to provide quality health care.

Dr Perlman and the team involved with *Recovery Camp* have been recognised by a Vice-Chancellor's Interdisciplinary Research Excellence Award and as a V-C award winner for Excellence in Community Engagement.

Dr Perlman, who gained his PhD (Sport Pedagogy) from the University of Idaho in 2006, is currently working on projects with Manipal University in India and the Autonomous University of Chihuahua in Mexico. He has worked with the Department of Education in NSW and most recently with the NSW Education and Standards Authority.



Associate Professor Honglin Chen, School of Education

An accomplished researcher with strong international linkages, Associate Professor Honglin Chen's achievements were recently recognised with her appointment as President of the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia. The Association is a key national professional body in language education.

As Associate Professor in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Language Education, Associate Professor Chen's research endeavours are at the forefront of an interdisciplinary approach to understanding literacy and language learning within the contexts of national curriculum reforms in the fields of English and languages generally.

She has a keen interest in the roles of metalinguistic understanding, talking about writing, thinking and reasoning, and intersubjectivity in promoting writing development. Her other research interests include English curriculum and policy, and provisions of community language programs.

Associate Professor Chen has a significant portfolio of ARC/ESRC (Economic Social Research Council, UK) funded research projects, generating in excess of \$1 million. She is currently engaged in a Transforming Literacy Outcomes project which is a longitudinal investigation of the language and literacy experiences of children from different transition points in schooling.

Along with colleagues from the Australian Catholic University, Associate Professor Chen was awarded a competitive Program Development Research Grant by the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organisation. This project is having a direct impact on professional learning and classroom practice in English and languages in the global IB context, with its innovative professional learning model.

find your why



“

Storytelling has been part of Indonesian tradition which has started to fade out and I would like to revive that again in the classroom. Once I step into the classroom and I can see sparks in my students' eyes when they understand what I'm teaching them, it always makes my heart warm. I want to help students to learn a new language through storytelling.

—

Ika

Doctor of Philosophy



“

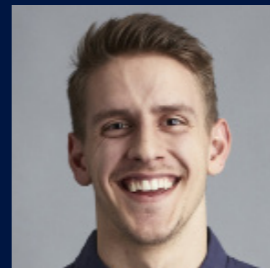
During my time as an SAS trooper, I met people who had lost everything, but remained resilient. I started to think about what I wanted to do in the next phase of my life. I decided to go to university, further my education and become a teacher. Every teacher has their strength and I want to make the most impact in a disadvantaged area where the kids don't have the same level of support or self-esteem that other kids do.

—

Keith

Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary)*

*The Master of Teaching replaced the Graduate Diploma in Education in 2015



“

My degree offers a range of opportunities that are designed to further our learning. Only last year I had the opportunity to undertake a two week block at a secondary school in Bangkok, Thailand. This experience gently demanded us to step out of our comfort zone in a way that enhanced our teacher expertise.

—

Luke

Bachelor of Physical and Health Education



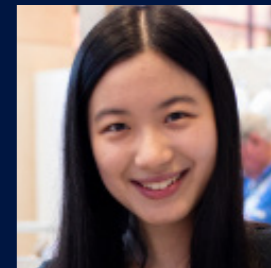
“

I've always wanted to be a primary school teacher; I want to work in a typical school. I really want to inspire kids, whether it be making a difference in one person's life or 100 peoples' lives, I really want to make a change, and I think you can really do that through education. By being a teacher, maybe I can inspire my students to come to university too one day.

—

Sophie

Bachelor of Primary Education



“

I'm really fascinated by human's development during the very early years. Babies and young children grow second by second, day by day, from gurgling to articulating, from crawling to walking, which makes me want to explore the secret of development. I want to advocate for the importance of early childhood and early childhood teachers who devote to making a difference in any child's lives.

—

Xiaomeng

Bachelor of Education – The Early Years



“

My degree has been very flexible. Over time I have adjusted both my major and my study loads and I still manage to have a healthy social life and stay active. Some of my study has been face-to-face while some subjects have been largely online. During my studies, I was successful in gaining a promotion to Assistant Principal.

—

Kieren

Master of Education (Educational Leadership)



**Professor Anthony Okely,
Director of Research, Early Start**

Young children are at the forefront in efforts by researchers like Professor Anthony Okely to halt Australia's child obesity epidemic.

Professor Okely's research focuses on physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and motor skills in children. It encompasses observational studies that describe the prevalence and patterns of these behaviours; relationships with health, education, and other developmental outcomes; interventions; and guideline development.

Professor Okely is Director of Research at Early Start and Theme Leader in the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute. He has been awarded more than \$11 million in competitive funding, including being Principal Investigator on two National Health and Medical Research Council Project grants. He has published more than 180 peer-reviewed journal articles, four book chapters, and four policy-related monographs or reports; has around 9,300 career citations, and has a h-index of 53 (an index based on the set of a researcher's most cited papers).

Professor Okely led the research team that developed and updated the Australian Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0-5 years, and the Australian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Children and Young People and was an international expert on the Canadian Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for the Early Years, the Canadian 24-hr Integrated Movement Guidelines for the Early Years and for Children and Youth, and the Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Canadian Children and Youth. He was also a member of the Early Years Expert Working Group for the UK Physical Activity Guidelines in 2011.

Professor Okely said governments now recognise the importance of evidence-based health guidelines for young children to provide recommendations for parents and those who work with and care for young children on the appropriate amounts of physical activity, sedentary behaviour (including screen time) and sleep.



**Dr Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett,
Senior Lecturer, School of Education**

Through the Early Start program at UOW, Dr Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett is playing a vital role in helping children realise their potential, especially those growing up in regional and remote areas of Australia.

A lecturer and researcher in Early Childhood for more than 20 years, Dr Neilsen-Hewett has delivered workshops and invited addresses to parents, educators, corporations and government bodies in Australia and overseas and has served on State and Federal government advisory committees.

Her research expertise and publications reflect a consistent interest in the nature of development from early childhood through to middle childhood.

Dr Neilsen-Hewett's current research projects focus on quality early childhood education and care environments, and enhancing access to early childhood education and health services as well as promoting social inclusion in Indigenous communities.

Since joining Early Start, Dr Neilsen-Hewett has taken a senior role in key, large-scale intervention and evaluation projects focusing on educator knowledge, practices and experience.

Together with Professor Iram Siraj (School of Education, UOW and Institute of Education, University College London) and Dr Denise Kingston (Senior Lecturer in Education, University of Sussex), she has pioneered the delivery of Leadership for Learning professional development interventions that are currently the focus of multiple evaluations at both centre and child level.

Dr Neilsen-Hewett is also involved in the evaluation of other structural initiatives that are designed to improve children's learning and development outcomes in the early years context and is leading the Early Start practice strategy for the network of 41 early education and care centres in regional and remote Australia.



**Visiting Professor Iram Siraj,
School of Education**

A renowned scholar who has provided specialist advice on early years education to the UK government and to overseas countries is currently a visiting academic to UOW's School of Education.

Professor Iram Siraj, who was awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Year Honours List in 2015 for her services to early education, hails from the University College London, Institute of Education.

Her recent research projects have included the major Department for Children, Schools and Families 17-year study on Effective Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE 3-16, 1997-2014) and the influential Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years project (REPEY).

Professor Siraj has led longitudinal studies as a principal investigator in a number of countries including the UK, Australia and Ireland.

She has always been particularly interested in undertaking research which investigates disadvantage and in turn gives children and families from these backgrounds a better start.

Professor Siraj has published widely and been a specialist adviser to the UK's House of Commons Select Committee on Education. She recently undertook a review of the Implementation of the Foundation Phase for the Welsh Government and is reviewing the early years workforce for the Scottish Government.

While at UOW, Professor Siraj will be working closely with other academics from Early Start.

Professor Siraj has worked as an early years teacher for most of the 1980s and has been an academic and researcher for around 30 years.

She has lectured in more than 40 countries and co/authored more than 70 books and published research reports as well as around 200 refereed journal articles and chapters in scholarly texts.

Executive Officers

We are a community of academics, students and professional staff who are all dedicated to making a difference through high quality teaching and learning, research and public debate.



**EXECUTIVE DEAN,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Professor Glenn Salkeld

Professor Glenn Salkeld has more than 30 years' experience in public health research and has held senior academic management positions in public health.

Glenn is a health economist with a particular interest in screening and diagnostic test evaluation based on the implementation of multi-criteria decision analysis. The latter has resulted in the creation of an online translation platform – a decision support program that combines the best available evidence with an individual's preferences to produce an opinion when comparing prevention or treatment options.

Professor Salkeld was a member of the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee Economic Subcommittee for six years, has been a consultant to the World Health Organisation on the Essential Medicines Program, a Member of the NHMRC Public Health Panel, a Member of the Bowel Cancer Implementation Committee and a Director of the Board of the Sax Institute.

He has also worked extensively for AusAID in teaching economics and evidence-based medicine to health professionals in numerous countries including South Africa, India, Iran, Estonia, China and Hungary.



**EXECUTIVE MANAGER,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Katrina Gamble

Katrina has served in her current role as Executive Manager of the Faculty of Social Sciences at UOW since 2013.

She comes from a career background in business development and project management for organisations contracted by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, AusAID and numerous governments around the world. They all shared a similar aim to deliver capacity development activities that have a sustainable impact.

Katrina has worked on projects in Kenya, Pakistan, Bangladesh, East Timor and Indonesia. These projects were in a range of sectors including education, public sector capacity development and health – particularly with a focus on public health.

She enjoys the fact that her work enables her to engage with people from across the world in an attempt to bring about social change that has an impact on the lives of others.

Katrina has been with UOW for almost seven years having initially been employed as the Business Manager for the Faculty of Education (now the School of Education).

A key factor about UOW which strikes a particular chord with Katrina is the University's international focus and real desire to engage in a meaningful way across the globe. A clear example she highlights is UOW being an Australian pioneer in establishing a presence in 1993 in Dubai – an education presence which has grown markedly in strength over the years.

Katrina holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and Politics and a Master of Arts (International Relations), both from the University of Wollongong.



**ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH),
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Professor Noel Castree

Professor Castree's standing within his profession is reflected in the position he holds as managing editor of one of the most influential peer review journals in his discipline of Geography, *Progress in Human Geography* (Sage publications).

In his research, Professor Castree, who holds degrees from Oxford and British Columbia, seeks to understand the political economy of environmental change.

Political economists study wealth – how is it defined, how is it created and how is it distributed within and between different societies. He has used Marxist political economy to understand why, and how, capitalist societies have been so unremittingly destructive towards the natural world.

His several publications about neoliberal political economy and environmental change are his most highly cited and appeared in the journals *Environment and Planning* and *Environment and Society*.

A major part of Professor Castree's research aims to shape the thinking of his academic peers and successive generations of students who enter various fields of employment after completing their degrees in Geography.

Professor Castree is currently trying to understand why expertise about global environmental change is having so little impact on changing government policies and public attitudes towards humanity's use of the non-human world.

Professor Castree still maintains ties with his former university in England, the University of Manchester, where he is an Honorary Professorial Fellow.



**ASSOCIATE DEAN (INTERNATIONAL),
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Professor Wilma Vialle

Professor Vialle's research has made an important contribution in improving the educational experiences of bright young minds on a global scale.

The Professor in Educational Psychology's research focuses on excellence, expertise and gifted education.

Her work has contributed to a broadened understanding of giftedness that is not restricted to IQ definitions. Originally a high school teacher of English and Speech and Drama in Tasmania, she completed her doctorate at the University of South Florida in 1991.

Professor Vialle is currently working on the educational and learning resources that support the development of talent. Another of her research projects is an investigation of the development of excellence in competitive Scrabble players.

Professor Vialle is the Chief Editor of the international journal, 'Talent Development and Excellence', and is on the Executive Board of the International Research Association for Talent Development and Excellence. She works collaboratively with colleagues at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and the University of Regensburg in Germany.

At UOW, she is Chair of the Academic Senate which is the peak body for advising the University Council and the Vice-Chancellor on academic matters and broad issues which affect and promote the academic excellence of the University.

In 2006, Professor Vialle was awarded the Eminent Australian Award by the Australian Association for Education of the Gifted and Talented to recognise her contributions to the field of gifted education in Australia.



**ASSOCIATE DEAN (EDUCATION),
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Dr Julie Kiggins

In her role as Associate Dean (Education), Dr Kiggins plays a central part in delivering excellence in learning and teaching across the Faculty to give effect to UOW's Strategic Goal, 'Learning and the Student Experience'.

It's a Strategic Goal that has certainly had its effect. *Education for Social Equity* began as an elective in 2009 with humble beginnings and an enrolment of 10 students. In 2017 more than 1,000 students have either completed or are near completion of this subject.

In *Education for Social Equity* students undertake a Service Learning placement that is designed to assist them gain a sense of social equity and justice. Students have reported very positively on the experiences that the subject has given them.

Dr Kiggins also introduced in 2010 a Capstone Task for students which provided them with opportunities to integrate their knowledge and experiences from their whole program in preparation for the next stage of their careers.

It enabled students to work collaboratively, and among other things, allowed them to understand and manage as novice teachers many of the issues surrounding the work of contemporary primary schools and students.

Dr Kiggins' work has been recognised with a range of teaching awards including a Vice-Chancellor's Outstanding Contribution to Teaching and Learning (OCTAL); Carrick Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning; Carrick Australian University Teaching Award for a program that Enhances Student Learning for the "Knowledge Building Community" Program; and an Australian College of Educators: Outstanding Achievement in Education.

Our Research Entity



EARLY START

Officially opened in July 2015, UOW's \$44 million Early Start initiative represents a new way of thinking about how universities can share their intellectual capital and research with the community, and how technology can bring about better outcomes for children.

Early Start is transforming lives through education to reduce current gaps in inequality. By 'investing' in the earliest years of life, Early Start is working to create a landscape for learning and social change that is markedly different to the image traditionally associated with higher education.

With state-of-the-art teaching, research and community engagement facilities, utilising enhanced technologies, the Early Start building acts as a hub connecting to a network of partner centres in regional, rural and remote communities across NSW.

Within the building is the Early Start Discovery Space, a public, hands-on creative learning space specifically designed for children from birth to 10 years and their accompanying families, carers, educators and teachers.

earlystart.uow.edu.au



Anita Kumar
Chief Operating Officer, Early Start

Anita Kumar is a passionate advocate for the rights of children and families, especially those dealing with complex life issues or living in vulnerable circumstances.

Anita began as the Chief Operating Officer of Early Start at UOW in March 2017.

In her previous role as CEO of The Infants' Home in Sydney, Anita was committed to developing quality services that support the wellbeing of children and their families, and building a socially cohesive community. She focused on strengthening the organisation's leadership in integrated service delivery for children and families through research, partnerships and engagement.

Anita brings to Early Start a strong track record of forging impactful strategic partnerships across government, corporate, philanthropic, agency and sector organisations as a means to build a sustainable social enterprise.

In May this year, Anita oversaw Early Start celebrate its second birthday. Early Start is an initiative that brings together early childhood researchers and educators with families and the community with the guiding aim of supporting all children to have a happy and healthy childhood, and become engaged citizens, especially those growing up in regional and remote Australia or living in vulnerable circumstances.

Anita said Early Start was delighted to contribute to children's development and their love for learning.

Early Start has built important links between UOW and the Illawarra community it serves, allowing carers, early childhood educators, childcare centres, schools and volunteers to benefit from the educational and research-based resources of a university.

Early Start has partnered with 41 early education and care centres in regional and remote Australia through face-to-face and virtual programs to build capacity, influence quality practice, connect and integrate services and support and strengthen community. It is committed to creating a socially and just civil society.

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