

UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA

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# CAREER READY GRADUATES



UNIVERSITIES  
AUSTRALIA



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# MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

Work integrated learning at Australian universities is a win-win for students and employers.

High-quality internships and work placements give university students crucial workplace skills to help them land their first job after graduation.

It is essential that students are exposed to how contemporary workplaces operate so they can hit the ground running from day one of the job.

These programs also give employers the opportunity to see the skills and abilities our graduates can bring to a workplace. In a competitive job market, businesses should be taking advantage of this opportunity.

It's no surprise university graduates are in demand, with a higher education qualification proving to be a solid pathway to employment.

This is demonstrated in the recent findings of the 2018 Employer Satisfaction Survey and the 2018 Graduate Outcomes Survey:

- 72.9 per cent of undergraduates were in full-time employment four months after completing their degree, an increase of five percentage points from 2014.
- Graduates employed full-time were earning \$61,000 a year four months after completion of their studies.
- 85 per cent of supervisors were satisfied overall with their graduate employee — the highest level ever recorded.
- 92 per cent of supervisors said graduates were 'very well' or 'well' prepared for employment.

The Federal Government is providing record funding to Australia's universities, and the return on that investment is job-ready graduates who can take advantage of the employment opportunities our economy is creating.

As our economy grows and changes, strong partnerships between industry, community organisations and universities will continue to evolve and expand student and graduate workplace experiences to deliver the skilled workforce our economy needs.

To assist, the Australian Government has been pleased to fund the collection of national data to highlight the scale and scope of work integrated learning activities in Australian universities.

I commend Universities Australia and its 39 member universities on these innovative programs and initiatives, many of which are highlighted in this report.



**The Hon Dan Tehan**  
Minister for Education

“ High-quality internships and work placements give university students crucial workplace skills to help them land their first job after graduation. ”

# UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA FOREWORD

Getting a ‘career edge’ can be a huge advantage in a competitive jobs market.

That’s why Australia’s world-class universities offer an impressive set of experiences for students to gain workplace skills and experience — even before they graduate.

New data collected by Universities Australia reveals that **almost half a million students at Australia’s universities had a formal work placement, industry or workplace experience in 2017.**

These **451,263 students participated in formal work placements, projects with industry or community groups, fieldwork, and practical simulations of the tasks students will be doing in future jobs.**

These placements are often offered towards the end of a student’s degree — in their final or near-final year — to maximise the value they get from the work placement and the knowledge they can apply to it.

**Student work placements are considered important by 91 per cent of Australians, with one in three rating them as ‘extremely important’ and a further one in three rating them as ‘very important’.**

These career-preparation activities are known as work integrated learning (WIL) — and, since 2015, the expansion of these opportunities has occurred under a concerted national strategy.

The partners in this work include Universities Australia, the Australian Collaborative Education Network, the Australian Industry Group, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Business Council of Australia, the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training, and the Office of the Chief Scientist.

We thank the Australian Government for its financial support of the data collection through the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training’s Enabling Growth and Innovation program.

In this publication, we showcase some of the many terrific examples of work placements and career readiness experiences for students offered by Australian universities.

They include incredible opportunities to get a career edge before graduation — as well as a chance for students to work on inspiring projects to strengthen local communities across the nation.



**Catriona Jackson**  
Chief Executive, Universities Australia



**Professor Margaret Gardner AO**  
Chair, Universities Australia



**CAREER READY  
GRADUATES:  
BY THE NUMBERS**

Australia's universities have had a long-term commitment to give students real-world career experience before they graduate.

Yet very little data existed about the scale of these career preparation activities across the sector.

Now, in a major project to deliver the nation's first comprehensive snapshot of work integrated learning, Universities Australia has collected information about all types of work placements, internships, industry projects, fieldwork and simulations offered by Australia's 39 comprehensive universities.

**In 2017, almost half a million — 451,263 — students at Australian universities did 555,403 workplace learning placements or activities.**

They included **357,806 Australian students** or permanent residents, **93,126 international students**, **5,486 Indigenous students** and **67,116 students from regional and remote Australia**.

There is strong emphasis on workplace experience starting from undergraduate education — with career readiness activities taken up by **339,017 undergraduate students** and **106,065 postgraduate students**.

These figures testify to the extent and diversity of work readiness activities now available at every Australian university and reflect a strong commitment to graduate employability.



**Australian unis offered**

**555,403**

**workplace experiences in 2017**

## WHAT IS WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING?

'Work integrated learning' (WIL) includes a broad range of activities for students at Australian universities to gain invaluable workplace experience during their degrees. It includes:

- **WORK PLACEMENTS AND INTERNSHIPS**  
Students spend time in a workplace — developing key skills, contacts and experience to give them an edge to apply for and get a job.
- **INDUSTRY PROJECTS**  
Students work directly with industry or community clients to deliver projects for the business or organisation, with a specific task to complete.
- **FIELDWORK**  
Students go off-campus and learn in the field — such as on archaeological digs or environmental monitoring.
- **INDUSTRY SIMULATIONS**  
Students practice a workplace task in a simulation of a real-world environment — either outside or inside the university — such as a moot court or clinical hospital simulation.

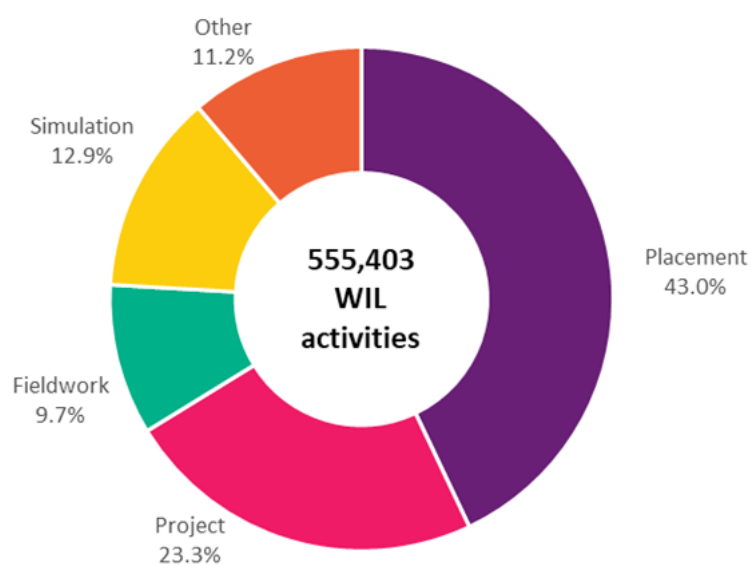


**Work placements** are the most common workplace experiences for students at Australian universities, accounting for **43 per cent** of all career preparation activities. But universities also offer students the chance to do **industry projects (23 per cent)**, **fieldwork (10 per cent)** and **industry simulations (13 per cent)**.

This highlights how Australia's universities are innovating and diversifying the types of experiences they offer students to maximise career readiness.

They have moved far beyond the model of past decades, which focussed mainly on internships, to offer a wide array of career-relevant opportunities to students.

Figure 1: Share of WIL participation by type of activity



This strong diversity in the types of work experience reflects the breadth of relationships developed between universities and employers in recent decades.

Australia's universities now partner with local, national and global companies and community organisations to offer diverse work preparation opportunities.

They include **opportunities for students to help deliver much-needed health services in developing countries, intern in the US congress, and plan towns and cities in Australia's tropical north.**

These industry and community relationships include **hosting students in workplaces, in-house start-up support, and connecting students as consultants to businesses and not-for-profits.**

**Four in five work placements or programs were done by Australian students** — but there is strong take-up also from international students at Australian universities.

International students pursue these opportunities at a similar rate to local students, reflecting their share of the overall student population.

This is **an important testament to the value of an Australian university education for students from all around the world**, equipping them with career skills.

This is invaluable before they pursue post-study work opportunities either in Australia or in their home country, preparing them strongly for careers in a global workforce.

Universities provide specific services to international students to develop their careers. This includes **courses to polish workplace language skills, dedicated career weeks, and matching industry professionals — former international students themselves — with students as part of a mentoring program.**

While many workplace readiness activities are offered as units that count 'for credit' towards a degree, others operate as voluntary additional experiences.

This broadens the range of activities that can be offered — and highlights **the flexible and innovative approach of Australian universities to deliver career readiness experience.**

And it suggests students have a range of motivations for doing workplace experience — with course credits just one of them.

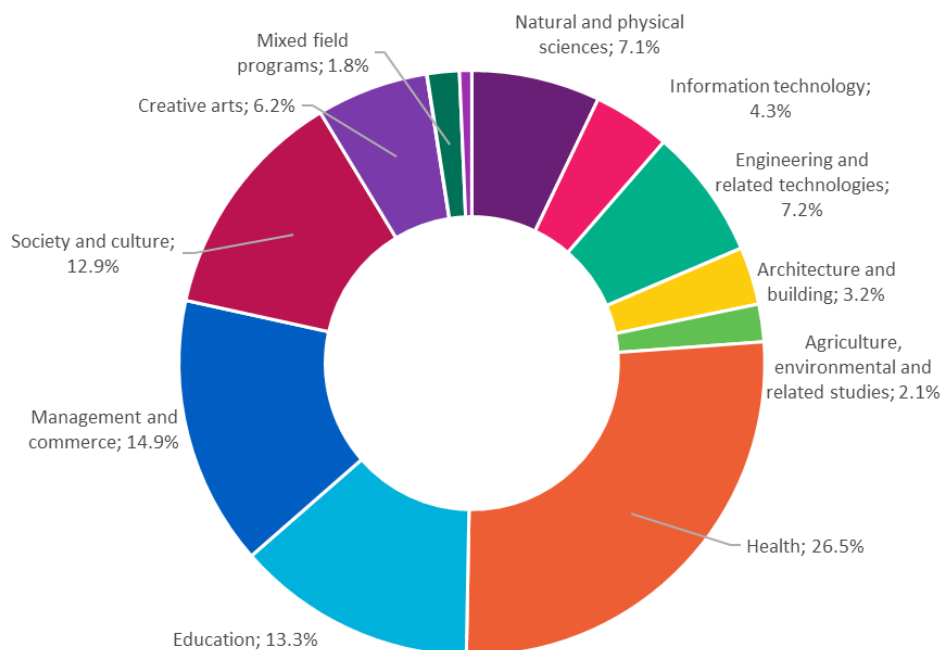
Australian universities also support students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue career skills.

Many offer scholarships and bursaries, design and deliver targeted WIL programs to equity groups, and bring workplace activities onto campuses to enable greater participation.



Students from all fields of study took up a workplace learning opportunity, as shown in the figure below.

Figure 2: Share of WIL activities, by broad discipline area



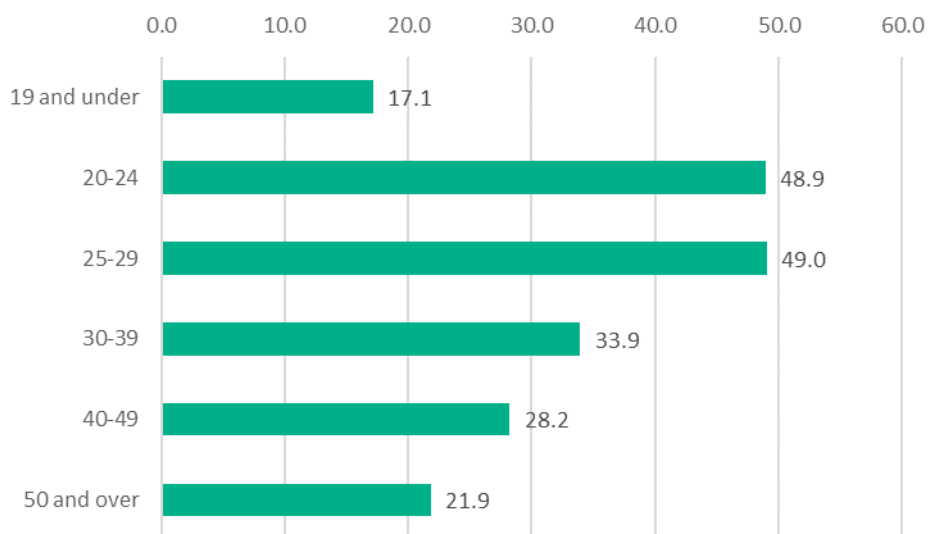
The students most likely to participate in **work placements** were those studying **health** and **education**.

Students who worked on **industry projects** were most often doing an **IT, engineering, architecture, management, commerce or creative arts** degree. This reflects the nature of employment in these industries, which are often project-based and client-driven.

And the most frequent participants in **fieldwork** of various types were students studying **agriculture, environmental programs or a closely related field**.

The age group most engaged in work integrated learning activities were **students aged 20 to 29**. This is no surprise given greater demands of family and work commitments for many students aged 30 and over.

Figure 3: WIL participation rates by age cohort (per cent)





Swinburne University of Technology - Iraish Thirimanne

Beyond internships and career experience, Australia's universities increasingly offer specific programs to coach students in how to apply for a job — including resume writing, job applications and interview skills.

One example is **La Trobe's Career Ready** program, which includes an online interview portal called "Big Interview" to hone students' interview skills with coaching from experts.

At **Swinburne University**, a partnership with cloud-based online platform Portfolium enables students to showcase their academic and work experience to prospective employers through digital resumes.

Beyond Australian-based opportunities, our universities also offer work experience overseas — bringing new global perspectives for their students and helping Australia build global ties.

The many examples include **health and rehabilitation students from the University of Queensland doing a placement in Vietnam or Timor Leste; Bond University students doing clinical placements in the Solomon Islands; and Flinders University students on political internships in Washington D.C.**

The case studies in this report highlight the breadth and diversity of these career-readiness activities now on offer to students at Australia's universities.

**Work placements with business or community groups are also very well regarded by the Australian public**, new findings from JWS Research in January 2019 confirm.

**Student work placements are considered important by 91% of Australians – with one in three rating them as 'extremely important' and a further one in three rating them as 'very important'.**

The same portion say student work placements with businesses or community groups **are important to prepare university students to get a job.**

**CAREER READY  
GRADUATES:  
CASE STUDIES**



## STUDENT ENGINEERS: WORLD-LEADING COURSE DELIVERS NEXT-GEN TALENT TODAY

It's a 'new chapter in engineering education' that is delivering the industry's next-generation workforce.

**Charles Sturt University's** engineering degree has no formal lectures or exams and is the only one in Australia hosted by a business faculty.

The program works with industry partners to give students a career edge when they graduate. It's also been recognised as one of the world's top four emerging programs by engineering powerhouse MIT.

Students enrolled in the undergraduate course are treated as engineers from day one. They spend the first 18 months on campus, where they complete four real-world projects instead of classes.

For the rest of their degree, they undertake self-directed learning online and four years of paid placements with industry partners, enabling them to explore authentic problems using state-of-the-art technology.

Foundation Professor of Engineering Euan Lindsay said the biggest feedback from host engineers is that the students are coming in work-ready.

"They've already got those professional enterprise skills that make them feel like they belong in the organisation, and that they are contributing value to their organisation straight away," Professor Lindsay says.

"This is a program that trains student engineers, not engineering students."

Third-year student Emerie Anonical worked with **Seymour Whyte** to build the Nepean River Bridge in Penrith.

"I'm really happy because I never would've thought I'd be exposed to something as big and real as this," says Emerie.

Foundation Professor of Engineering Euan Lindsay with students Alex Johnson, Emma Zanotto and Chris Oviawe. CSU's engineering program sets students up as engineers from day one.





A partnership between Griffith University and the Commonwealth Games gave students hands-on skills through internships for the 2018 Gold Coast games.

## GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES FROM COMMONWEALTH GAMES INTERNSHIPS

With 4,400 athletes from around the world and more than 100,000 visitors, the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games was a major event for Australia on the world stage.

As an official partner of the games, **Griffith University** secured a suite of internships for students in disciplines as varied as business and tourism through to engineering and design.

These internships not only gave students experience in one of Australia's highest-profile public events — but also directly led to students finding paid employment.

The whole-of-university program meant students could work in a variety of departments with the **Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Organising Committee (GOLDOC)**.

Over 235 students spent 35 hours a week on a 12-week internship. Working with real deadlines and real budgets, these students had direct experience working in a project-driven, high-profile organisation.

GOLDOC was able to pick the best of the interns and hire them into paid roles as the organisation grew rapidly to have 1,500 staff at its peak. All up, 61 students were employed in paid positions.

A GOLDOC spokesperson says the interns were “phenomenal” and “out-performed expectations”.

Brittany Bell, a student working as a spectator experience intern, says she knew she would gain worthwhile experience but the internship “exceeded my expectations every day.”

“Completing this internship has definitely been one of the best things I have done for my career and future,” Brittany says.



## EQUITY FUND GIVES STUDENTS REAL-WORLD INVESTMENT EXPERIENCE

Getting a career break in the funds management industry can be easier said than done. Practical experience can make all the difference when applying for jobs.

That's why a project established by **The Australian National University** (ANU) gives economics and business students the chance to run an investment fund of their own — and for a worthy cause.

Launched in late 2017, the ANU Student Managed Fund gives students the experience of managing a real endowment fund — and its proceeds support equity scholarships.

As part of the project, ANU College of Business and Economics students research investment opportunities and play a role in the day-to-day management of the fund — with support and oversight from the faculty.

To create the fund, private donors matched university funding. The fund now has assets worth \$660,000.

One student from the project says their skills in funds management were transformed by the chance to apply their knowledge in a real-world situation.

"The real value and gravity of this student fund was truly reflected to me during the interviews for the Morgan Stanley Investment Banking scholarship — it was all they wanted to talk about," they say.

"Yes, I have had internships and done the usual student activities, but to have real valuation experience, and manage real money under the guidance of such incredible academics was the standout."

Several students from the program have already landed jobs in the investment industry.

A student managed investment fund to support equity scholarships was launched at ANU in 2017. It gives business and economics students real-world experience at investing.



## FROM BUILDING OFFICES OF THE FUTURE TO HELPING BEAT BLINDNESS: MONASH STUDENTS DEVELOP MITI SOLUTIONS

Smart buildings that maximise energy use and alert owners to the need for repairs are fast becoming a reality — and students from **Monash University** are on the cutting edge helping to build them.

Through the Monash Industry Team Initiative (MITI), multidisciplinary teams of students are working with global firm **Honeywell Building Solutions** to develop the world's first cognitive office — solving practical business challenges along the way and gaining valuable experience to launch their careers.

It's just one of many examples from MITI — an award-winning summer placement program that sees high-achieving Monash students work directly with business.

The diverse range of MITI work experiences include developing autonomous helicopters to fight bushfires, boosting dairy production and combating trachoma — an infectious eye disease that can cause blindness.

More than 500 students have completed the program, with some of their MITI-developed innovations already commercialised. This includes a toll payment app for **Transurban** — a company which has also employed 15 Monash students from the MITI program.

“You bring in very energetic, talented people without biases or background in the industry and they just think differently. They ask questions we've given up asking a long time ago and therefore we rethink the answers and we get much better outcomes,” says Transurban CEO Scott Charlton.

Software engineering student Thamale Hettiarachchige was part of the team working with Transurban.

“As we ended our presentation to Scott, some of the first words out of his mouth were ‘why aren't we doing this already?’. It was very exciting,” says Thamale.

The Monash Industry Team Initiative pairs talented students with leading Australian and global industry partners to solve challenges in business.



## KICKING GOALS: WORK PLACEMENTS IN HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPORT

Australians love their sport. It's an industry that supports around 100,000 jobs and injects \$12 billion into our economy.

But landing a job in professional sport can be hard without experience.

That's where a specialised internship program can give students a real edge.

As part of their degrees, students in the Faculty of Health Sciences at **Australian Catholic University** (ACU) are placed in sports institutes and high-performance athlete organisations.

After doing an internship as part of her Masters of High Performance Sport program, ACU student Greta Conlan clinched a job as a sports scientist working with elite athletes in the **West's Tigers** NRL team.

"While I was interning, my mentor got a job in the NBA. So the head of performance approached me and asked me if I was interested in taking [his role]," she says.

"I think they liked the fact that I was a familiar face and I knew the program and how it worked. I knew all the things that we had to do day-to-day."

In 2017 alone, ACU health sciences students did nearly 26,000 work placements — amounting to over 320,000 days of work integrated learning.

ACU's Associate Professor Jillian Fox says many students land a job directly from their placements.

The placements also benefit the university's partners "because it gives them access to our students, so they get to contribute to our programs and meet our students early on," Associate Professor Fox says.



Greta Conlan clinched her dream job as a sports scientist after an Australian Catholic University internship with the West's Tigers NRL club.

## IBM INTERNSHIP GIVES STUDENTS AN IT EDGE

American multinational **IBM** operates in over 170 countries and is one of the world's largest employers — with 380,000 staff.

And **Federation University Australia** students have a head start to join that global workforce thanks to an innovative program at the university's Mt Helen Tech Park.

FedUni IT students work alongside IBM staff in the final two years of their degree. This gives them invaluable experience with one of the world's tech giants and an employment edge in a competitive industry.

The students work with clients over the course of a full project lifecycle — from concept to implementation.

Since 2001, around 360 students have completed the program with a \$35,000 scholarship. After completing the internship, students then have priority access to IBM's graduate employment programs. They're also in the box seat for graduate roles in other tech companies.

Client Innovation Centre Leader Steve Davies says IBM values its long-standing partnership with the university.

"The work integrated learning programs are a win-win-win for IBM, the university and, most importantly, the students," Mr Davies says.

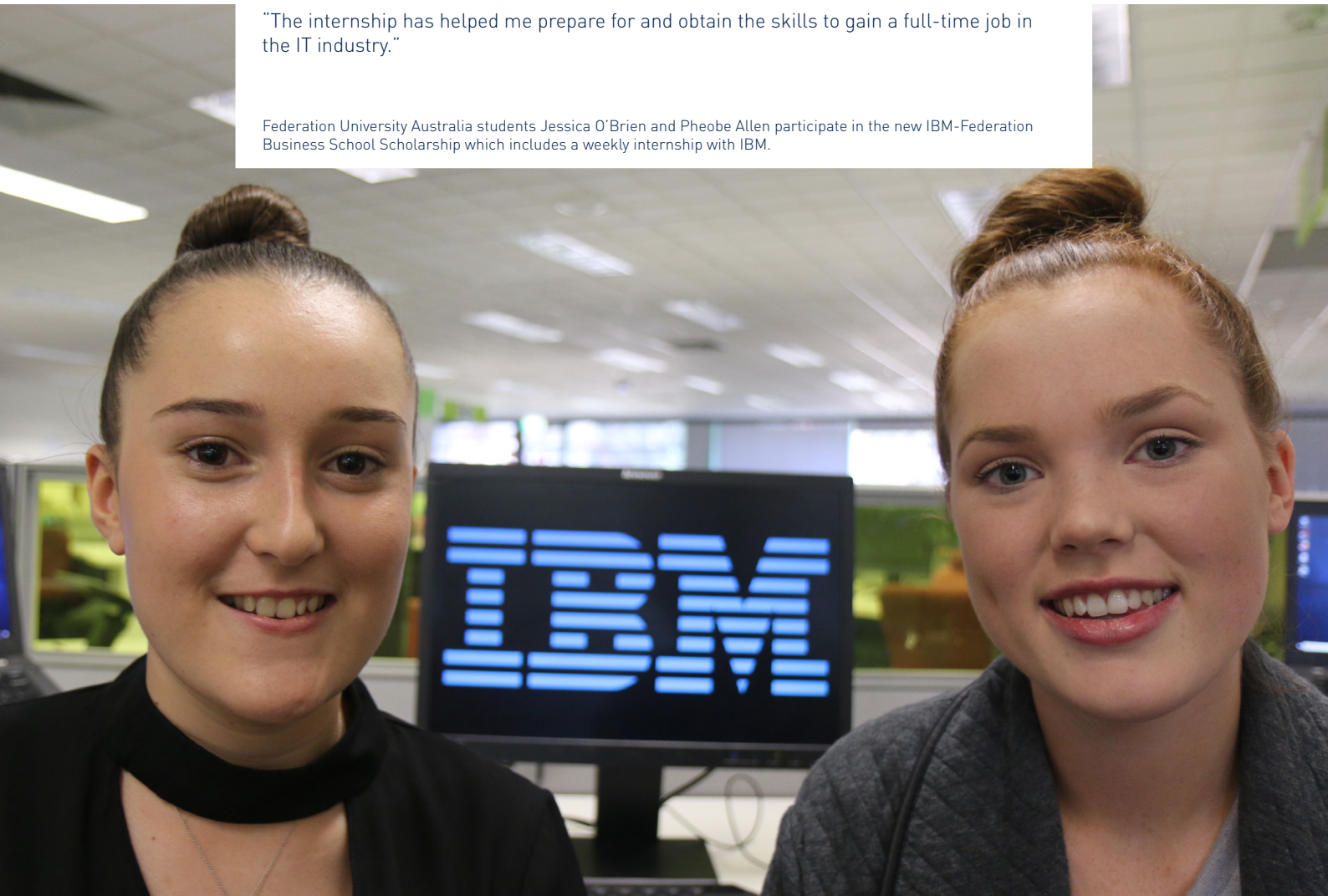
"IBM and its clients continue to benefit from student participation on projects adding to team diversity, fresh ideas and access to up-to-date skills."

IT student Jimi Von Burg says the internship was a great complement to his classroom study.

"The work undertaken at IBM brings great industry value to my learning experiences," Jimi says.

"The internship has helped me prepare for and obtain the skills to gain a full-time job in the IT industry."

Federation University Australia students Jessica O'Brien and Pheobe Allen participate in the new IBM-Federation Business School Scholarship which includes a weekly internship with IBM.





## UNI INTERNS GAIN WORK SKILLS TO COMBAT CYBER CRIME

By 2020, the world will have an estimated shortfall of more than 1.5 million qualified cyber security professionals.

Students from **Edith Cowan University** (ECU) get real-world work experience as part of their studies to help them land one of those jobs.

One of the first Australian universities to offer cyber security studies, ECU now has 70 students doing internships with cyber security businesses and organisations.

On placement, students are embedded in a cyber security business, working on real projects onsite five days a week for 12 weeks.

Mike van der Feltz landed a job with local cyber security firm **Asterisk Information Security** after completing the program.

"My work integrated learning experience allowed me to get hands-on experience with the kind of work I'd be doing once I graduated and started my career in cyber security," Mike says.

"It's a hugely competitive industry and to secure my first job out of my internship was a bonus for me."

Greg Roberts, Consulting and Infrastructure Services Manager at Asterisk, is keen to have another intern in the future.

"Having gone through the work integrated process and bringing onboard someone genuinely motivated to learn and develop their understanding of information security, I would definitely recommend the program to others," Mr Roberts says.

## STUDENTS HELP AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS CRACK CHINA'S BREAKFAST MARKET

Business-savvy, Mandarin-speaking students from **Southern Cross University (SCU)** are helping Australian gourmet food producer **Brookfarm** get its breakfast products on the plates of Chinese consumers. In return, students gain valuable industry experience for their resumé's.

Brookfarm, which has been exporting to China for the past three years, has seen significant growth in its business as Chinese demand for macadamia-based products strengthens.

Business students Nanxi (Nancy) Liu, Xinwen (Wendy) Fu and Qunyao (Ann) Liu have worked with Brookfarm's sales and marketing team, sharing their insights on a range of breakfast products. They also helped conceptualise and develop a Chinese-language product information website.

The work experience opportunity is part of SCU's Volunteer Connect work integrated learning program.

"Accessing business students through Southern Cross has really assisted us in better understanding our key Chinese demographic," says Clinton Bown, Head of Marketing at Brookfarm.

"The students confirmed a strong desire amongst the Chinese consumer to access Australia's 'clean green' products and also highlighted online consumer trends in China."

Nancy, Wendy and Ann are thrilled to have worked alongside the Brookfarm team.

"The Volunteer Connect program is a good chance for me to prepare for future employment and has developed my teamwork skills and people-relation skills. It really made sense for me," Wendy says.

Volunteer Connect was designed to improve the study experience and employability of SCU's international students.

"We are delighted with industry and student responses, with over 40 students gaining valuable work experience through Volunteer Connect," says Leanne Baker, Manager of Careers and Employability at SCU.

Students Qunyao (Ann) Liu, Xinwen (Wendy) Fu and Nanxi (Nancy) Liu are tucking into the world of work by helping Australian food producer Brookfarm grow its business in China.





University of Newcastle students help locals who need legal advice and support while improving their career prospects.

## BRIEFS ON THE BEACH: STUDENTS HELP LOCALS WITH LEGAL ISSUES

Sure, you've heard of the law of the jungle, but did you know about Law on the Beach?

It's the innovative, free outreach service from **The University of Newcastle** (UON) that sees students step out of the classroom and onto the sands to provide locals with empowering legal advice, under the guidance of qualified lawyers.

And it's not just helping locals; the program prepares students for a career in the courts.

The volunteer students interview clients who attend the clinic, problem solve legal issues and provide advice under the supervision of pro bono lawyers and UON academics.

The placements count toward the Juris Doctor and Bachelor of Laws degrees, with more than 500 students participating in the program over the last 15 years.

Taking place every January and February, the free clinic aims to make it easier for people seeking legal advice, particularly for young people in the community.

"Law on the Beach has hands down been the best experience of my law degree," says one participating student.

"For people with no real legal training, the law can be quite a complex and frightening thing. So being able to assist people in understanding how it affects them, particularly when it is causing them stress, is absolutely fantastic."

In recent years the program has been extended to include latter year social work students who provide professional advice to locals on a range of complex socio-economic issues that often overlap with the law.

The interactions between social work and law students provide additional interprofessional learning experiences.

## UNI STUDENT PLACEMENTS HELP TREAT MALARIA IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

In a tiny hospital on a small island in the South Pacific, **Bond University** students are helping fight deadly tropical diseases like malaria and dengue fever.

As they do so, they gain profound insights into what it is like to work on the frontline of global health — giving them a practical head-start on their future careers.

The students assist local doctors and nurses at **Kirakira Hospital** in the Solomon Islands through the Kirakira medical program. The hospital serves a community of 6,000 people with only two doctors.

Each year, more than 1,000 people in the Solomon Islands are admitted to hospital with malaria — and more than 40 people die from it.

Bond's Professor Peter Jones says the placements enable students to "practice global health in a practical setting" and grasp the scarcity of resources in many countries.

"Nothing motivates students more than responsibility, and that's exactly what they are given when working in communities like Kirakira; it makes them more well-rounded practitioners and people," he says.

Student Ramanan Vimalasri says the four-week program reinvigorated his passion for medicine.

"It's really given me a unique perspective of what it's like being a doctor and being able to impact on people's lives in such an acute and powerful way," he says.

Since 2013, the program has placed more than 200 students from medicine, nutrition and physiotherapy.

It now includes project management and town planning students who help the Solomon Islands' Government deliver much-needed infrastructure.



Former Bond University medicine student Joshua Burman with Kirakira locals.







## ERICSSON SCHOLARSHIP GIVES STUDENTS AN EMPLOYMENT EDGE

A partnership between the **University of Technology Sydney** and **Ericsson** is developing the next-generation of information and communication technology (ICT) talent.

Students get a front row seat in one of the world's largest ICT companies, boosting their chances of a job in one of the world's most dynamic industries. Ericsson carries up to 40 per cent of global mobile traffic.

The wide-ranging collaboration includes a scholarship for high-achieving women engineering students.

The Ericsson Women in ICT and Engineering Scholarship deepens and broadens the company's pool of technology talent, while giving students a one-year paid opportunity to work with and learn from some of the brightest minds in ICT.

During her time at Ericsson, scholarship winner Laura Becker has evolved from an intern to project manager in the making, shadowing staff as they work with clients on real projects. She says the experience benefits everyone.

"Ericsson gets the perspectives of younger people who are coming from a different context and are very capable of delivering quality work," Laura says.

"For students, you get to say you worked with industry on specific projects with Ericsson."

In addition to the scholarship, worth up to \$39,000, the partnership sees IT and engineering students gain vital work experience and mentoring in the form of industry challenges.

As part of 'hackathons' and the Software Development Studio, students solve business challenges for Ericsson and their customers. Past innovations include using the Internet of Things to develop smart evacuation systems for buildings.

Senior Lecturer Julia Prior says the partnership is helping tackle the tech talent gap.

These initiatives are "highly valuable ways for students to test their technical skills in a problem-solving environment," she says.

"We are already seeing the value to industry in that we are providing a quality pipeline of competitive graduates."

## THE VIEW FROM CAPITOL HILL: INTERNSHIP IN THE HEART OF US POLITICS

For political junkies, the **US Congress** is a crucible of global political influence.

And for international relations and political students at **Flinders University**, it doesn't get much better than the university's congressional internship program.

The unique Flinders Washington Internship Program not only sends students to Washington, but kick-starts their careers.

It equips them with skills that make them more attractive to employers in a range of sectors and industries.

Students come away with an insider's appreciation of the American political system and insight into public policy-making they can apply in Australia and abroad.



A unique program puts Flinders University students at the centre of US Government — giving them exclusive insights and experience from the American halls of power. (Shutterstock)

Students also return with a letter from their Congressman or Senator attesting to their internship performance — a powerful addition to any professional resume.

Established in 2000, the program places students for eight or 17 weeks in a congressional office, where they help with everything from congressional hearings to answering constituent calls.

Participants Jack Harrison and Georgia Hicks — the latest of more than 114 Flinders interns since the program began — say they were “absolutely loving” their placement.

“Being in the middle of US Government is an incredible experience — from seeing the inner workings to really simple things like seeing your political hero in the corridors,” they write.

Professor Don DeBats, the head of American studies at Flinders, says the program gives students an insight into “the practical side of American politics.”

## TEMPTING TEACHERS TO TAKE UP A TREE CHANGE IN REGIONAL SCHOOLS

Attracting teachers to regional Australia can be a challenge.

In 2017, there were around 200 teacher vacancies in regional and rural NSW public schools alone.

But a new program, backed by **UNSW Sydney** (UNSW) and the **NSW Department of Education**, is looking to fill the gaps and give talented teaching students the skills to go straight into regional classrooms.

Under the scheme, student teachers are placed at pilot school, **Coonabarabran High**, for nine weeks at the end of the final school term.

The NSW Department of Education's Diane Wasson says the length of the placement allows the student teachers to really experience what a teaching career is like.

"They are moving from a position of being a teacher education student to almost being a teacher," Wasson says.

When UNSW student teacher Danielle Barisa made the drive seven hours west from Sydney, she probably didn't realise she'd be making the regional town her home. She now works at the local high school.

On the placement, Danielle says: "I treated it as a new opportunity and just went for it."

Coonabarabran High School deputy principal Mary Doolan, who mentored Barisa during her placement, says the program benefits staff and students with fresh perspectives and gives interns a sense of what it is like to live in a rural community.

"The [student teachers] are enthusiastic and right on top of pedagogy and are ready to try new approaches to teaching and learning, so it re-energises staff in their own pedagogy," Doolan says.

UNSW Sydney student teachers Danielle Barisa (left), Lucienne Martel (centre) and Nicola Murphy (right) learnt their craft at Coonabarabran High School.



Western Bulldogs' Catherine Dell'Aquila (left) is impressed with students like Brook Muscat (right) who have been working at the AFL club as part of a Victoria University work placement program.

## WORK IN THE WEST SETS VU STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS

Since 2006, more than 1,000 **Victoria University (VU)** students have swapped the classroom for the clubhouse, undertaking work placements at professional AFL club **The Western Bulldogs**.

It's a win-win, with students gaining essential skills to make the transition from study to work.

More than 100 VU students have secured positions at the AFL club after completing their internships.

As part of their studies, VU students from programs as diverse as sports science, marketing, psychology and community development spend one to two days at the club over the course of a year.

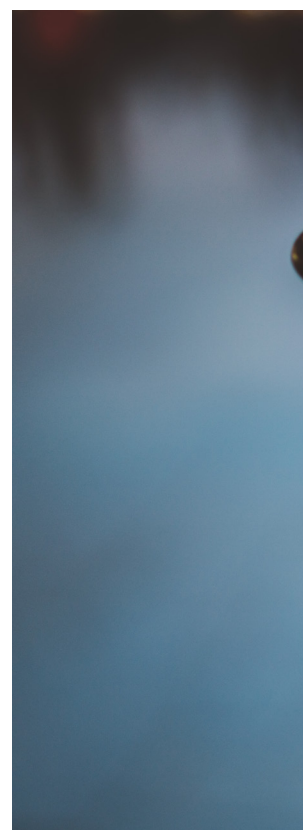
They work closely with professional athletes, coaches, administrators and sports doctors across areas including club operations, media and marketing, exercise science and team management.

Another standout of the placement is the chance to work with the club's Community Foundation programs, which deliver essential health and other services in western Melbourne, says VU student Brooke Muscat.

"These programs offer a great deal to the local community. Helping people get the best out of themselves mentally and physically is so rewarding," says Brooke, who now works full-time at the foundation.

Community Health Pathways Coordinator Catherine Dell'Aquila says VU students consistently demonstrate their capabilities during placements at The Western Bulldogs.

"Because of these traits, we don't see VU students as 'students on placement', but as members of the team who contribute and add value and that offer the qualities employers are looking for."



## INDUSTRY LAB GIVES NEXT-GEN TECH AND DESIGN ENGINEERS AN EDGE

Engineering students from **Macquarie University** will help deliver the next-gen circuits powering 5G mobile networks and low-orbit satellites thanks to a new industry-based teaching and research lab.

A partnership between Macquarie's School of Engineering and Nasdaq-listed company **Analog Devices**, the lab gives students experience to launch high-tech careers and help them to be highly-competitive in the tech labour market.

Analog Devices says the partnership will create "the next-generation of microwave and millimetre-wave integrated circuit (MMIC) designers" to meet the demands of the next wireless revolution.

MMICs help generate the powerful signals needed in wireless communications technologies. It's also a field of research and teaching that Macquarie University has been pioneering for more than 20 years.

"Macquarie University has a history of world-class MMIC design and modelling expertise," says Analog Devices' Senior Director of Engineering, John Cowles.

"The merging of design innovation with world-class manufacturing is what makes this partnership so exciting."

Unlike other placement programs, which just send students out to industry, the partnership invites industry onto campus.

"Half a dozen or more engineers with industry experience will be embedded in the lab and provide mentoring to dozens of students," says Macquarie's Professor Michael Heimlich.

"And Macquarie University researchers will provide cutting-edge computer-aided design, modelling and measurement technology to continually push the circuit design capability forward."

A new industry partnership gives Macquarie University students direct experience in frontline 5G mobile technology. (Shutterstock)





Charles Darwin University law student Paul Larder has the chance to work on real cases through the Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic Internship.

## REFUGEES GET A HELPING HAND FROM STUDENTS

Around the world, there are an estimated three million asylum seekers fleeing war or persecution.

Students from **Charles Darwin University** (CDU) are helping people in desperate need while honing their craft with some of the world's leading legal experts.

Through the **Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinic Internship**, law students from the university have an opportunity to work on real cases alongside lawyers and other experts in immigration and refugee law — bolstering their resumes while also helping people in need.

Students travel to America for the four-week internship and gain real-world experience writing briefs and interviewing clients, honing advocacy skills and improving their understanding of asylum seeker visa applications. The students also work with domestic violence survivors and other victims of crime who face forced removal in immigration proceedings in the United States.

The university's College of Business and Law provides a scholarship of up to \$10,000 to participating students for flights and accommodation.

The internship also enhances students' engagement with Darwin-based refugee service providers. To date, this work in Darwin has been undertaken largely by lawyers from interstate due to a lack of on-the-ground expertise — giving students a strong potential to stay and work in the region following their studies.

Law student Paul Larder has enjoyed the challenge of participating in the program.

"I am so inspired by the lawyers and professors I was working for, who take on clients pro bono from a desire for social justice," Paul says.

## TO TEACH AND TO LEARN: STUDENTS HEAD TO REMOTE INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS FOR INVALUABLE LESSONS

Located at the very north-eastern tip of the Northern Territory, Yirrkala is almost as far away from Melbourne as you can get without leaving Australia.

But each year, teaching candidates from **The University of Melbourne** make the 4,000km trek to work with local schools and communities as part of the Indigenous remote teaching placement.

It's a transformative journey in their long-term career path, delivering invaluable lessons and skills, and generously provided by existing expertise in the community.

The four-week program sees six Masters students partner with the **Yolngu community** to teach Indigenous primary and secondary schoolchildren at **Yirrkala Homelands** and **Yirrkala schools**.

Working closely with local mentor teachers, the university students experience first-hand the local needs and contexts of remote schools and communities.

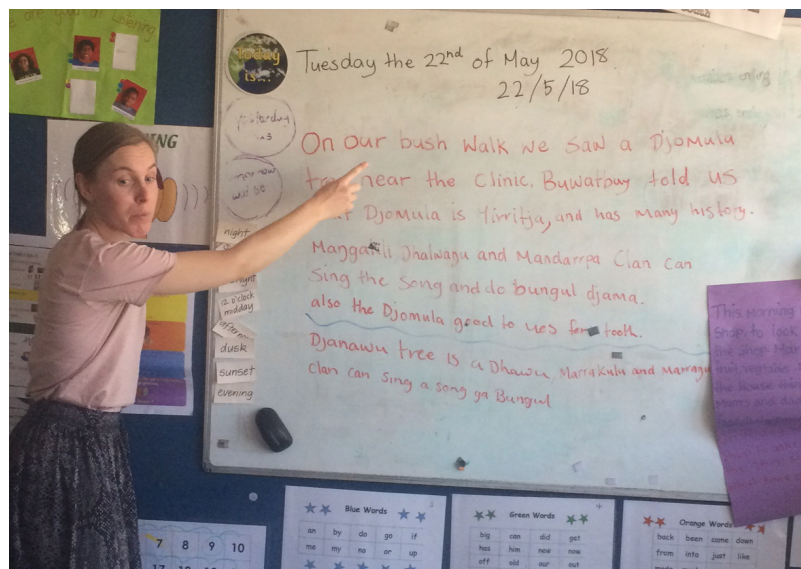
"The practicum visit from the Melbourne University was very valuable and builds very well on the ongoing relationship with the university," says Leon J White OAM, former principal of Yirrkala Homelands School.

"The opportunity that the prac presented means that as graduate teachers the participants will enrich their teaching with a greatly expanded understanding of the culture, art, language and historical context of the North East Arnhem area."

One of the participating students doing a Master of Teaching (Secondary) says the experience has inspired their future career choices.

"It's given me confidence in my decision to come and teach in a context like this, but it's also a reality check in terms of observing my mentor teachers and the level of skill required."

Students from The University of Melbourne get hands-on teaching experience at remote schools in Arnhem Land.





Saving wildlife and developing new skills — working in the Saving Endangered Species unit is a win for UWA conservation biology students and the environment.

## SKILLING UP FOR CONSERVATION CAREERS AND SAVING ENDANGERED SPECIES

Biology students from **The University of Western Australia** (UWA) are helping save the State's endangered species.

And while safeguarding the future of local wildlife, the students also gain the vital skills and practical experience they'll need in their conservation and environmental management careers.

As part of the Saving Endangered Species unit, third-year conservation biology students complete hands-on fieldwork in the Great Southern region of Western Australia.

Run in partnership with the **Western Australian Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions**, the program sees students collaborate with conservation practitioners, local government and community groups to collect population data and assess the condition of threatened plants and animals.

The practical experience is vital in developing students' knowledge of conservation, as well as the biology and ecology of national and State-listed threatened species. The students' fieldwork also makes a significant contribution to knowledge of threatened species in Western Australia.

The hands-on fieldwork is combined with a lecture program, which provides students with expert knowledge of recovery planning and threatened species conservation.

Since commencing in 2007, 571 students have completed the unit. The majority of UWA conservation biology graduates have found work in conservation and environmental management.

UWA student Bronte Van Helden says the Saving Endangered Species unit was one of the best experiences of her undergraduate degree.

"It was one of the only units where we were able to collect data that would directly contribute to the conservation of threatened species and tackle major conservation issues," Bronte says.

## STUDENT SKILLS IN CARING CAREERS GROW IN VIETNAM PLACEMENTS

In Vietnam, more than six million people live with one or more disabilities — including more than half a million children.

Since 2011, students from **The University of Queensland** (UQ) have worked with children and families living with moderate to severe disabilities to deliver much-needed clinical care and therapy.

The program gives students stronger personal and interprofessional skills to work as clinicians after graduation — offering them valuable experience to bolster their insights, work readiness and job prospects.

In a four-week program, students studying occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech pathology deliver much-needed feeding, movement and communication services in rural orphanages, special schools, early intervention centres and households.

The program provides additional services that would otherwise not exist.

Run in partnership between UQ's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and **Hue University of Medicine and Pharmacy**, the program gives UQ students first-hand experience of health care in Vietnam.

Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Honours) student Chloe Nguyen says her most memorable experience from the program was visiting a family in the countryside. Chloe and her fellow students developed strategies with the family to improve their quality of life.

"I was brought to joy to see how happy both the child and mother were with the changes we made, especially when the mum was happy to take a photo together with our team," says Chloe.

"This placement improved my skills as a clinician to work alongside different healthcare professionals, and to work with a variety of different clients who may present with cultural and linguistic diversity."

University of Queensland health and rehabilitation students in a wide range of fields are honing their work skills as they help children in Vietnam through a clinical placement program. (Shutterstock)







Graduate Ellen McCutchan has used her internship at RMIT ABC Fact Check to launch her journalism career.

## FIGHTING FAKE NEWS AND FORGING MEDIA CAREERS

In the age of fake news and feelpinions, **RMIT University** students are helping separate fact from fiction in important public debates.

While setting the record straight, the students are also setting themselves up for media careers.

As part of an innovative internship, students studying journalism, animation, public relations, design, television and creative writing work with the award-winning **RMIT ABC Fact Check unit**.

During the 15-day placement, students team up with seasoned journalists and editors based at RMIT's new state-of-the-art media precinct to assess the accuracy of public statements by politicians, public figures and advocacy groups.

They also produce bite-sized, shareable 'Fast Facts'.

Ellen McCutchan says the internship helped launch her career.

"I was given the opportunity to be a part of a working newsroom with experienced journalists," says Ellen.

"I've also been able to transition into a job with the RMIT ABC Fact Check unit, which has been a fantastic opportunity to expand my skills and portfolio, and a great first step into a competitive industry."

The team is headed by Walkley Award-winning journalist Russell Skelton.

"The program offers students a wonderful opportunity to work closely with highly credentialed journalists and researchers who have worked in a variety of editorial roles across different media organisations," Russell says.



Students are using their knowledge about artificial intelligence to help transform businesses. [Getty Images]

## STUDENTS TAP ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO TRANSFORM BUSINESSES

Students from **The University of Sydney** are helping transform the future of banking — while improving their own career readiness.

In a new range of practical courses called Industry and Community Project Units, students are helping major bank **Westpac** — one of Australia's biggest employers — prepare for a world of artificial intelligence.

Westpac was one of the first industry partners to back the university's new units, which are open to undergraduate students. Other major businesses include **Accenture, AGL, QBE and Randstad**.

At Westpac, students were challenged to come up with ways to implement AI across a range of banking and corporate operations — including fraud prevention and human resources.

Third-year Bachelor of Commerce student Vincent Giannini helped develop a tool that profiles employees' strengths and recruit new talent.

"This interdisciplinary experience is a key stepping stone in preparing you for the workplace and gives you an insight into what life is like beyond the doors of the university," says Vincent.

The Industry and Community Project Units see teams of students from a range of academic disciplines work with community, corporate and government organisations to solve challenges in the arts, community development, law, the public service, technology, farming, sustainability, finance, health and more.

Projects are run both domestically and internationally.

"Around 1,000 students completed the unit in 2018, with another 1,750 enrolled in 2019," says Danielle Godbier, USyd's Head of Stakeholder Engagement.

"We are responding to the reality of the changing nature of work and the global workforce," says The University of Sydney Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence.

"The curriculum answers the call by students, staff and leading employers to create graduates who are inventive, resilient, digitally and culturally competent with experience addressing real-world scenarios."

## LEARNING AND EARNING INTERNSHIPS CAN LEAD TO GRADUATE JOBS

A paid internship program with global firm **PwC** is paying dividends for students from the **University of Canberra (UC)**.

The six-month Industry Based Learning program helps students step straight from campus and into full-time work, providing students with valuable industry experience for their future careers.

Students also develop professional networks and a deeper understanding of their professions.

Lauren Firth and Madison Head are among the first cohort of students to graduate from the program. They've turned their paid work placements into full-time roles as technology consultants at PwC.

"I worked on some major projects during the program and was exposed to a whole range of experiences and challenges," says Lauren.

"Being in the final semester of my degree, I could take everything I had learnt at university and apply it to the projects. It was so rewarding seeing it all come together."

"The Industry Based Learning program provides an opportunity for students to be fully immersed in a professional workplace and we know that when students engage with industry throughout their studies, everyone benefits," says Professor Lawrence Pratchett, Dean of UC's Faculty of Business, Government and Law.

The inaugural round of the program was the first time the University of Canberra and PwC worked together on student learning.

"PwC has been delighted at how successful this program has been," PwC partner Ian McGuire says.

"It exceeded all of our expectations and we can't wait to see what the partnership brings in the future."

The program is currently targeted at students in science, technology, engineering and math degrees.

University of Canberra student Lauren Firth is gaining new skills and experience working with multinational company PwC.



## YOUNG CREATORS BUILD NOVEL PRODUCTS AND CAREER SKILLS

From automatic CPR machines to wearable devices that help elderly Australians move around their homes, engineering students from the **University of Wollongong Australia** (UOW) are designing products to improve lives.

The experience is also enhancing the students' career readiness and employability.

Other innovations include self-cleaning gutter systems, tyre safety monitors and wireless parking. The prototypes are developed as part of the students' project-based course in engineering design. It also has them run a company and create business proposals to pitch to industry.

At the end of the subject, students present a final product to an audience of peers and industry experts.

The best innovations and teams are selected to continue their product development at UOW's Innovation Campus with the aim of creating a commercial product.

Students enrolled in the course develop high-level engineering project design, business, communication and entrepreneurial skills that set them up for career success.

One engineering student says: "The experience gained by talking to the industry members was invaluable in guiding how we [should] proceed with the project, and also in giving us a better market understanding."

It's not just the students who stand out. Components of the novel course, which teaches 120 students each year, have won two major awards.

In 2016, innovative elements of the course took home the Australasian Association of Engineering Education Award for Engineering Education Engagement and the Innovation Award with the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education.

University of Wollongong Australia engineering students are preparing for the world of work by developing innovative products.





Western Sydney University students are working with local businesses and households to boost energy efficiency and renewable energy use. (Shutterstock)

## POWERING CAREERS — AND WESTERN SYDNEY'S ENERGY FUTURE

Chris Jones is using hands-on experience to power his career — as well as helping two million people to meet their energy needs.

As part of his professional placement, the **Western Sydney University** (WSU) student worked with the **Western Sydney Community Forum** on their Blacktown Energy Initiative.

The initiative helps local business and households increase energy efficiency and the use of renewables and was set up in partnership with the **NSW Office of Environment and Heritage**.

"This project was of great interest to me as I wanted more exposure and experience in renewable energy," says Chris.

"I was looking to apply my knowledge on renewable energies in a practical way."

During his placement, Chris produced a major report on the potential role of the Blacktown Energy Initiative in NSW Government plans for climate change and energy efficiency — a great addition to any resume.

The experience has given him confidence for his future career.

"I found the placement to be a fantastic learning opportunity for a number of reasons," Chris says.

"The first was to understand the importance of improving my communication skills."

"The placement also highlighted that I can successfully transition from university to a professional career."

His placement was organised by The Academy at WSU, which provides high-achieving students with personal and professional development, as well as community engagement opportunities.





Students from Curtin University gain career skills in design and construction as they help to turn a former Aboriginal mission site into a place of healing.

## TECH-SAVVY STUDENTS BUILD FUTURE CAREERS AND HELP HEAL THE PAST

Students from **Curtin University** are getting hands-on experience with cutting-edge tech that is reshaping the design and construction industry.

It's providing students with the skills they need while also helping redress one of the most harrowing chapters in Australia's past.

The Virtual Design and Construction (VDC) Cooperative puts students together with industry to gain invaluable practical experience on major projects. They use digital technologies to shape the future of the built environment.

"The VDC Cooperative prepares students to meet the changing demands of the industry by providing mentoring opportunities from industry leaders through collaboration on high-profile projects," says Associate Professor Jane Matthews.

One project includes the restoration of Western Australia's Wandering Mission School — a Catholic mission for Aboriginal boys and girls taken from their families between 1944 and 1976.

Employing a range of technologies, including drones and 3D computer models, the students are working with survivors to record the conditions of the derelict site. The work forms part of a restoration project that seeks to transform the former mission into a place of healing — the Wandering project.

Fourth-year architecture student Ryan is working on the project.

"We've been asked to reimagine an old site that was used previously as a mission site for the Stolen Generations," Ryan says.

"Architecture is creating a building or a place that is going to help people, help social change and the community. And in this case, that was very much so the case."

"It's a very rewarding experience and I'd sign up for it again in a heartbeat."



The Tropical Urban Design Studio sees JCU students work with local councils across northern Queensland to develop masterplans for regional towns. (Getty Images)

## UNI STUDENTS HELP DESIGN TOWNS IN THE TROPICS

In Australia's tropical north, university students are helping to plan town improvements while boosting their own chances of getting a job.

As part of the Tropical Urban Design Studio, **James Cook University** students work with local councils across northern Queensland to develop masterplans for regional towns.

More than 80 students have completed the program, with some securing permanent employment with the local councils they worked with.

"Running these studios in rural centres gives our students unparalleled learning experiences, working on real-world projects with local government planners and our adjunct industry partners," says Associate Professor Lisa Law.

"It's work with real impact. Good urban design can lead to positive changes such as attracting tourists and new residents to declining agricultural towns. It can also help to keep local youth engaged and participating in civic life."

In Ravenshoe — a former timber town that is working to build a secure economic future — planning student Visnja Prtenjaca saw first-hand the complexities of working with a diverse community with equally diverse visions of its future.

"That was the big lesson for me — the complexity of drawing together many strands to produce a masterplan that will guide the town's development for years to come," Visnja says.

"And now I can say 'I can do that!'"

While continuing her studies, Visnja has begun working part-time for an architect she worked with on the Ravenshoe project.

## STUDENTS DELIVER ESSENTIAL HEALTH CARE IN THE PHILIPPINES

Medical students from **The University of Notre Dame Australia** are delivering much-needed services to an impoverished community in the Philippines — gaining first-hand experience as frontline health providers at the same time.

Since 2013, students from Notre Dame's Darlinghurst medical campus have worked with the charity, **Team Philippines**, to provide basic health services for the people of Calauan — a rural township three hours south of the capital Manila.

Team Philippines visits the community twice a year — it runs medical clinics, health education classes, women's health screenings, eye and vision clinics, and free dental care.

The charity was set up by Notre Dame's Associate Professor Charlotte Hespé. She says the student volunteers provide essential services to people with very limited access to medical facilities.

"We provide a comprehensive medical clinic with access to essential medications and investigations and employ a full-time community nurse who can supervise the medical program and medications throughout the year when we are back in Australia — making it easier for the community to maintain a commitment to their own health," she says.

The program also employs a full-time youth worker and farmer who works with members of the local church to oversee a number of community-led projects.

These include a feeding program for malnourished children and their parents, a play group and preschool program, small-scale agricultural projects including mushroom farms, chicken and goat breeding programs and vertical home vegetable gardens.

Notre Dame medical students learn first-hand how to provide health services in the Philippines.





## CAPSTONE COURSE IN IT DELIVERS CAREER SKILLS AND TECH PRODUCTS

From social media to apps and websites, information technology now touches almost every aspect of our working and personal lives.

With tech skills increasingly in demand, students at the **University of Tasmania** are improving their employability through the ICT Capstone Project as they bring IT projects to life.

The students work with real clients to take a project from problem specification through to design and testing, giving them the experience of working in a team and overcoming project challenges.

With promoting healthier eating habits in mind, a team of students developed a mobile app for not-for-profit **Eat Well Tasmania** to help Tasmanians better identify which local fruit and vegetables were in season.

Other IT students worked with the **Human Interface Technology Laboratory** to create a smart greenhouse management system to help greenhouse owners better manage humidity, temperature and irrigation.

The lab's Tony Kerr said the project gave students an opportunity to learn about the internet of things and home automation.

"Development of a prototype allowed students to test and apply these skills in a practical hands-on way which can be expanded upon in the future," Tony says.

Ryan Ward, Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Computing graduate, worked on a mobile game for a local game developer, Secret Lab.

"[They] have clients all over the world. I want to be a project manager, and the ICT Project units helped match my expectations to reality," Ryan says.

University of Tasmania IT students work with real clients to develop clever technology products that can solve business and community challenges. (Shutterstock)

## MUSCLING INTO A CAREER WITH PHYSIO PLACEMENTS

Physiotherapy is one of the fastest-growing health fields.

But you can't land a job in the industry without doing a work placement during your degree.

That's why at **CQUniversity Australia** (CQU), physiotherapy students gain hands-on experience from a clinical placement program in hospitals, community health centres and private practices.

Over five weeks, students experience the daily demands on a professional physiotherapist — assessing and treating patients with a wide array of clinical challenges.

In 2018, 31 fourth-year CQU physio students completed clinical placements across Queensland.

Since 2016, all students graduating from the course have landed a job — with some at major hospitals such as the **Prince Charles Hospital and Redcliffe Hospital**, as well as in private practice.

One of the program's graduates, Alex Piva, now works for a busy practice on Bribie Island that caters to the island's majority retiree community.

Alex is now supervising current fourth-year student, Daniel O'Connor — a mature-aged student originally from country Victoria.

"I learnt so much and had such a great time [on my own placement] that I jumped at the chance to be an Educator for a student completing their final Physiotherapy placement through CQUniversity," Alex says.

Bribie Island Physiotherapy owner Vera Fullarton says the program is a great opportunity to pass on years of experience to the next generation of physiotherapists.

"Not only do the students gain great hands-on experience that they can take on with them in their careers but we, too, gain from their fresh knowledge and keen work ethic," she says.

No bones about it: Alex Piva (left) supervises physiotherapy student Daniel O'Connor (right) at Bribie Island Physiotherapy, giving him practical workplace experience before graduation.



## HONING PITCHING AND PRESENTING SKILLS WITH NOT-FOR-PROFITS

With the rise of the gig economy, today's graduates are preparing for very different careers than previous generations. Many students plan to run their own firms, pitching for work and presenting to clients.

With a keen eye on this trend, **Deakin University's** FreelancingHUB gives students the chance to develop employability skills while working with local community organisations on real-world challenges.

Domestic and international students work together in cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural teams on specific projects proposed by not-for-profit groups.

On these placements, students have delivered projects for organisations including **The Salvation Army, Eastern Volunteers, Bluebird Foundation, Wildlife Victoria, Box Hill Golf Club, Forrest Neighbourhood Community House** and **the Australian Centre for Regional Entrepreneurship**.

The scheme gives students real-world work experience — while the community groups get to tap into student skills on projects they would otherwise not have the time, resources or skills to do.

One group of students worked with the Victorian Parliament to improve the Parliament's connection with young Victorians through a new digital blueprint.

One student says the best part of the program was working with students from other faculties to apply insights from several disciplines to each challenge.

"You learn a lot from the other people in your group. It was a very intensive 12 weeks of work," they say.

"I learnt lots of new skills and made some professional contacts. It was hard work, but it was very worthwhile and I'm lucky to have had this experience."

Deakin also offers students practice interviews and resume reviews to give personalised feedback before they apply for jobs.

Deakin University students helped to develop a new blueprint for youth engagement for the Victorian Parliament.



Student Eva-Louise worked as a cardiac technologist helping monitor heart conditions and disease.



## HANDS-ON HEART EXPERIENCE FOR SWINBURNE CARDIAC STUDENTS

Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death in Australia, so we need a workforce of highly skilled and experienced doctors, nurses and technicians who can give patients the best medical care.

**Swinburne University of Technology** student Eva-Louise is one of the next-generation of specialists training to do just that.

The Bachelor of Science student has had invaluable frontline experience thanks to Swinburne's Professional Placement program.

During her 12-month full-time placement, Eva-Louise worked as a cardiac technologist at **Monash Heart** — a non-profit organisation delivering cardiac services to the Melbourne community.

There she trained to perform and interpret electrocardiography tests (ECGs), as well as monitor patients' heart rhythms during delicate interventional procedures.

"The best thing about placement is doing and learning things I would never have had exposure to as a student," Eva-Louise says.

"While sitting in a lecture theatre learning about what each part of an ECG represents, I never thought that I'd be the one looking at a patient's ECG, recognising a dangerous arrhythmia and taking it to a doctor for immediate treatment."

"Not a day goes by that I don't learn something new. Most importantly, however, I've developed skills in communicating effectively and empathetically with diverse patient populations as well as the wider staff at the hospital."

Launched in 2016, Swinburne's Professional Placement program builds on 50 years of strong connections between the university and industry. In 2018, more than 300 students commenced a professional placement.

## STUDENTS KICK-START CAREERS IN STARTUP SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Not every university student gets to create a company from scratch.

But that's exactly what savvy students from **The University of New England (UNE)** are doing — tapping into one of Australia's fastest growing sectors and getting vital first-hand experience of life as an entrepreneur.

As part of UNE's Business in Action course students are working in local startups or creating their own. It's a smart move that will help set them up for success in business.

Startups generate more than \$160 billion each year, with university graduates playing a major role in this vital segment of the Australian economy.

During their 120-hour program, the students gain essential skills in how to devise investment pitches, develop business models and test product ideas.

In addition to tailored mentoring, students can take a "bootcamp" with business leaders — exploring solutions to problems that are then presented back to companies. They also network with the startup community at UNE's SMART Region Incubator and beyond.

Callum Maljers, who is studying a Bachelor of Business, set up his own recording company, Castle Records.

"This unit helped me gain a more positive insight into a business career in the creative industries," says Callum.

"It helped me challenge myself to be more motivated and inspired me to chase a passion and turn it into a career."



The University of New England is helping student Callum Maljers found his own startup through a Business in Action course.



Students from The University of Adelaide are using their Arts Internship program to get ahead in their careers while helping the not-for-profit sector.

## ARTS SMARTS HELPS STUDENTS AND ORGANISATIONS GET AHEAD

Students from **The University of Adelaide** are turning their research skills into solutions for more than 100 local organisations as part of the university's Arts Internship.

The internship also provides them with vital skills to find ongoing work and full-time roles at their host organisations.

The 12-week program places 80 high-achieving final-year students in NGOs, the not-for-profit sector, local and state government and private industry.

Students use their expertise from a range of disciplines — including international politics, social science, policy, media, languages and the arts — to investigate an issue or topic the organisation needs to address.

One student completed her placement at a library, investigating how to help young children learn to read.

"My internship involved researching the benefits of early literacy programs with public library services. From my research I could see how children take in information, working out what worked best, and what didn't," the student says.

"I definitely recommend students study the internship course. It gives you opportunities to learn the skills you need for the most rewarding and the most exciting career."

Bachelor of Languages student Ann Jackson interned at **Era Publications** — an Adelaide-based educational publisher of children's books and learning materials.

"This experience allowed me to learn about the children's publishing industry from an insider perspective, and try my hand at a range of tasks including writing, editing, proofreading and translation," says Ann.

The Arts Internship program has run for more than 10 years and placed more than 500 students.

## HANDS-ON WORK TO HELP THE HOMELESS

Across Australia, more than 105,000 people are homeless — including 17,000 children.

Students from **Queensland University of Technology** (QUT) are helping combat homelessness while also building foundational skills they will need in their careers.

As just one example from QUT's professional placement program, students work with creative agency **Rowland** to promote the **St Vincent De Paul Society's CEO Sleepout** and raise much-needed funds.

In 2018, the sleepout raised \$6.9 million — enough funding for 680,000 beds and 1.59 million meals.

The partnership is one of many great programs in QUT's work-ready internship and projects program, which has been running for more than 10 years.

Communications student Rachel Guy worked for two days a week at Rowland over a 13-week semester. She says her experience has inspired her to work in an agency once she finishes university.

"This has been an invaluable experience," says Rachel.

"I am working with St Vincent De Paul on the CEO sleepout, creating marketing material, including media releases and interviews.

"One of the best parts of this experience is having a mentor who constantly provides me feedback and works with me."

Rowland Managing Director Helen Besley says the QUT interns play a critical role in the agency's pro bono work on the CEO Sleepout.

"The internship program allows students to apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world client experience, under the supervision of our consultancy team while contributing to a worthy cause," says Helen.

QUT student Rachel Guy worked at agency Rowland to help promote the CEO Sleepout.



With work shortages in the field of mental health, University of South Australia students are helping to prevent suicide by working with community organisations. (Shutterstock)



## WORK PLACEMENTS GIVE STUDENTS SKILLS TO HELP PREVENT SUICIDE

On a typical day in Australia, eight people die by suicide.

Undergraduate psychology students from the **University of South Australia** are helping to prevent these tragic deaths.

An internship program gives students vital hands-on experience in psychology, providing essential training for their future careers and improving their chances of getting a job in the sector.

In some placements, students work with local organisations to develop community education modules on suicide prevention.

Other placements see students help people with drug and alcohol addiction, develop methods to assess student wellbeing, and assist dementia patients with sleep.

Partner organisations include **The Smith Family, Drug Arm Australasia** and **SA's Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure**.

Lasting 150 hours, UniSA's psychology work placement is the only one in Australia available to undergraduate students. Since 2011, more than 600 students have completed the program.

One supervisor says the professional skills of the participating students were "amazing".

"They're just really professional... I think these girls and boys that we've had on placement have definitely up-skilled themselves throughout the whole placement and gained skills that [they] wouldn't have gotten."

When asked about readiness to enter the workforce, one student says they felt they were now better prepared for their future career.

"I don't think I'd feel as comfortable if I didn't have the placement because I wouldn't really know what it was going to be like, wouldn't know what skills to use. I wouldn't know what the ethics would actually be like in a workplace."





University of Sunshine Coast student Julie Reeves is helping to design projects to protect Noosa's pristine natural environment.

## STUDENTS GET JOB SKILLS AND PROTECT NOOSA'S PRISTINE ENVIRONMENT

From its spectacular shoreline to its beautiful bushland, Noosa's stunning environment is being nurtured as **University of the Sunshine Coast** (USC) students develop career skills.

The experience helps students flourish as they plan careers in environmental management, and improves their chances of landing a job once they graduate.

As part of a work-experience program at **Noosa Shire Council**, USC students help design and deliver environmental protection projects.

Noosa receives up to a million visitors a year and is home to more than 50,000 people. The Council manages the area's distinct and popular natural environment sprawling across 871 square kilometres — an area bigger than Australia's capital, Canberra.

The students' work supports Noosa's environmental strategy, which addresses key challenges like koala conservation, waste reduction and recycling, pest management, biodiversity protection and reaching zero carbon emissions by 2026.

Bachelor of Environmental Management student Julie Reeves says the experience has been "invaluable".

"I've grown not only as a student now ready to graduate, but more importantly as an aspiring environmental manager with skills and knowledge I know will be relevant in the real world," says Julie.

"I've learnt so much about where I'm heading into the future, my career aspirations, and the context in which I'll be working as a professional in the field."

## STUDENTS TACKLE THE BIG ISSUES WITH BIG IDEAS

It's a big idea that's got big potential: social enterprises are using business know-how to help address some of our most challenging social issues.

Students from **La Trobe University** are gaining essential work and business skills through a partnership with **The Big Issue** — an independent magazine that creates work opportunities for the homeless — as part of its **The Big Idea competition**.

The competition invites students working in teams to design, research and pitch an idea for a social enterprise — a company that turns business strategies into new ways to help the community.

The competition gives students unprecedented access to social entrepreneurs and potential employers — helping them stand out from the crowd in any job market.

The Big Issue also provides guidance and advice to ensure students can hone their ideas into viable business plans.

Students Georgina Wheeler, Marni Chaskiel and Meera Dawson won the competition in 2013 with the idea for an urban landscaping project called "Revegetate" that provides work for unemployed young people.

Georgina, a health science and international development student, said the project called for each group member to contribute their skills in development, agriculture and business.

"My focus was on the people we were helping; there's a lot of long-term youth unemployment in Melbourne, but also across Australia and this idea can be replicated in other places," Georgina says.

Danya Sterling, manager of education enterprises at The Big Issue, says the competition gives students access to an amazing range of learning resources.

"It's great to see students engage with the challenge," Danya says.

Students from La Trobe University are working with The Big Issue to address social challenges like homelessness. (Getty Images)





Third-year graphic design students Sin Long Wong (left), Katie Kieran and Charles Hill, working with client, Harm Reduction WA, on the design of a new website.

## STUDENTS MESH WITH REAL-WORLD CONSULTANCY SERVICE

Got a business problem you need to solve?

You may want to give **Murdoch University's** fully-fledged student consultancy a call.

MESH, the university's in-house consultancy, sees students work on projects for real clients as part of their degrees — helping students to stand out in a crowded jobs market while delivering new ideas and strategies for companies and not-for-profits.

Students in games design, public relations, marketing, photography, graphic and web design, and apps development work with clients under the ongoing guidance of university staff.

In 2017, nearly 250 Perth-based students participated in MESH consultancy project, with some students engaged in multiple projects during the year.

**The West Australian Royal Life Saving Society's** Samantha Vigus said the team from Murdoch who helped create a marketing plan for the First Aid and CPR courses was "fantastic".

"Understanding the complexities and challenges of the industry in which we work, [the students] formulated a communications strategy that included some well-thought out ideas we'd never considered before," Samantha says.

"We would highly recommend the Murdoch University MESH team and look forward to working with more Murdoch students in the future."

Dylan Newick, a recent graduate, said being a MESH consultant had improved his professional communication skills.

"These skills will be beneficial in giving myself a head start for being career ready," Daniel says.



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