



# **Nature and Roles of Arts Degrees in Contemporary Society**

*A national scoping project of Arts programs across Australia*

**PROJECT FINAL REPORT**

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Professor Christy Slade, Macquarie University  
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Professor Richard Fotheringham, University of Queensland  
Professor Stephen Garton, University of Sydney  
Professor Andrew Wells, University of Wollongong  
Professor David Wood, Curtin University of Technology

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The BA Scoping project was developed under the auspices of The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH). The project proposal was endorsed by the group of Deans at the DASSH 2007 annual conference and its progress monitored by a steering committee comprising of members of the DASSH executive and DASSH membership body. This scoping exercise was funded via a Discipline-Based Initiative Grant, a grant scheme of The Carrick Institute of Teaching and Learning (since renamed the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd.) Much of the conceptual framework and intellectual input was provided by the Principal Investigator, Deanne Gannaway and the final report was written by her, with final sign off by the Project Director, Professor Faith Trent.

The project focused specifically on the undergraduate award programs called Bachelor of Arts. It aimed to achieve the following:

- To understand the nature and role of a Bachelor of Arts degree in contemporary Australia
- To map the diverse Bachelor of Arts programs on offer in Australia between 2001 – 2008
- To identify the major strengths, difficulties, capabilities and contributions of the program
- To provide rich base-line data on the nature and models of BAs to be accessible for future curriculum planning for Arts Faculties.

The project gathered evidence to be used by decision makers across the sector to optimize future curriculum development in the light of the potential value of the BA. It aimed to provide options and guidance to the sector for other crucial projects and for further work in implementation and response to future demands.

A small project team, guided by a steering committee consisting of DASSH members, conducted the scoping study. The BA scoping project commenced in March 2007, and was due to conclude in February 2008. As the project has developed, it has become apparent that there was a need to engage stakeholders with the project findings. This engagement was particularly important as the project was designed to recommend subsequent collaborative studies. Further, given the high turnover of key individuals, the project identified a need for engagement with a wider group other than just the Council of Deans. As a result of the interim project report submitted to The Carrick Institute of Teaching and Learning in November 2007, additional funding allocated to facilitate a series of round table meetings was sought, and received. The additional funding and project activity stretched the project conclusion to the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, 2008.

This report provides an overview of the BA scoping project's activities, methods and outcomes.

Key outcomes of the project include the following

- **Creation of a definition of Arts programs**  
An outcome of the BA Scoping Project is a clearer definition for Arts programs. This definition has been used throughout the project data analysis processes to ensure consistency. As the project progressed, it became apparent that there is a lack of a

common, shared understanding of what is meant by the term “Arts”. The reference to “Arts” is frequently ill-defined and often limited to the DEST/DEEWR definition of Society and Culture. This reliance is problematic as the DEST/DEEWR Society and Culture definition encompasses programs that include Law, Social Work and Police Studies. There is also confusion between Liberal Arts and Creative or Visual Arts. There is also evidence that the DEST/DEEWR definition has changed over time.

- **Identification of the key features of an Arts program**  
The project maps and identifies the features that make the Bachelor of Arts distinct from other programs within the broader Arts definition. A clearer understanding of these features is a step towards the articulation of the value of the Bachelor of Arts award programs
- **Development of models to describe curriculum currently in use**  
A series of models that describe the curriculum structures and educational philosophies as they are currently used in Arts programs has been postulated. These are not mutually exclusive but do give a typology.
- **The development of an Arts programs database**  
A crucial outcome of this project is a collection of centrally located accessible data that can be used across the sector for benchmarking and as a resource for future development. This can be used by institutions for quality assurance processes such as preparing for AUQA audits and institutional curriculum reviews. It takes the form of a database of program profiles, case studies, data sets and highlight or summary reports. All are available via the DASSH website <http://www.dassh.edu.au>.
- **Testing of a national communication strategy across Arts programs**  
The project facilitated a series of round table meetings as part of the engagement strategy. These meetings offered an opportunity for people engaged in the coordination of BA programs to meet with each other. Regional discussions afforded the opportunity to address the kinds of issues that particularly affect the sector in particular regions. They also offered an opportunity to disseminate findings across the sector.
- **Development of a methodology for further studies**  
A series of further investigative projects are suggested in order to examine areas identified through this project as requiring further investigation and to examine the long term impact of the BA. A recommended approach is offered that proposes that areas identified by the sector will be led and researched by institutions working collaboratively, be conducted sector-wide and facilitated through DASSH.



## ABOUT THE BA SCOPING STUDY

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### Background

The BA Scoping project was developed under the auspices of The Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH). The project proposal was endorsed by the group of Deans at the DASSH September 2007 annual conference and its progress monitored by a steering committee comprising of members of the DASSH executive and DASSH membership body.

### Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

DASSH leads and promotes the arts, social sciences and humanities nationally and internationally. The long established DASSH organisation is now incorporated as an association. DASSH represents the Deans of Faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities in Universities across Australia and New Zealand. DASSH advocates for the role of teaching, research and scholarship in the arts, social sciences and humanities by:

- sharing information and disseminating best practice between member institutions
- fostering research
- providing a forum for discussion of higher education management
- contributing to the development of education policy and administration issues with a view to establishing national position statements
- taking a lead role in fostering the arts, social sciences and humanities in Australasia
- creating alliances with related organisations and institutions nationally and internationally, and identifying and responding where appropriate to issues relevant to the arts, social sciences and humanities

### Discipline-Based Initiative Grant Scheme

This scoping exercise was funded via a Discipline-Based Initiative Grant, a grant scheme of The Carrick Institute of Teaching and Learning (since renamed the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd.)

### Project Team

The project team initially operated through Flinders University. It was directed by Professor Faith Trent, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Humanities, Law and Theology and President of DASSH and consisted of principal investigator Deanne Gannaway, and research assistants, Hayley Upton and Sarah Price.

The team was guided by a steering committee of members of DASSH and of the DASSH executive. The Steering Committee was representative of all states in Australia, the different institutional types (G08, IRUA, ATN, and NGU), single campus institutions and those with multiple campuses. The Steering Committee consisted of Professor Christy Slade (Macquarie

University); Professor Kay Ferres (Griffith University); Professor David de Vaus (Latrobe University); Professor Richard Fotheringham (University of Queensland); Professor Stephen Garton (University of Sydney); Professor Andrew Wells (University of Wollongong); and Professor David Wood (Curtin University of Technology).

The Steering Committee met with the project team regularly and provided guidance and feedback as the project progressed

## Acknowledgements

The project team would like to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of all the Deans, Associate Deans, Program Coordinators and administrators, career office personnel, administrative staff and students who participated in this project. The project team would like to acknowledge their contribution towards this project's successful conclusion and thank them for their time, insight and commitment in willingly completing surveys, interviews, telephone conversations, reviewing draft documents, and participating in round table meetings.

The project team would also like to acknowledge the support and assistance from the following people:

- Professor Fred D'Agostino, University of Queensland, for his support and feedback across all aspects of this project
- Mia O'Brien, University of Queensland, for editorial and curriculum theory advice
- Lindy Dodd, Flinders University, for her administrative assistance through out the project
- Members of the steering committee for hosting and chairing the round table meetings
- The personal assistants for the Steering Committee members (Ghada Daher, Carlene Kirvan, Bev Shaw, Jenny Young, Khyla Eggert, Ronda Bentley, Carol Button and Lindy Dodd) for organising the national round table meetings
- Associate Professor Janice Orrell, Dr Elizabeth McDonald, and DBI staff at ALTC for their support and guidance in the development of this project

## Project Rationale

This project builds on the previous Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC) funded project that produced the report *"The Lettered Country"* (Pascoe, McIntyre, Ainley & Williamson, 2003). *The Lettered Country* report offers a historical overview of Arts related programs from the beginnings of higher education in Australia to 2001. That report explored the resilience of the BA degree, one of the oldest degree programs in Australia.

The stated purpose of the current ALTC funded project is to scope the nature and roles of Arts degrees in contemporary society.

In the initial project briefing and proposal documentation, it was noted that

*Bachelor of Arts degrees (BAs) have proved the most enduring and adaptable of University awards. They attempt to meet a range of needs – generalist, specialized with depth of disciplines and breadth of possibilities. This makes it imperative that an overall scoping study identifies the major strengths, difficulties, capabilities and*

*contributions to the community and consider these in the light of emerging needs, opportunities both nationally and internationally.*

To date, the BA has been able to survive externally motivated pressures such as strategic and marketing changes, government funding regimes, political imperatives and administrative rearrangements.

However, at the 2006 DASSH conference and in subsequent DASSH executive meetings, DASSH members expressed that they were frequently required to justify the degree programs and to articulate the value of the Arts programs on offer at their institutions.

The BA Scoping project aimed to provide rich base-line data on the nature and models of Bachelor of Arts programs offered in Australia between 2001 – 2008 and to record the types of curriculum practices used. These data are able to be accessed by Arts curriculum leaders as benchmarking evidence for future curriculum planning.

A fundamental rationale for this project is the acknowledgement that diversity is important. This study does not intend to develop a “one size fits all” model nor is it intended to prescribe an Australian BA. Rather, the project findings support the notion that an Arts program is likely to be designed to fit the needs of the institution and of the community that it draws on and feeds into.

## **Project Objectives**

The scoping study had the following initial objectives:

- (a) Provide a map of the types, diversity, structures and discipline distribution within the BA.
- (b) Provide an analysis of the constraints, strengths and weaknesses of the various models within the general and the specialized professional BAs
- (c) Identify trends in demand, student profile, and choice of disciplines
- (d) Identify relationships between disciplines and teaching and assessment approaches
- (e) Identify ways in which curricula have been developed and modified
- (f) Provide a resource of good practice examples including: interdisciplinary learning and disciplinary scholarship; learning and teaching methods; effective use of technology; and effective attention to globalisation and trans-cultural curricula
- (g) Identify the broad scope of relationships, similarities and differences between Humanities and the Social Sciences in Arts degrees and associated issues for teaching and learning
- (h) Identify opportunities when learning and teaching provide a link between Humanities and the Social Sciences
- (i) Identify elements of the BA which have affected careers of BA graduates over the long term
- (j) Design a methodology for examining the long term impact of the BA

## **Project Aims**

The project focused specifically on the undergraduate award programs called Bachelor of Arts. It aimed to achieve the following:

- To understand the nature and role of a Bachelor of Arts degree in contemporary Australia
- To map the diverse Bachelor of Arts programs on offer in Australia between 2001 – 2008
- To identify the major strengths, difficulties, capabilities and contributions of the program
- To provide rich base-line data on the nature and models of BAs to be accessible for future curriculum planning for Arts Faculties.

## Project Limitations

The project was initially a 12 month project with a budget of \$100,000. An extension to an 18 month timeline with an additional budget of \$ 32,000 accommodated the round table meeting engagement. As the project progressed, it became apparent the amount of change in the sector, the desire to involve all Australian Universities and the complexities of the BA meant that certain refinements of the initial scope were required in order to accommodate budgetary and time constraints. As a consequence, this project has not achieved the initially intended goals originally articulated in the project proposal. It is anticipated that they will be addressed as separate investigations with a different budget and time line, as they are considered an integral part of the project.

### 1. Gathering information from graduates

The initial submission for the project stated that

*From alumni lists, a stratified random sample will be chosen of graduates who are 5, 10, 15 years out from graduation. Stratification will be by age, age of entry, gender and current positions. Using a mix of questionnaire and focus groups, data will be developed which identifies those aspects of the BA, its learning potential and career paths which have been important for the alumni.*

As the project has progressed, it became apparent that institutional alumni offices range greatly in function and capacity and that developing a sample of graduates through this means is not possible. Requesting access to graduate contact details has raised confidentiality issues. There are also issues regarding application for ethics approval. This aspect of the project was considered, therefore, beyond the funding, capacity and time scales of this project. Consequently the following initial objective has not been met

*(k) Identify elements of the BA which have affected careers of BA graduates over the long term*

An aspect of this project is addressed in the ACER “Graduate pathways” survey that has recently been administered.

### 2. Assessment approaches

A lack of available cross institutional information has restricted access to data on assessment meant that it was not possible to address the original objective “*Identify relationships between disciplines and teaching and assessment approaches*”.

### 3. Database of practices

An initial objective of the project was perceived to be the development of a prototype database of good practices, specifically

*a resource of good practice examples including: interdisciplinary learning and disciplinary scholarship; learning and teaching methods; effective use of technology; and effective attention to globalisation and trans-cultural curricula*

As the project progressed, it became apparent that, not only was it extremely problematic to elicit examples of what might be considered to be good practice; it was also something that was perceived to be of limited value. The case studies ultimately developed as an outcome of these projects emerged according to what was identified by the sector through the steering committees and round table meetings. These differ to what was perceived to be important at the onset of the project

## **Project Deliverables**

A crucial outcome of this project is a collection of centrally located accessible data that can be used across the sector for benchmarking and as a resource for future development. This can be used by institutions for quality assurance processes such as preparing for AUQA audits and institutional curriculum reviews. They take the form of a database of program profiles, case studies, data sets and highlight or summary reports. All are available via the DASSH website <http://www.dassh.edu.au>

## **Summary Reports**

The summary reports of the Scoping Study are particularly intended for decision makers for the Bachelor of Arts programs: those responsible for coordinating and managing Arts programs. The Summary Reports can be read independently or as a set of information. The set consists of:

1. The Bachelor of Arts Scoping Project: Executive Summary
2. What is the Australian BA? Defining and Describing the Nature and Role of the Arts in Contemporary Australia
3. Mapping the Terrain: Trends and shared features in BA programs across Australia 2001-2008
4. Who is enrolled in the Australian BA? Student Uptake of the Australian BA 2001 – 2006
5. Who is delivering the Australian BA? Trends in Staff Profiles in the BA 2001 – 2006
6. Future studies emerging from the BA Scoping project

These summary reports are supported by resources developed as part of the project. These resources are available from the DASSH website <http://www.dassh.edu.au>

The format of these summary sheets provides an introduction to the specific issue and articulates the key findings pertaining to that issue. The summary sheets also provide links to the data sources for further investigation. The report format emerged in response to requests from round table meeting participants who indicated that they would prefer information sheets that provided bites of information rather than deep analyses, with salient points highlighted and block text on fact and figures. These have been provided as hard copies issued to Executive Deans and as PDF versions on the DASSH website.

## Case studies

Case studies describe experiences and current practices in addressing with common issues. These experiences, practices and issues emerged during the interviews and round tables discussions. Case studies include

- Retention and recruitment strategies
- Advanced studies
- Administration
- Work integrated learning
- Links to community
- Teaching Quality
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Effective use of technology
- Trans cultural curriculum
- Effective attention to globalization
- Ways in which curricula have been modified
- Graduate attributes
- Employability

## Data sets

The datasets are designed to enable DASSH members to interrogate the data in response to their own needs. They are offered in an excel spreadsheet format as both raw data and as pivot tables. They offer current information related to:

- Bachelor of Arts arranged by institution
- Graduate attributes used in Arts programs
- Work Integrated Learning in Arts programs
- Student Exchange in Arts programs
- Disciplines taught as part of the Bachelor of Arts as sequences of study, including core courses within programs
- Bachelor of Arts Student demographics 2001 - 2006
- Graduate destinations of Arts students 2001 - 2006
- Arts Graduate satisfaction with course 2001 - 2006
- AUQA reports pertaining to Arts degrees
- Projects dealing with Bachelor of Arts

## Institutional program profiles

The profiles are itemised program details collated in a uniform framework to facilitate a comparison of programs across a standard instrument. The Institutional Program Profiles focus on the Bachelor of Arts award. They are designed to provide a baseline of what Bachelor of Arts award programs look like across the Australian Higher Education Sector in 2008 and to enable benchmarking.

The first part of each profile describes the details of the award Bachelor of Arts as offered by each institution in 2008. This description is for the Bachelor of Arts award only. It does not include tagged or named programs such as Bachelor of Arts (International Studies), double degrees or honours. The second part of the profile describes the Bachelor of Arts award in contrast to other Arts awards offered by each institution fitting the definition described earlier.

Program details include:

- Duration
- Current Program structure (2008)
- Major changes in structure
- Entry score 2001 – 2008
- Articulation into Bachelor of Arts Program
- Host Faculty
- Campus
- Modes of Delivery
- Coordination/Management
- Specific Requirements/Limitations
- Work Integrated Learning within the Bachelor of Arts
- Industry
- Community
- Links to External Organisations
- Graduate Attributes Shaping the Bachelor of Arts
- Fields of Study available to the Bachelor of Arts
- Student Numbers enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts
- Review
- Contextual Comment

## Project Definitions

Defining an Arts program is problematic given the huge range of types of Arts programs on offer. The Bachelor of Arts is not a universally defined program. A Bachelor of Arts in one institution actually might be described as a Bachelor of Social Sciences in another. In some cases, it is used by non-Arts related program.

A clear and true definition of Arts degrees is an elusive thing. The forerunner report “The Lettered Country”, (Pascoe, McIntyre, Ainley, & Williamson, 2003) took as its focus Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and defined the Arts degree as “*all those bachelor programs in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, variously called a BA, BSocSci, or BA (specific field)*” (Pascoe, McIntyre, Ainley, & Williamson, 2003, p. 7). That report referred to DEST data using the codes associated “*the definition of the BA is the field of study described by government statisticians as ‘Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences’, or, since 2001, ‘Culture and Society’*”(Pascoe, McIntyre, Ainley, & Williamson, 2003, p. 10 Section 2)

The change in coding from field of study code to field of education coding in 2001 meant that the new Society and Culture code now also includes Law, Economics, and Human Services programs. It also does not include data on Media and Communication programs, as these are categorised under the ‘Creative Arts’ coding. Many institutions include Media and Communication programs as part of their Arts offerings.

Duplicating the approach used for “*The Lettered Country*” was therefore not appropriate for this scoping exercise.

### Definition of Arts programs

For the purposes of this study, an Arts program is taken from the DEST “Society and Culture” Coding that includes:

- 0901 Political Science and Policy Studies;

- 0903 Studies in Human Society;
- elements within 0911 Justice and Law Enforcement;
- 0913 Librarianship, Information Management and Curatorial Studies;
- 0915 Language and Literature
- 0917 Philosophy and Religious Studies;
- 0919 Economics and Econometrics and
- 0999 Other Society and Culture.
- It also includes the Creative Arts 1007 code: Communication and Media Studies.

Arts programs described in this report are programs that are

- humanities or social sciences focused;
- are single degree undergraduate programs.

It therefore excludes programs like Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), as well as the Bachelor of Creative Arts, Performance Arts (including Music) and accredited programs such as the Bachelor of Police Studies and Social Work.

As a working definition for this project and for the report, the term “Arts” therefore refers to those programs that adhere to the broader definition of humanities and social science programs with the delimiters described above, and could include professional, vocational, or technical curricula.

### **Definition of Bachelor of Arts programs**

The term “Bachelor of Arts” refers to programs that follow the above criteria and, in addition, adhere to a “liberal Arts notion” i.e. a tertiary curriculum that is

- humanities or social sciences focused;
- are single degree undergraduate programs;
- not accredited or dependent on a professional body for benchmarking;
- allow some level of flexibility in terms of choice for students; and
- are aimed at imparting a general knowledge and developing intellectual capabilities



## THE INVESTIGATIVE APPROACH

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### Project Method

The project team adopted a historical/comparative analysis approach (Ruschemeyer & Mahoney, 2003). As much of the data only came to light during the investigation, an iterative theory building process was used. (Kerssens-van Drongelen, 2001).

The project team worked with existent data relying on primary data rather than second hand data.

Primary sources included the following quantitative and qualitative sources:

- DEST (now renamed DEEWR) data
- Data drawn from the Graduate Destinations Survey (GDS) and Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ)
- Course outlines, program structures and details gathered from institutional 'course finder' websites and calendars
- An online survey of those engaged in the teaching of these programs
- Semi-structured interviews conducted telephonically or 'face to face' with 67 people from a range of roles
- A pilot focus group with graduate and later year South Australian students

Secondary sources included the following:

- existing institutional or centre reports of investigations into particular areas such as attrition or employability
- institutional strategic plans and program review documents
- facility or school websites, program handbooks and program flyers or publicity materials
- literature pertaining into higher education curriculum, teaching and academic work in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and graduate employability
- media and press releases to develop an understanding of contemporary issues.

### Project Stages

The project collected and analysed the data over the life of the project in a staged process. This is described below.

#### Stage 1: Exploration (Data Collection)

In total, 40 institutions were examined and detailed data was collected on 390 programs.

The data collection process was conducted from March 2007 to February 2008, in accordance to a process that met with approval from the Flinders University's Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee.

The data collection process included the following strategies:

### 1. **Interviews**

An interview was sought from each institution, initially targeting the role of the Executive Dean of a Faculty of Arts or a similar role. For the most part, Executive Deans requested that the interview be conducted with a person who had a responsibility for the coordination or oversight of the BA program. A series of semi-structured interviews were conducted telephonically or 'face to face' with 67 people from a range of roles. A full list of the people interviewed is available in Appendix 1.

Interviewees included:

- 11 ALTC/Carrick national award winners teaching into an Arts award
- managers and coordinators of Arts programs across the sector, including
  - 9 Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning),
  - 18 BA coordinators,
  - 6 Deans,
  - 7 Heads of School
  - 5 Administrative officers

This range reflects the diversity of means by which the BA award programs are managed and coordinated across the sector. The semi-structured phone interview questions are available in Appendix 2 and 3

Interviews were not recorded, but comprehensive notes were taken and a case study of each interview drafted. This draft was returned to the interviewee for amendment and approval.

### 2. **Course Outlines and Study Plans**

Course outlines that had either Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Social Sciences as some part of their name were identified via online course finder search engines. Information gathered through this process was collated into an excel spreadsheet under the following general information headings:

- Degree title
- Structure
- Program outline
- URL
- Campus offered
- Mode of delivery
- Disciplines or majors offered as part of the program
- Specific requirements/restrictions
- Host AOU (Academic Organisational Unit)
- Evidence of WIL (Work Integrated Learning)
- Articulation processes and procedures
- Any international exchange or cross institutional opportunities

### 3. **Online Survey**

An online survey, hosted by SurveyMonkey.com, was linked via the DASSH website. The survey was entirely voluntary and anonymous. All Deans were asked to circulate an invitation to "all staff teaching into the BA" to participate in the survey. The survey drew 248 respondents from 28 participating institutions. Questions were a mixture of set response and short word answer. Questions were as outlined in Appendix 4 and a list of institutions from which respondents were recorded is available in Appendix 5

#### **4. DEST/DEEWR Data**

Data sets were requested from DEST that draw on the STUDENT LOAD, ENROLMENTS, and COMPLETIONS data gathered between the period 2001 – 2006. At the time of the analysis, 2007 data was not yet available. Data from the STAFF data sets for the same time period was also collected

#### **5. GCA data**

Data from the Graduate Destinations Survey (GDS) and the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) was requested from Graduate Careers Australia that matched with the DEST Society and Culture code.

#### **6. Program Reviews**

Institutional internal and external reviews of programs were requested from all participating institutions. By the analysis stage of the project, 21 institutions had submitted review documentation for inclusion in the project. Of the remainder, the programs for 3 institutions were under review at the time, 3 institutions indicated that review documents were not able to be released publicly, 4 institutions indicated that there was not a structure in place for program review and 3 institutions were undergoing a major organisational restructure. For a list of reviews submitted see Appendix 6.

#### **7. Website and Publicity Materials**

Promotion material was gathered. This included graduate testimonials and materials illustrating future possible employment from career offices. For a list of career offices contributors see Appendix 7

### **Stage 2: Explanation (Synthesis and analysis)**

#### **1. Institutional program profiles**

An award program that represented a Bachelor of Arts for each institution was identified. All data gathered was analysed through a standard framework document, which became the institutional 'profile' and manifested as a 12 page document. The frameworks were used to develop trends across the programs.

#### **2. Data sets**

Data gathered from the interviews, the program outlines and profiles, DEST and GCA data and publicity materials as collated into a series of data sets that could be analysed

#### **3. Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) reports**

Reports from the first round of the AUQA were examined and any comments, recommendations and commendations for any features that might be identified as related to Arts programs were noted and collated into a dataset.

#### **4. ALTC and institutional teaching and learning investigations**

Existing projects that are funded either under ALTC funding or via institutional funds that may have some impact on Arts programs were collated into a data set.

### **Stage 3: Verification (Authentication and analysis)**

As much of the data and documentation used in this research were not initially created for the purposes of this project, but rather for other purposes or administrative function, in order to reduce the inherent bias or distortion, data collected were critically evaluated and authenticity and accuracy established prior to analysis. In keeping with the iterative theory-building process, as concepts were initially developed, they were verified in comparison with

the raw data across the range of sources and literature and then validated through consultation with the steering committee

**1. Scan of Literature**

There is little in the literature that specifically deals with Arts in the definition used in this study. The literature primarily focuses on the disciplinary experiences that collectively contribute to the development of an Arts program. The literature scan focused on higher education curriculum, attrition and retention, employability of Arts graduates and teaching practice as related to Arts disciplines, from both research and practitioner based sources. The literature was used to inform the summary reports where relevant.

**2. Alternate possible sources of data investigated**

The Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) was drawn on heavily in the preceding study by Pascoe et al (The Lettered Country, 2003). With the refined definition of this study, the data emerging from LSAY in the standard reports proved to be too broad to contribute meaningfully, as data is not gathered specifically on the Bachelor of Arts program, but rather within the broader category of the Society and Culture coding. A similar problem emerged with the Australian Bureau of Statistics data. As data not collected in the general Census Survey does not specify the programs studied, the data from the ABS was deemed to be too broad to meaningfully contribute to this specific scoping exercise.

**3. Student pilot focus groups**

A very small focus group of recent graduates and later year students from the 3 South Australian universities was conducted. The focus group's purpose was to test emerging perceptions and possible questions for future student focus groups emerging as a result of the project progression. As this was an unrepresentative small sample and the results of the focus groups were not used as part of the analysis, but will inform later projects. The questions and focus of the focus groups is available in Appendix 8

**4. Steering Committee meetings**

Regular face-to-face meetings and teleconference meetings with members of the steering committee allowed for continued refinement of the project outline. The Steering Committee also seconded additional participants for advice and alternate viewpoints.

**5. Round table meetings**

A series of round table meetings were held throughout Australia. Invitations were extended through the Executive Deans to three representatives with responsibility for management and curriculum coordination of the BA. Nine meetings were held across the country chaired by a member of the Steering Committee and with the Principal Investigator Deanna Gannaway leading them all. At least one was held in each State, with 103 representatives invited and 99 participants in attendance. During these meetings, program profiles were examined, and project findings gathered to date were shared and discussed. These meetings also provided an opportunity for participants to discuss relevant issues related to regional experiences. A full list of participants is available at Appendix 9. These meetings were recorded and actions minuted

## Stage 4: Outcome Development

The components of the database of program profiles, case studies, data sets and highlight or summary reports were developed. All are available via the DASSH website

<http://www.dassh.edu.au>

1. Findings were consolidated into a series of summary reports with the following headings.
  - a. What is the Australian BA? Defining and Describing the Nature and Role of the Arts in Contemporary Australia
  - b. Mapping the Terrain: Trends and shared features in BA programs across Australia 2001-2008
  - c. Who is enrolled in the Australian BA? Student uptake of the Australian BA 2001 – 2006
  - d. Who is delivering the Australian BA? Trends in Staff Profiles in the BA 2001 – 2006
  - e. Future studies emerging from the BA Scoping project
2. Institutional Program Profiles were finalised and returned to institutional contacts for final approval and publication permission

## Project Evaluation

### Formative evaluation

1. **Steering committee meetings**

The Steering committee meetings provided an opportunity for gathering feedback from a representative DASSH membership. The formative evaluation enabled the refinement of research questions for the project team in order to gather data that would have the maximum benefit for the sector. In addition, these meetings ensured periodic reviews of progress against the time line with project director and project team.
2. **Informal feedback**

Feedback was also elicited through interviews and email correspondence with Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities and BA program coordinators
3. **DASSH Conference 2007**

A presentation report at the DASSH sector-wide conference held between 26 - 28 September, 2007 was met with whole-scale support from the sector. In general, feedback from the conference participants included support for the project as an important part of the Council's core business.
4. **Round table meetings**

The round table meeting format provided an opportunity for formative evaluation of the project. This process was used to ensure that outcomes would be effective and relevant; to enable representatives from the sector the opportunity to provide input into the proposed methodology for further study; to set the direction for the format of the project's outcomes that would be of greatest use to individual institutions; and to allow discussion with peers about the structures and design of the curricula in use across the sector.

## 5. ALTC liaison

The project's initial direction and scope was developed through consultation with the then Director, DBI, Carrick Institute: Associate Professor Janice Orrell and at a later stage with Director Dr Elizabeth McDonald. Participation in the national DBI fora and workshops allowed discussion about the project and project processes with project managers, investigators and directors engaged in similar projects. This engagement encouraged project process refinement.

The interim report and resultant increase in funding for additional activities received in November 2007 provided a more formal opportunity for evaluation from ALTC. In addition, on going meetings and correspondence between the Project Director, Professor Faith Trent and the ALTC Director - Programs and Networks Dr Elizabeth McDonald monitored project progress and outcomes.

## Summative evaluation

### 1. Round tables Online Survey

A post round table meeting online survey of respondents attracted a response rate of 42%. Most of the feedback was positive with the main negative responses centred around the fact that the round table meetings did not allow enough time for detailed discussion of matters beyond the project. A summary of the results will be made available at the DASSH conference to guide future activities.

### 2. DASSH Conference 2008

Input from DASSH members will be sought at the annual conference to be held in October 2008. Members will be encouraged to join in smaller groups to take ownership of identified Priority Projects for submission to ALTC, under the auspices of DASSH.

## Project Dissemination

In keeping with the notion that effective dissemination of project outcomes requires the engagement of leaders (Southwell, Gannaway, Orrell, Chalmers & Abraham, 2005) the sustainability of this project is guaranteed through its patronage by DASSH.

### 1. Round tables

As mentioned earlier, the round table meetings held nationally, facilitated a level of engagement with the project from people representing a wide range of program and institutional leadership positions.

### 2. DASSH Conference 2008

The official launch of this project will take place at the DASSH Conference 2008 to be held in Melbourne between 1 to 3 October 2008. This conference has Senator the Hon Kim Carr (*Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research*), Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AC (*Chair, Higher Education Review Expert Panel*) and Professor Margaret Sheil, (*CEO, Australian Research Council*) as keynote speakers. A key outcome of the conference will be the development of the expressions of interest applications for funding for the future projects emerging from this scoping exercise to be lodged with ALTC in the new year.

### **3. DASSH website**

The project deliverables are made available via the DASSH website. Certain areas are password protected. Access to these areas is through a password sent via the DASSH office to DASSH members. The website and an email announcing the availability of the project resources will be sent initially to project contributors and to the DASSH members as a soft launch of the project outcomes.

## FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES

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### **Project Findings**

#### **The Bachelor of Arts is highly complex**

There is a little in the way of a common understanding in terms of definitions, scope and pedagogy across the various Arts degrees across the sector. Once a working definition of Arts programs had been established, only 35 of 390 programs explored could be called Bachelor of Arts according to the project definition, suggesting that the Arts are serving a range of functions, yet are commonly referred to as a single entity.

#### **Decline in numbers of full-time staff, increasing casualisation and implications for renewal**

Despite the steady increase in student numbers across the all of the programs defined by this project as Arts programs, there has been a steady decline in the numbers of full time staff teaching into the Arts programs over the last 6 years. Project informants report a concern in the increase of casualisation of the workforce and its effects on learning and teaching in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. This is supported by reviewing the DEST/ DEEWR data. A combined picture indicates that there are looming issues as to how Arts degrees will be staffed in the future and how the trend towards casualisation will be curbed at a time when Arts is serving a range of functions in the community.

#### **Increase in student numbers**

Although there has been a steady increase in the number of students across the broader Arts programs, there has been a steady decline in the number of students engaged in Bachelor of Arts programs.

#### **Increase reliance in convergent technologies**

Project participants report a movement away from talk and chalk modes of delivery and the increasing reliance on convergent technologies at a time of decreased funding.

#### **Arts programs are in a state of renewal and review**

Most of the Bachelor of Arts programs examined were either under review or emerging from a review. Arts programs are in a state of flux. Most of the programs investigated reported that they were currently under review or offering a new iteration as a result of institutional restructuring. The BA programs appear to be constantly adapting and adjusting.

#### **Reduction of the number of programs on offer in 2008**

Of the 390 Arts programs that were initially explored, there were 214 on offer in 2008, and an additional 10 new programs made available. This means that there is a reduction of 176



programs across the country. At the same time, in some institutions that had closed Bachelor of Arts programs because they had niche degrees are now reinstating Bachelor of Arts programs in favour of niche degrees.

## **Problems with the DEST/DEEWR data**

The experiences of using national data collections such as the DEST/DEEWR collections and the GCA collections show that interrogating the data on a program level is particularly challenging.

The data is collected in manners unique to institutions. DASSH is well placed to liaise with these organisations to request changes in the ways data is collected and distributed. In addition, there are inconsistencies between the student numbers and sessional teachers data collected and distributed by DEST/DEEWR and that maintained by institutions.

Data is collected from institutions in a unique manner. Each institution records program names in a unique and idiosyncratic manner according to internal policies, making program names an unreliable mechanism for examining awards across the sector. The only reliable mechanism for distinguishing programs was using the Society and Culture, which still leads inaccuracies.

## **Work integrated learning**

The project identified the different types of work integrated learning that form part of the Arts programs. There is a suggestion through the interviews and the analysis of programs, that there are increasing opportunities for work integrated learning within Arts programs. However, there is a discrepancy in the actual WIL EFTSL recorded by DEST/DEEWR as being involved in these programs. This is because to some extent definitions keep changing in the DEST/DEEWR world, making comparisons difficult.

## **Curriculum Leadership**

The project identified that the management of a program of the nature of the BA is a highly complex activity. It requires negotiation and management across a range of disciplinary pedagogies and organisational structures such as schools and Faculties. Many individuals with responsibility for these activities expressed a concern about their capacity and their knowledge of curriculum.

## **Curriculum**

One clear feature which emerges is the notion of curriculum in the BA is ill-defined and probably ill-understood. The BA is frequently a “Lego” degree which may have coherence in its discipline areas if there has been agreed discussion and consistent expertise but the overarching curriculum is rarely referred to or described, except in professional BAs. The flexibility of the degree is cited as a virtue but often this is lost in issues of availability, timetabling and student external pressures. However structures can be described.

## **Inclusion of the Student Voice**

Future studies into the Arts programs need to include input from students, particularly with respect to motivation for enrolment, expectations for career progression and experiences of engaging with the program.

## **Project Outcomes**

### **Creation of a common language**

An outcome of the BA Scoping Project is a clearer definition for Arts programs. This definition has been used throughout the project data analysis processes to ensure consistency. As the project progressed, it became apparent that there is a lack of a common, shared understanding of what is meant by the term “Arts”. The reference to “Arts” is frequently ill-defined and often limited to the DEST/DEEWR definition of Society and Culture. This reliance is problematic as the DEST/DEEWR Society and Culture definition encompasses programs that include Law, Social Work and Police Studies. There is also confusion between liberal Arts and creative or visual Arts.

### **Key features of the program**

The project maps and identifies the features that make the Bachelor of Arts distinct from other programs within the broader Arts definition. A clearer understanding of these features is a step towards the articulation of the value of the Bachelor of Arts award programs

### **Development of models to describe curriculum currently in use**

A series of models that describe the curriculum structures and educational philosophies has been developed.

### **Bachelor of Arts Programs Collection**

A crucial outcome of this project is a collection of centrally located accessible data that can be used across the sector for benchmarking and as a resource for future development. This can be used by institutions for quality assurance processes such as preparing for AUQA audits and institutional curriculum reviews. They take the form of a database of program profiles, case studies, data sets and highlight or summary reports. All are available via the DASSH website <http://www.dassh.edu.au>.

The project has developed a collection of resources and data describing the Australian Bachelor of Arts awards in 2008 – a snapshot in time. The outcomes of this project provide a baseline and snapshot of the Australian Arts programs. The outcomes are available via the DASSH website. They can be used by institutions for benchmarking purposes if they are maintained. A mechanism to ensure the data collected remains useful beyond the life of this project will be required.

A crucial outcome of this project is that there is now a collection of accessible data centrally located that can be used across the sector for benchmarking and as a resource for future development. This can be used by institutions for quality assurance processes such as preparing for AUQA audits and institutional curriculum reviews

### **Testing of a national communication strategy across Arts programs**

The project facilitated a series of round table meetings as part of the engagement strategy. These meetings offered an opportunity for people engaged in the coordination of BA programs to meet with each other. Regional discussions afford the opportunity to address

the kinds of issues that particularly affect the sector in particular regions. They also offered an opportunity to disseminate findings across the sector.

### **Methodology for Further Studies**

A series of further investigative projects are suggested in order to examine areas identified through this project as requiring further investigation and to examine the long term impact of the BA. A recommended approach is offered that proposes that areas identified by the sector will be led and researched by institutions working collaboratively, be conducted sector-wide and facilitated through DASSH. These are described in greater detail in the next section.

## FUTURE FUNDING SUBMISSIONS

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An outcome of the BA Scoping project was the identification of areas that required further investigation. It is recommended that a series of further investigative projects be conducted to examine the long term impact of the BA. The recommended approach is that the following key areas (as identified by the sector) will be led and researched by institutions working collaboratively, be conducted sector-wide and facilitated through DASSH.

The role of DASSH within the proposed approach is to

- Coordinate and orchestrate projects to ensure that projects are not duplicating activities with the same group of stakeholders
- Facilitate collaboration and communication across the projects
- Develop and maintain databases from the prototypes developed in this scoping project
- Disseminate findings and outcomes through strategies that facilitation of Arts related round tables, master classes and road shows
- Conduct external evaluation of all BA related projects

The intention is that an outcome of the DASSH conference 2008 will be the development of applications for funding.

The proposed studies described below are framed as research, are not prescriptive, but indicate areas of concern to participants within the project. It is anticipated that the future project funding proposals would include recommendations, actions, resources and practices that will address how Arts in Australian higher education can be strengthened. As an outcome of the scoping nature of this exercise, this report frames the following issues as requiring to be investigated in order to examine and enhance the long term impact of the Bachelor of Arts

### **1. Value of the BA program**

Most individuals interviewed or those who informed the project expressed a concern that they needed to be able to express to the wider community what the value of the BA program is. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the common perception of the BA program is that it is a waste of time, a degree that results in no particular outcome or clear direction. This is despite the fact that a look through the Australian Who's Who shows an impressive number of BA graduates, as does the current Federal parliament listing.

The only main sector-wide instrument that gathers data about graduates provides information about graduates a mere 6 months out of university. There are a number of institutional projects that have tracked alumni, for a range of different reasons, but there is no data on a national scale.

There is a commonly held perception amongst the project informants that BA graduates take a longer time to establish their career paths than their peers who graduate from a professional degree. This needs to be tested.

Overwhelmingly, participants in this research have indicated that they want to know what value graduates place on their degree once they are in the workplace and at what point does, if at all, that valuing takes place.

While it is acknowledged that interviewing the students will be interviewing them about a program in the past, it is important to establish whether the changes that have occurred to the program over the years are in fact meeting the needs of the graduates.

- What is the value-added of a BA degree? What does it actually contribute?
- Who are BA Alumni and what are they doing?
- Where are they 3, 5, 10, 20 years out of their degrees?
- What does the BA contribute to their career path? To themselves?
- What has their career path been?
- What do they value from their degree program through their experiences?
- Is the flexibility the strength of the BA?
- What is the outcome of the BA?
- Given the choices, would a BA graduate recommend a BA program? What are the reasons for the answer?

## **2. Internationalisation**

Across the sector, internationalisation and the preparation of students to work in a global economy was identified as an educational imperative. The BA Scoping project identified some instances of strategies and programs designed to optimise the international experience. The effectiveness of these programs needs to be examined and further successful programs identified. The perception is that the BA is not the program of choice for international students or for students planning a career that will take them into the global job market. This perception requires investigation as to its validity and if the case proves true, the implications for the future curriculum and teaching and learning considered

- What has the impact of internationalization been on the BA program?
- Where has successful internationalization of the curriculum occurred and what does it look like?
- What program developments to enhance the global experience exist?
- What are the curriculum implications for students going abroad for a semester or is the impact simply personal growth?
- To what extent have increasing numbers of those studying overseas influenced the curriculum?
- What is an Australian BA in comparison to international programs?

## **3. Employability**

There appears to be many studies that have been conducted into establishing what key graduate skills are identified as essential to various future employers of graduates. They have often resulted in the development of graduate attributes. While it might be possible to establish a core curriculum that develops these attributes in a professions-based degree, it is difficult to do so in a program that often relies on student selection of units. The relationship between the employers articulated needs and the program outcomes in terms of student experiences is not clear.

- How do curriculum intentions, practicum experiences, graduate attributes map to prospective employer expectations?
- How do institutional outcomes map to industry/community expectations?
- How are graduate attributes implemented, evaluated and assessed across the sector?
- How are these communicated to industry?
- What are the implications for the work integrated learning programs and what are the implications for program managers in coordinating placements?
- How does work integrated learning in the BA provide training or skills for future workplaces?

#### **4. Curriculum**

The BA Scoping Project has identified a range of challenges that revolve around the issues of curriculum. For the most part, curriculum design appears to happen on a discipline level, if it occurs at all. The term curriculum when used in the context of the BA seldom elicited anything deeper than a discussion about the number of units that comprise a major. There was no sense that the BA was designed to provide neither a particular purpose nor a particular outcome. Few informants in the project appeared clear about what the purpose of the BA was. Most referred to the key outcomes of the BA as communication skills, critical thinking and the ability to adapt. Assessment was seen to be the training ground for the communication skills and critical thinking, but the ability to adapt was perceived to be the outcome of the flexible nature of the program – the fact that students could choose to study anything that they desired (within timetable and availability constraints) and that the outcome of that flexibility and ability to customise to personal interest was the feature of the program that developed the ability to adapt. It is not clear whether these were simply the opinions of the informants of whether these features are intentional outcomes of the program. The follow-up projects might examine the following areas identified through the study as key questions:

- What are the key graduate attributes of the BA?
- Do we really teach critical thinking or opinion thinking? How does it differ in different contexts? Do students value it?
- Are the subjects offered because of academic expertise and interest or because they form part of a curriculum outcome?
- What are the essentials in each discipline?
- To what extent is there coherence within the disciplines across the BA
- Is there a minimum number and range of disciplines the BA should encompass?
- What is the relationship between the program and the units that make up the program? What's inside the disciplines that make up the degree program? Is it a way of thinking? Is it content?
- What is the outcome of the BA?
- What drives curriculum change in the BA?

#### **Further examination and investigation**

In addition to the long term impact, there were other areas identified through the round table meetings as issues requiring detailed further investigation. These are listed as

Appendix 10 and detailed in the Summary sheet: Future studies emerging from the BA Scoping project, available via the DASSH website. It is expected that individual institutions might wish to apply for funding for these potential projects.

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## GLOSSARY

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**Articulation:** The movement between areas of study, Academic Organization Units or institutions by a student.

**Capstone:** In-depth exploration of an area of the curriculum. Usually occurs in the final term of study and builds on previous learning.

**Community work integrated learning:** Placements formally arranged for students to engage within community organizations and volunteer groups.

**Credit points:** Number of points assigned to each unit of study that acts as an indicator of the amount of work required in that unit. Collective of credit points indicates successful completion of a program

**DASSH:** Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities. DASSH represents the deans of Faculties of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities in universities and higher education institutions across Australia and New Zealand. <http://www.dassh.edu.au>

**DEST:** Department of Education, Science and Training. Since the change in government, this federal government department is now known as DEEWR. Data sets informing this project were delivered under the DEST name, hence the use of this name as a cited source.

**Field of study:** A subject or discipline area; a branch of knowledge or learning. Majors have been collated to match to a field of study to provide a sense of a subject area in which a major is offered.

**Elective:** A unit counting towards the total credit points required toward a program but is not a specific program requirement.

**Entry score:** Required scores to gain entry to be able to participate in a program of study. Often set as a tertiary entrance score developed as a result from standardized exams at the end of secondary schooling.

**Exchange program:** An opportunity for domestic student to continue a portion of studies at a university other than the home institution. May include an exchange of a domestic student with an overseas student

**ICT:** Information and Communication Technologies

**Industry work integrated learning:** Placements formally arranged for students to engage within industry

**Level:** Used in this profile to describe what has traditionally been conceived of as year of study. Findings from this project suggest that students do not necessarily complete a program within traditional 3 year blocks. Levels have been used instead of years to indicate a staged progression through a program

**Major:** A group of units, typically in one or more related fields of study which are a specialisation within a program. A major denotes a concentration of a number of credit points in a specific subject. It does not necessarily imply an increasing level of complexity.

**Minor:** A secondary field of academic concentration or specialization with fewer credit points than a major. Sometimes called a sub-major. It does not necessarily imply an increasing level of complexity.

**Program:** Program is used in these documents to denote an integrated course of academic studies. It could include award programs, or programs of study that allow students to qualify to access postgraduate studies

**Restricted field of study:** A field of study is restricted to certain students (e.g. some Dance majors require auditions; some majors require the student to be enrolled in a double program)

**Unit:** In keeping with the DEST definition, the term “unit” has been used to describe a subdivision of a course, subject, or program of study or training. Different institutions may refer to a unit as a course, subject, topic or module.

**Upper Level:** Academic concentration in a particular subject requiring some grounding or basic understanding. A primary field of study. Implies an increasing level of complexity through study.

## APPENDICES

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## Appendix 1: Interviewees

<b>Award Winners</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Associate Professor Matthew Allen	Curtin University of Technology
Dr Lekkie Hopkins	Edith Cowan University
Dr Caroline Chanock	La Trobe University
Professor Richard Howitt	Macquarie University
Associate Professor Baden Offord	Southern Cross University
Professor Iain Hay	The Flinders University of South Australia
Professor Mark Israel	The Flinders University of South Australia
Dr Joy McEntee	The University of Adelaide
Dr Jennifer Clark	The University of New England
Dr Stephen Robertson	The University of Sydney
Dr Beverley McNamara	The University of Western Australia
<b>DEANS</b>	
Professor Gail Crossley, Dean	Australian Catholic University
Assistant Professor Anne Cullen, Head of School of Humanities	Bond University
Dr Warwick Mules, BA Coordinator	Central Queensland University
Associate Professor Dennis Shoesmith, Political Science	Charles Darwin University
Associate Professor Frank Molloy, Senior Lecturer School of Humanities and Social Sciences	Charles Sturt University
Associate Professor Sue Trinidad, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor, Faculty of Humanities	Curtin University of Technology
Associate Professor Sarah Paddle, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)	Deakin University
Professor Peggy Brock, Professor of Colonial and Indigenous History School of International, Cultural and Community Studies – Program Director Bachelor of Arts	Edith Cowan University
Dr Jock Macleod, Deputy Head School of Arts	Griffith University
Professor Janet Greeley, Pro Vice Chancellor Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences	James Cook University
Ms Ralene Reece, Registrar Faculty of Humanities	La Trobe University



and Social Sciences	
Professor Christie Slade, Dean of Humanities	Macquarie University
Professor Mark Peel, Associate Dean (Teaching) Faculty of Arts	Monash University
Associate Professor Jim Macbeth, Head, School of Social Sciences and Humanities	Murdoch University
Dr Jane Williamson, Executive Director Northern Campus	Queensland University of Technology
Professor Bruce Wilson, Head, School of Global Studies, Social Sciences and Planning; Des Cahill	RMIT University
Dr Jean Griffiths, Head School, School of Arts and Sciences	Southern Cross University
Professor Julie Mulvaney, Deputy Dean Faculty of Life Sciences and Social Sciences	Swinburne University of Technology
Professor Nicolas Peterson, Dean College of Arts and Social Science Therese Douglass, CASS Student Administration and Julie Gorrell, Executive Officer CASS (together)	The Australian National University
Professor Don De Bats, Faculty Advisor, Faculty of Social Sciences, School of Political and International Studies	The Flinders University of South Australia
Dr Miriam Collins, Program and Curriculum Officer, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Penny Boumlha, Associate Dean (Education) and Head, Discipline of English (together)	The University of Adelaide
Associate Professor Steve James, Associate Dean (Undergraduate Studies) Faculty of Arts	The University of Melbourne
Dr Bruce Stevenson, Acting BA Co-ordinator	The University of New England
Associate Professor Eileen Baldry, Associate Dean (Education) Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	The University of New South Wales
Professor Hugh Craig, Faculty of Education and Arts	The University of Newcastle
Simon Adams, BA Coordinator	The University of Notre Dame Australia
Professor Fred D'Agostino, Director of Studies Faculty of Arts	The University of Queensland
Dr Brigid Rooney, Co chair Teaching and Learning and Dr Nerida Jerky (together)	The University of Sydney
Dr Beverley McNamara, Senior Lecturer Anthropology and Sociology	The University of Western Australia
Professor Jonathon Holmes and Mrs Yvonne Bottomley (together)	University of Tasmania

Dr Jeremy Smith, Course Coordinator: Bachelor of Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences)	University of Ballarat
Dr Nicolette Bramley, Part-time BA Convener	University of Canberra
Professor Kerry Green, BA Coordinator	University of South Australia
Associate Professor Peter Wicks, Program Head, General Studies, Combined Degrees & Transdisciplinary Studies, Faculty of Arts	University of Southern Queensland
Associate Professor Pam Dyer, Dean Coast Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	University of Sunshine Coast
Professor Theo van Leeuwen, Dean Humanities and Social Sciences	University of Technology, Sydney
Associate Professor Peter Hutchings, Associate Dean (Academic), College of Arts	University of Western Sydney
Associate Professor John McQuilton, Associate Dean (Undergraduate)	University of Wollongong
Dr Jeannie Rea, Head of School, Communication, Culture and Languages, Coordinator BA review	Victoria University

## Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

### 1. The BA in your institution

1.1. Accuracy of BA profile as gathered to date (to be circulated prior to the interview)

*These questions refer to the BA at your institution and asks questions about your perception*

- What you believe is particularly unique or exemplary about the BA degree at your institution?
- Most popular degrees at your institution and why you believe they are so?

*Please describe and provide an overview of how the BA is managed in your institution*

- Roles of BA conveners/ coordinators
- A description of links with other degree programs within your institution and across institutions
- A description of links between your BA and schools, community and industry

*Many students choose to do a BA for different reasons. Tracking student pathways through a BA may give some insight into how students view the BA degrees. These questions refer to your perception about how students move through the degree*

- Attrition rates and possible reasons for attrition
- Sense of rate of progression of students through degrees
- Why do you believe a student chooses a BA degree at your institution
- Evidence of structured work-place or student international exchange programs
- Are there any logical postgraduate add-ons to your institution's BA programs?

### 2. The BA Curriculum

*The following questions refer to the way in which the BA curriculum may be designed at your institution. This could refer to professional styled degrees or generic degrees*

- 2.1. Evidence/existence of a curriculum or linking of units
- 2.2. Evidence of progression in complexity for 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students
- 2.3. What are the key outcomes of a BA?
- 2.4. When was the last time the BA was reviewed in your institution?
- 2.5. To what extent do you make decisions based on trans-disciplinary or multidisciplinary approach or not?
- 2.6. What words do you believe are the buzz words that attract large number of students at your institution at the moment?
- 2.7. How do you respond to the fashions or trends in student demand of courses/programs?

### 3. The BA in general

*Do you have a sense of how studies in the BA have changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?*

- What changes have happened over the last 5 years
- What is the strength of the BA?

*Impact of market differentiation. There are a range of different models that exist regarding the BA across the sector. Thinking about future directions, what do you see as possible trends within your institution?*

- What are the broader impacts of these changes
- what are the 3 biggest issues of concern for you at the moment

## **Appendix 3: Schedule of Award winners interviews**

### **2. Your experiences**

- a. Your role within the BA
- b. Your teaching experiences within a BA degree
  - i. Modes of delivery
  - ii. Teaching successes
  - iii. Teaching challenges
- c. Your disciplinary association and organisations with which you are involved
- d. Your experiences with regards to your teaching award
- e. What support you need to ensure continued excellence in teaching

### **3. Your perceptions of the BA**

- a. What are the strengths of the BA?
- b. What are the challenges of the BA?
- c. What aspect of the BA requires detailed exploration or attention?

## Appendix 4: Online survey

1. In which University do you teach?
  2. What is your field of study or discipline area in which you research and teach?
  3. In what capacity do you contribute to the delivery of the BA at your institution? Please check as many of the responses as applicable
    - Teach within a minor study within the BA
    - Teach within a major study within the BA
    - Coordinate a major study within the BA
    - Design a major study within the BA
    - Act as a director of studies or major convener within the BA
    - Other (please specify)
  4. What, in your opinion, is the singular strength of the BA at your institution?
  5. What are the major challenges you see relating to the successful delivery of a BA program in your institution?
  6. What, in your opinion, does the BA contribute towards the prospective future employment of a student?
- As part of the project, a database of good practices is being developed that will form the basis an online resource that can be accessed by academics teaching in the BA.
7. Can you provide an example of good practices in one or more of the following sections?
    - Interdisciplinary learning
    - Integration of research into teaching
    - Learning and teaching methods
    - Use of technology
    - Teaching in the global context
    - Trans-cultural curriculum
    - Assessment strategies
    - Other (please specify)
  8. Which good practice area would you most like to access to inform your own teaching practice?
    - Interdisciplinary learning
    - Integration of research into teaching
    - Learning and teaching methods
    - Use of technology
    - Teaching in the global context
    - Trans-cultural curriculum
    - Assessment strategies
    - Other (please specify)

Should you wish to make a contribution to the good practice database, please email [deanne.gannaway@flinders.edu.au](mailto:deanne.gannaway@flinders.edu.au) for a contribution template to be sent to you. Thank you for your response.

## **Appendix 5: Participating Institutions in Survey**

Australian Catholic University National  
Bond University  
Central Queensland University  
Charles Sturt University  
Curtin University of Technology  
Edith Cowan University  
James Cook University  
Macquarie University  
Monash University  
Murdoch University  
Queensland University of Technology  
Southern Cross University  
Swinburne University of Technology  
The Flinders University of South Australia  
The University of Melbourne  
The University of New England  
The University of New South Wales  
The University of Notre Dame Australia  
The University of Queensland  
The University of Sydney  
University of Ballarat  
University of Canberra  
University of South Australia  
University of Tasmania  
University of Technology, Sydney  
University of the Sunshine Coast  
University of Wollongong  
Victoria University

## **Appendix 6: Institutions Offering Reviews for Perusal**

Australian Catholic University  
Central Queensland University  
Charles Darwin University  
Charles Sturt University  
Deakin University  
Griffith University  
James Cook University  
Murdoch University  
Queensland University of Technology  
RMIT University  
The Flinders University of South Australia  
The University of Adelaide  
The University of Melbourne  
The University of New South Wales  
The University of Queensland  
The University of Sydney  
The University of Western Australia  
University of Ballarat  
University of Canberra  
University of Technology, Sydney  
University of Wollongong

## **Appendix 7: Careers Office Respondents**

James Cook University

Queensland University of Technology

RMIT University

The Australian National University

The Flinders University of South Australia

The University of Adelaide

The University of Melbourne

The University of New England

The University of New South Wales

The University of Sydney

The University of Western Australia

University of Canberra

University of South Australia

University of Southern Queensland

University of Tasmania



## Appendix 8: Pilot Focus Group Questions

Name:

Sex:

Institution Attended:

1) Why did you go to university?

2) What degree did you do? Did you do a BA?

Why did you do a BA? Why not?

Why did you do the degree that you did?

3) What is a BA?

What would you study in it?

What are the "Arts"?

4) What is the value of a BA?

What skills do you get from it

Where would a BA take you?

5) Why do people do BAs?

6) Was the BA anywhere on your tertiary entrance preferences – what position?

7) Would your parents have let you / supported your choice to do a BA?

Why or why not?

## Appendix 9: Participants at Round Table meetings

Meeting date	Meeting Location	Institution	Representative	Position
25/03/08	The University of Sydney	The University of Sydney	Prof Stephen Garton	Dean, Faculty of Arts
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of Sydney	Dr Nerida Jarkey	Director of Student Support Programs, Faculty of Arts
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of Sydney	Dr Carole Cusack	Senior Lecturer, School of Letters, Art and Media
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of New South Wales	Prof James Donald	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of New South Wales	A/Prof Eileen Baldry	Associate Dean Education, School of Social Sciences and International Studies
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of New South Wales	A/Prof Sean Brawley	Senior Lecturer, School of History and Philosophy
25/03	The University of Sydney	University of Technology, Sydney	A/Prof Gael Walker	Associate Dean Academic Programs, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
25/03	The University of Sydney	University of Technology, Sydney	Prof Andrew Jacobowicz	Head of Academic Group, Social and Political Change
25/03	The University of Sydney	University of Technology, Sydney	Mr Martin Harrison	Program Director, Writing and Cultural Studies
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of Notre Dame Australia	Prof Gerry Turcotte	Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts & Sciences
25/03	The University of Sydney	The University of Notre Dame Australia	Dr Peter Dean	Assistant Dean, Faculty of Arts & Sciences
27/03	Macquarie University	Avondale College	Dr Howard Fisher	Dean, Faculty of Arts
27/03	Macquarie University	Macquarie University	Prof Christina Slade	Dean, Division of Humanities
27/03	Macquarie University	Southern Cross University	Prof Jenny Graham	Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts & Sciences
27/03	Macquarie	Southern Cross	Dr Jean Griffiths	Head, School of Arts & Social Sciences

Meeting date	Meeting Location	Institution	Representative	Position
	University	University		
27/03	Macquarie University	The University of New England	Prof Margaret Sedgley	Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean, Faculty of the Arts & Sciences
27/03	Macquarie University	The University of New England	Dr John Scott	Coordinator BA, School of Behavioural, Cognitive and Social Sciences
27/03	Macquarie University	Macquarie University	Dr Mark Evans	Head of Department, Division of Humanities
27/03	Macquarie University	The University of New England	Prof Kerry Dunne	Academic Director, Faculty of Arts and Sciences
27/03	Macquarie University	Macquarie University	A/Prof Martina Möllering	Head of Department, Division of Humanities
27/03	Macquarie University	Macquarie University	A/Prof Michael Roberts	Acting Dean, Division of Humanities
2/04	University of Wollongong	University of Wollongong	Prof Andrew Wells	Dean, Faculty of Arts
2/04	University of Wollongong	University of Wollongong	A/Prof John McQuilton	Associate Dean (Undergraduate)
2/04	University of Wollongong	University of Wollongong	Dr Stephen Brown	Sub Dean, Faculty of Arts
2/04	University of Wollongong	University of Wollongong	Ms Nuala O'Donnell	Co-ordinator Teaching and Learning
2/04	University of Wollongong	University of Western Sydney	A/Prof Peter Hutchings	Associate Dean (Academic), College of Arts
3/04	La Trobe University	La Trobe University	Prof David de Vaus	Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
3/04	La Trobe University	La Trobe University	Ms Raelene Reece	Registrar
3/04	La Trobe University	La Trobe University	Dr Kay Souter	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
3/04	La Trobe University	Deakin University	Prof Gary Smith	Head of School, School of International and Political Studies, Faculty of Arts and Education
3/04	La Trobe University	Deakin University	A/Prof Sarah Paddle	Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), Faculty of Arts and Education
3/04	La Trobe University	Deakin University	Ms Rachael Alexander	Co-ordinator Staff and Student Support, Faculty of Arts and Education
3/04	La Trobe University	Victoria University	Prof Robert Pascoe	Dean Laureate, Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences
3/04	La Trobe University	Victoria University	Dr Jeannie Rea	Head of School of Communication, Culture and Languages, Faculty of Arts
3/04	La Trobe University	Victoria University	A/Prof Katie Hughes	Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning)

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Position</b>
3/04	La Trobe University	Victoria University	Caterina Cafarella	Lecturer, Faculty of Arts, Education and Humanities
3/04	La Trobe University	Charles Sturt University	Prof Anthony Cahalan	Dean, Faculty of Arts
3/04	La Trobe University	Charles Sturt University	Mr David Gilbey	Senior Lecturer, School of Policing Studies, Faculty of Arts
3/04	La Trobe University	Charles Sturt University	A/Prof Frank Molloy	Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Faculty of Arts
3/04	La Trobe University	Australian Catholic University	Prof Gail Crossley	Dean of Arts and Sciences
3/04	La Trobe University	Australian Catholic University	Dr Theda Thomas	Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning and International), Arts and Sciences Faculty
3/04	La Trobe University	Australian Catholic University	Dr Carolyn Masel	BA Co-ordinator, School of Arts and Sciences
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The Flinders University of South Australia	Chair: Prof Faith Trent, President DASSH	Executive Dean, Faculty of Education, Humanities, Law and Theology
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The University of Adelaide	A/Prof John West-Sooby	Incoming BA Coordinator
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The University of Adelaide	Dr Clement Macintyre	Reader, Head of Politics
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The University of Adelaide	Mr Robert Ewers	Faculty Registrar, Humanities & Social Sciences
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The Flinders University of South Australia	Prof Don De Bats	Chair BA Board
7/04	The University of Adelaide	The Flinders University of South Australia	Dr Diana Glenn	Deputy Head School of Humanities
7/04	The University of Adelaide	University of South Australia	Prof Pal Ahluwalia	Pro Vice Chancellor, Education, Arts & Social Sciences
7/04	The University of Adelaide	University of South Australia	Dr Lynne Badger	Acting Dean: Teaching, Learning & International
7/04	The University of Adelaide	Charles Darwin University	Prof Adrian Walter	Dean of the Faculty of Law, Business and Arts
7/04	The University of Adelaide	Charles Darwin University	A/Prof David Mearns	School of Creative Arts & Humanities (Anthropology), Faculty of Law, Business and Arts
7/04	The	Charles Darwin	A/Prof Dennis	School of Creative Arts & Humanities

Meeting date	Meeting Location	Institution	Representative	Position
	University of Adelaide	University	Shoemith	(History/Political Science), Faculty of Law, Business and Arts
10/04	Griffith University	Griffith University	Prof Kay Ferres	Dean, Faculty of Arts
10/04	Griffith University	Griffith University	Dr Jock MacLeod	Deputy Head of School, School of Arts
10/04	Griffith University	Griffith University	A/Prof Stephen Stockwell	Head of School, School of Arts
10/04	Griffith University	James Cook University	Dr Greg Manning	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences
10/04	Griffith University	James Cook University	Dr Rosita Henry	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences
10/04	Griffith University	University of the Sunshine Coast	A/Prof Joanne Scott	Head of School of Social Science, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
10/04	Griffith University	Bond University	Ms Linda Kirwood	Faculty Executive Support Officer (Teaching and Learning and Accreditation), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
10/04	Griffith University	Bond University	Mr Joel Mason	Program Advisor, School of Humanities
17/04	The University of Queensland	Queensland University of Technology	Prof David Gardiner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
17/04	The University of Queensland	Queensland University of Technology	Prof Gavin Kendall	Professor, Humanities Program
17/04	The University of Queensland	Queensland University of Technology	Prof Clive Bean	Head, Humanities Program
17/04	The University of Queensland	University of the Sunshine Coast	Prof Pam Dyer	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
17/04	The University of Queensland	University of the Sunshine Coast	A/Prof Stephen Lamble	Head of School of Communication, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences,
17/04	The University of Queensland	University of Southern Queensland	Prof Peter Goodall	Dean, Faculty of Arts and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Social Justice)
17/04	The University of Queensland	University of Southern Queensland	Dr Laurie Johnson	Program Coordinator for the Bachelor of Arts, Faculty of Arts
17/04	The University of Queensland	The University of Queensland	Prof Fred D'Agostino	Deputy Dean and Director of Studies, Faculty of Arts
17/04	The University of Queensland	The University of Queensland	Ms Shirley Moran	Manager Academic Administration, Faculty of Arts

Meeting date	Meeting Location	Institution	Representative	Position
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	The University of Notre Dame Australia	Prof Neil Drew	Dean of Arts and Sciences
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	The University of Notre Dame Australia	Dr Deborah Gare	Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	The University of Notre Dame Australia	Dr Angeline O'Neil	Senior Lecturer English Literature, Faculty of Arts and Sciences
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Curtin University of Technology	Prof David Wood	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Humanities
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Curtin University of Technology	A/Prof Sue Trinidad	Deputy Dean of Teaching & Learning, Faculty of Humanities
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Curtin University of Technology	Ms Sonia Ferns	C2010 Project Leader, Office of Teaching and Learning
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Curtin University of Technology	Ms Veronica Goerke	Lecturer, University Office of Teaching & Learning
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	The University of Western Australia	Ms Emma Matson	Arts Practicum & Student Exchange Coordinator, Faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	The University of Western Australia	Prof Philipa Maddern	Head of the School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Edith Cowan University	Prof Brenda Cherednichenko	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Executive Dean, Faculty of Education and Arts
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Edith Cowan University	Prof Clive Barstow	Head, School of Communications and Arts, Faculty of Education and Arts
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Edith Cowan University	Dr Susan Ash	Program Director, Communication and Arts, Faculty of Education and Arts
23/04	Curtin University of Technology	Murdoch University	A/Prof Jim MacBeth	Acting Head of School of Social Sciences & Humanities, Faculty of Arts and Education, Social Sciences and Humanities
24/04	Curtin University of Technology	Murdoch University	Prof Andrew Taggart	Dean of Faculty of Arts & Education
28/04	Monash University	University of Tasmania	Prof Jan Pakulski	Dean of Faculty of Arts
28/04	Monash University	University of Tasmania	Prof Jonathan Holmes	Associate Dean (Teaching & Learning), Deputy Head of School of Art
28/04	Monash University	RMIT University	Prof Bruce Wilson	Head of School of Global Studies, Social Sciences & Planning

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Representative</b>	<b>Position</b>
28/04	Monash University	RMIT University	Ms Helen McLean	Academic Development and Improvement Manager
28/04	Monash University	RMIT University	Prof Joe Siracusa	Program Director for Global Studies, Social Sciences & Planning
28/04	Monash University	University of Ballarat	A/Prof Rosemary Green	Head of School, Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities
28/04	Monash University	University of Ballarat	Dr Jeremy Smith	Deputy Head of School
28/04	Monash University	University of Ballarat	A/Prof Alice Mills	Lecturer, Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences and Humanities
28/04	Monash University	Swinburne University of Technology	Prof Julie Mulvaney	Deputy Dean, Life & Social Sciences
28/04	Monash University	The University of Melbourne	Prof Mark Considine	Dean, Faculty of Arts
28/04	Monash University	The University of Melbourne	Dr Marion Campbell	Associate Dean Curriculum and Teaching
28/04	Monash University	Monash University	Dr Chistina Twomey	Lecturer, School of Historical Studies, Faculty of Arts
28/04	Monash University	Monash University	Ms Bronwyn Shields	Faculty Manager, Faculty of Arts
29/04	Monash University	The Australian National University	Ms Therese Douglass	Manager, Student Office, College of Arts and Social Sciences

## **Appendix 10: Areas identified by the sector for further examination during round tables**

The areas identified by the sector for further examination were established through steering committee and through the round table meetings held in each state.

1. The value of the BA.
2. Key skills, knowledge and attributes sought by common employers of BA graduates
3. Developing curriculum leadership for those engaged in coordinating BA programs
4. Matching institutional outcomes with industry/community expectations
5. How are graduate attributes implemented, evaluated and assessed
6. Work integrated learning in the BA
7. Who are the graduates of the BA and what is their career path?
  - o When does the learning gained in a BA kick in?
  - o Where are they 5, 10, 15 years out?
8. Internationalization
  - o Internationalizing the Curriculum
  - o Program developments to enhance the global experience
  - o Global standards – what is an Australian BA as opposed to an international
9. Sciences and Arts
  - o Synergies between Liberal Arts and Sciences in curriculum and methodologies
10. Issue of dual degrees
  - o Role of the BA in dual degrees
  - o Impact of having other subjects/dual degrees in terms of administration
  - o Why do students want double degrees
11. Academic profiles
  - o Succession planning
  - o Who's doing the teaching
  - o Impact of increasing casualization on the program
  - o Workload policies
12. Identity of students
  - o Who are Arts students and where do they come from
  - o What are their expectations of Arts and uni
  - o Issue of cohort and how do they identify themselves
  - o What knowledge do they come with – what's their social capital
13. Enrolment
  - o Retention and attrition across programs and institutions
  - o Enrolment across the institutions – who is enrolling where and why
  - o Pathways through the degree
14. Honours and pathways to PhDs
  - o Masters and double degrees – what's the impact on the BA
15. How are students learning in the BA
  - o Infrastructure and IT needs
  - o lab teaching
  - o issues related to staff training
  - o Convergent communication technology
16. What is the key graduate attribute of the BA – is it critical thinking?
  - a. Do we really teach critical thinking of opinion thinking
  - b. How does it differ in different contexts
  - c. Do students value critical thinking?