

Achieving economic sustainability for niche social profession courses in the Australian higher education sector - a nationwide collaborative strategy

OVERVIEW

This Fellowship seeks to develop a nationwide collaborative strategy to improve economic sustainability and geographic availability of niche social profession courses. Niche courses in social professions meet specialist social needs in disability services, social gerontology, community mental health, and youth work. Small courses have become expensive for single institutions to offer, and availability of these important and valuable programmes has declined despite continuing need for specialist graduates. To improve learning opportunities for students and achieve collaboration, I will work with colleagues and professional bodies through my national networks to:

1. Raise awareness of the need for urgent system-wide action;
2. Establish a network of colleagues to help resolve these challenges;
3. Work with these colleagues to find practical collaboration arrangements to improved availability of these courses;
4. Develop a nationwide collaborative strategy that will support other institutions to offer viable programmes;
5. Document successful strategies for consideration by other niche courses in Australian higher education.

DISCIPLINE FOCUS

Specialist social professions, for example: disability, social gerontology, youth work, community mental health, Indigenous services and career development.

COLLABORATING INSTITUTIONS

Edith Cowan University, Australian Catholic University, University of New England, Queensland University of Technology, Charles Sturt University, Southern Cross University, RMIT University, Tabor (Adelaide).

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