



School of  
Psychology  
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 Psychology



Incoming students to the School of Psychology will discover an undergraduate program which provides a solid foundation in psychological science and one which can be combined with studies in a range of other disciplines.

The school offers excellent teaching staff and facilities which combined leads to a quality education and research opportunities. The extensive computer facilities as well as teaching and research laboratories are all supported by a team of professional staff.

In the 1960s UOW offered its first course in Psychology within the Faculty of Arts. By 1969 the Faculty had doubled in size and offered 100, 200 and 300 level programs. In 1973 the Faculty saw its first Honours program begin including a major expansion in staffing. By 2012 UOW offered Psychology courses in Singapore. In 2013, Psychology transitioned into the new Faculty of Social Sciences at UOW.

The School of Psychology has a proud record of research alongside its teaching programs. Its staff and Higher Degree Research students continue to engage in basic, translational and applied research that is recognised nationally and internationally.

For instance, the Project Air Strategy for Personality Disorders is an award-winning initiative, recognised nationally and internationally as a leader in research, training and treatment.

Other research projects include an examination of the neurobiological factors associated with cannabis dependence; an examination of the effects of omega-3 supplements on the aggressive behaviour of prison inmates; and a long-term partnership with the Salvation Army in evaluating drug treatments.



# Head of School

## SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

### Professor Peter Caputi

Trained originally as a quantitative psychologist, much of Professor Caputi's research is interdisciplinary working with colleagues in public health, medicine and business.

His research interests are in applied psychology, specifically in applied health and clinical psychology. Professor Caputi has a particular interest in measurement issues and model development in applied and clinical settings.

Illustrating this point is Professor Caputi's work on psychological recovery from serious mental illness. In conjunction with Dr Retta Andresen and Associate Professor Lindsay Oades, Professor Caputi has developed a number of measures of stages of recovery, including the STORI (Stages of Recovery Inventory).

These measures are underpinned by an innovative stage model of psychological recovery. The impact of this work is not only evident in excellent citation rates but also by Wiley-Blackwell commissioning a book titled *Psychological Recovery from Mental Illness* that was published in 2011.

Professor Caputi's collaborations also with Associate Professor Chris Magee, the late Professor Don Iverson and Professor Xu-Feng Huang has led to a body of work that has had a significant impact on our understanding of the relationship between sleep and obesity. In particular, this body of research (highlighted by the award of an ARC Discovery Grant) highlights Professor Caputi's contribution in applying complex data modelling to the health discipline.

More recently, Professor Caputi has focused his research attention to the occupational health psychology, especially understanding the concept of presenteeism. Internationally, Professor Caputi is recognised as a leading researcher in Constructivist Psychology.



**Associate Professor Stuart Johnstone, School of Psychology**

A significant research development emanating from the School of Psychology has been the invention and development of the world’s first evidence-based neuro-cognitive training tool for the improvement of behavioural control in children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Associate Professor Stuart Johnstone, whose research uses brain electrical activity measures (such as EEG and event-related potentials) to understand processes such as attention and inhibition, has been recognised for this achievement.

His research has focused on understanding clinical disorders in special populations such as children diagnosed as having ADHD. It led him to investigate the benefits of cognitive and neuro-cognitive training to improve individual functioning.

Professor Johnstone was instrumental in securing an industry licence to the UOW Intellectual Property (IP), and has continued researching the efficacy of this approach. The neuro-cognitive training tool was embodied as two software products.

The software is a system of cognitive training incorporating objective attention levels obtained via a wireless brain electrical activity recording device. The commercialisation effort resulted in the ‘Focus Pocus’ software product being marketed in Australia, United States, China, Canada, and European countries.

He brought to market an affordable, research-supported, non-drug treatment program for children diagnosed with ADHD. This commercialisation effort also led to Professor Johnstone receiving the 2013 Vice-Chancellor’s award for ‘Outstanding Achievement in Research Commercialisation’.

The future potential of the UOW IP in other treatment domains has also been recognised and has generated additional research output and collaborations. For example, the neuro-cognitive training tool has recently been explored as a potential training approach for adults with Traumatic Brain Injury (in association with Illawarra Brain Injury Service Wollongong and Nowra, and Liverpool Hospital Rehabilitation Unit) and for children with Post Traumatic Amnesia (in association with Sydney Children’s Hospital).

Professor Johnstone also holds the post of Academic Program Director (Singapore).



**Professor Nadia Solowij, School of Psychology**

A passion for research, inspiration from highly respected role models, and the identification of an under-investigated niche area has led Professor Nadia Solowij on a path that has seen her become the most published author in the world on the effects of cannabis on the brain.

The author of *Cannabis and Cognitive Functioning*, the only book published on the subject, Professor Solowij is a leading expert in her field and has publications in the top one per cent of the most cited in the world. Her outstanding work earned her an Australian Research Council Future Fellowship in 2011.

Professor Solowij’s current work on the neuroprotective properties of a cannabinoid compound has the potential for wide-ranging clinical application for disorders such as schizophrenia and Alzheimer’s disease. She is an investigator on Australia’s first medicinal cannabis trial for terminally ill cancer patients. She currently also leads an NHMRC Project Grant investigating the neural substrates of cannabis dependence.

Amendments to the Narcotic Drugs Act were passed in the Australian Parliament with bi-partisan support in February 2016, permitting legally grown cannabis for the manufacture of medicinal cannabis products. Since then, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland have legalised the use of medicinal cannabis, and recreational use is increasingly becoming legal in a number of jurisdictions around the world.

Professor Solowij believes the rapidly shifting policies around legalisation of cannabis for medicinal and recreational use means there is a critical need for research and evidence-based guidelines.

She hopes her research will extend the knowledge base around both harmful and therapeutic effects.

Professor Solowij is driven to fulfil her passion for research with mentoring future generations of researchers.



**Professor Rodney Croft, School of Psychology and Director of the Australian Centre for Electromagnetic Bioeffects Research**

As leader of the UOW-based Australian Centre for Electromagnetic Bioeffects Research (ACEBR) and Chief Investigator with the Centre for Population Health Research on Electromagnetic Energy (headquartered at Monash University), Professor Rodney Croft is involved in a range of scientific studies addressing impacts of electromagnetic radiation on human health.

Professor Croft obtained degrees in philosophy and psychology from the University of Wollongong and was later awarded a PhD in Psychology. His studies exposed him to the emerging field of bioelectromagnetics, which explores the interaction between radiofrequency electromagnetic energy (RF-EME) emitted from mobile phones, base stations, WiFi and other technologies.

It was around the time that mobile phone use was accelerating and so, after working as a post-doctoral scholar in the area of cognitive psychology at the Imperial College London, and then Swinburne University, Professor Croft returned to UOW to carve out a career as a world-renowned expert on the health outcomes of RF-EME. He is also one of 14 commissioners with the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection, the body which sets the safety limits for such devices.

Professor Croft and his team of post-doctoral scholars and PhD candidates have recently started recruitment on several new studies, including one looking at the effect that mobile phone emissions have on the sleep patterns of children -- a study on the phenomenon known as electromagnetic hypersensitivity. He is also examining a number of experimental studies aimed at improving our understanding of risk communication strategies and effects.

Professor Croft attracted UOW’s first-ever National Health and Medical Research Council Centre of Excellence grant in 2012, followed by a second similar grant in 2013 totalling \$5 million. He describes his work as being in the realm of health protection.

Professor Croft recently accepted an invitation to also lead the Illawarra Health and Medical Research Institute (IHMRI)-affiliated Centre for Health Initiatives at UOW.



**Dr Sarah Loughran, Research Fellow, School of Psychology**

There’s a range of myths about what really are the best habits to pursue in order to get a good sleep. Helping to set the record straight is Dr Sarah Loughran.

Her background is in neurophysiology and neuroscience, having spent more than a decade studying what is occurring in our brains during sleep.

Dr Loughran’s current research focuses on a wide range of bioelectromagnetic health issues including the effects on sleep, human brain function, and the mechanisms associated with these effects, as well as sleep and cognitive neuroscience research more generally.

She is also currently leading a world-first investigation into possible effects of Radio Frequency Electromagnetic Fields (RF EMF) exposure on sleep and brain activity in children. Dr Loughran has recently established the first sleep research laboratory at UOW, with many sleep and neurophysiology studies currently underway or near completion.

Dr Loughran is recognised internationally for her bioelectromagnetics research and is currently an invited member of the World Health Organisation’s RF Environmental Health Criterion evaluation committee. In addition, she is an invited member of the scientific expert group at the International Commission for Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

She joined the School of Psychology in 2013 and is currently a researcher in two National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Centres of Research Excellence -- the ‘Australian Centre for Electromagnetic Bioeffects Research’ (ACEBR) and ‘Population Health Research on Electromagnetic Energy’ (PRESEE).

Dr Loughran received her BSc in Physiology and Psychology from Deakin University before completing a PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience/Psychophysiology at Swinburne University of Technology. Her PhD investigated the effects of electromagnetic fields on human sleep, the electroencephalogram (EEG), and melatonin.



**Dr Emma Barkus, Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology**

Driven by a desire to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable young adults, Dr Emma Barkus is focused on understanding the causes of a serious mental illness.

Schizophrenia generally manifests in late adolescence or early adulthood. Affecting about one per cent of the world’s population, its diagnosis often means a lifelong dependence on medication, which have adverse side-effects like excessive weight gain. Those with schizophrenia often require support for daily functioning.

In an effort to understand what causes schizophrenia, Dr Barkus investigates how factors such as illicit drugs, alcohol, and stress confer their toxic effect on vulnerable young minds. Her team investigates how these risk factors operate against a personality trait called schizotypy. People who express schizotypal traits have unusual perceptual experiences and beliefs, most will remain psychologically healthy and actually enjoy the experiences they have, often being highly spiritual and creative people.

Her first major breakthrough, achieved during her PhD, was demonstrating that auditory hallucinations in healthy individuals activate the same brain areas as those seen in patients with schizophrenia. Later, she developed the only questionnaires to capture the experiences people report after cannabis and consequently opened up a new approach to considering cannabis as a risk factor for psychosis.

Dr Barkus’ motivation to contribute to make a difference in young adults is also reflected by her commitment to teaching and pastoral care. She supervises seven PhD students in the areas of schizotypy, substance use, stress, cognition, cognitive failures and other risk factors for schizophrenia with the aim of encouraging future leaders in the field.

Dr Barkus is determined to continue to help unravel the complexities of what causes schizophrenia. She and her team of collaborators are making the approach from a number of angles, including identifying which factors might work together to increase the risk of psychosis, and investigating which mental health symptoms reduce the likelihood people will seek help when they need to do so.



**Associate Professor Stephen Palmisano, School of Psychology**

Associate Professor Stephen Palmisano is internationally recognised as an expert on self-motion perception and, in particular, vection (the subjective experience of self-motion).

His research targets how people perceive and control their self-motions and also how having two eyes benefits perception of depth (i.e. stereoscopic depth perception).

One real-world example of vection is the “train illusion”, where passengers on a stationary train experience illusory self-motion when they see a train moving along the next track. Professor Palmisano’s research has demonstrated that many visual consequences of self-motion play important roles in its perception. For example, his research has shown that adding visual ‘bob, sway and lunge’ head motions to self-motion simulations enhances the experience of vection. His recent research examines the relationship between vection and various types of motion sickness (including the cybersickness experienced when wearing helmet-mounted displays or HMDs).

Professor Palmisano is also interested in the visual control of fixed-wing aircraft. His research investigates out-of-cockpit cues that pilots use for glideslope control and flare timing during landings. He has also conducted eye-tracking studies to determine where pilots actually look during the various phases of landings. This research has provided explanations for the increased likelihood of aviation accidents at night, based on systematic misperceptions of either ground slant or height above the ground plane.

Stereoscopic depth perception occurs largely because our left and right eyes are horizontally separated, and as a result they receive slightly different views of the same scene. These binocular differences are the basis for powerful impressions of depth. Until recently, it was believed that stereopsis was only useful up to about six metres away. However, research conducted by Professor Palmisano and his team in a disused railway tunnel shows that stereo contributes to depth perception at least as far away as 300 metres. These findings suggest that stereopsis plays an important role in guiding whole body self-motions such as walking, cycling and even driving.



#### Associate Professor Mitch Byrne, School of Psychology

Passionate about research that results in tangible community outcomes, current key focuses for Dr Mitch Byrne are an investigation into the impact of Omega-3 supplementation on prisoner aggression and building on a de-stigmatisation program for Autism.

In 2016, Dr Byrne (along with Associate Professor Barbara Meyer) was Chief Investigator in a successful \$1.8million five-year NHMRC Partnership grant examining Omega-3 supplementation on prisoner aggression.

Dr Byrne has also continued his research in Autism, building on a de-stigmatisation program developed through 2012 to 2014 entitled Understanding Our Peers.

The de-stigmatisation program was awarded the 2015 Autism Spectrum Australia Advancement Award and in 2016 Dr Byrne and his doctoral student, Lidija Balaz developed a pre-school version comprising children's story books. These have been well received in the early education community and have been commercialised.

Data collected as part of this research demonstrated reduced bullying-type behaviours by typically developing peers towards children with Autism. Dr Byrne has also been part of a consortium of researchers and practitioners liaising with peak bodies in China about the development of Autism services in their country.

Dr Byrne has also worked alongside university and community colleagues on the development of the MIND the GaP facility in Nowra and as part of that is collaborating with Dr Emma Barkus on community-based research investigating help-seeking, stigma and mental health literacies as they relate to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Dr Byrne continues to be an active provider of clinical and forensic psychological services. He was invited to present at the annual Children's Court Magistrates Conference on what constitutes and 'good' clinical report. He also presented to the Australian Psychological Society (WA branch) Golden Jubilee Conference on the role of Omega-3 in the management of health disorders, and to the University of Sydney Institute of Criminology seminar on Pharmacotherapy and Crime. Dr Byrne has continued his long-established research on medication adherence, collaborating with researchers in Portugal investigating the role of clinician and patient attitudes in patient adherence.



# find your why



“

I have always had an interest in what drives people's behaviour, how the mind works, and why people feel the way they do. These interests drove me toward studying psychology. I hope to one day become a Clinical Psychologist working with people in a clinical setting – while continuing my research.

—  
**Sarah**

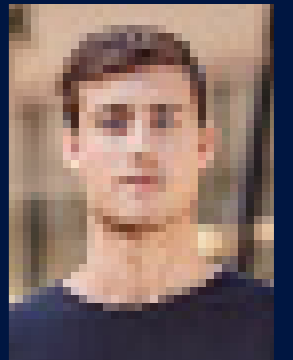
Doctor of Philosophy (Clinical) Candidate – Current  
Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) – 2014

“

I wanted to study psychology because I was really passionate about people and I find people so intriguing. I wanted to follow in the line of my parents as they have helped out those who have been disadvantaged through their lines of work. I want to give a voice to those who really need it in our community.

—  
**Sam**

Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) – Bachelor of Laws – 2016



“

Life at UOW has been nothing short of an enjoyable and worthwhile experience. I have met new friends and academic staff who have made me feel so welcomed far away from home. The facilities at the university made studying a convenient process, and the campus has a brilliant mix of natural landscapes amidst the backdrop of concrete buildings which provides a cool ambience for de-stressing walks after classes.

—  
**Harith**

Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours) – 2015  
Bachelor of Science (Psychology) – 2014

“

I called Northfields Clinic my second home during my two-year Clinical Masters degree. I think the real stand-out for me was the network of support. There was always someone available and willing to help out including supervisors, administration staff and peers.

—  
**Fiona**

Doctor of Philosophy Candidate – Current  
Master of Psychology (Clinical) – 2013  
Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) – 2011



# 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**  
Associate Professor Lisa Kervin

Associate Professor Kervin is particularly interested in the ways children use language in their play, the ways they create text and how educators and families can support these practices.

Prior to academic appointment, Professor Kervin was employed as a primary-school teacher, with experience in school leadership. She graduated with her PhD in 2004, from UOW. In 2005, she was appointed to the then Faculty of Education. Beginning with an International Reading Research Fellowship (2006) her career has taken a research pathway. During her time at UOW she has held research governance roles including Honours Coordinator, Head of Postgraduate Studies, Head of Research (Education) and most recently, Associate Dean (Research).

Professor Kervin's research over the last decade has provided fresh perspectives to the role of technology in the lives of children. Typically, her research designs are qualitative, multi-site and ethnographic. Her research has been acknowledged through International awards including the Elva Knight Award in 2011. In 2016, she was awarded the Australia Literacy Educators' Association Medal for services to literacy education locally, nationally and internationally. Professor Kervin leads research focused on technology, pedagogy and curriculum in Early Start Research. She is regularly called upon to consult in literacy practices in educational contexts at service, school and system levels.

Professor Kervin has published more than 60 journal articles and has been successful in obtaining competitive internal and external grants (including five ARC Discovery grants and an OLT grant). She has graduated 15 Higher Degree Research students.



**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](http://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.

## CONTACT

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**#ThisIsUOW**



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