Dr Deanne Gannaway
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Dr Deanne Gannaway currently coordinates Professional Learning in the Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation at The University of Queensland. She is a leader in teaching and learning innovation and curriculum and a Senior HEA Fellow.

Fellowship title: Making Connections: Future-proofing the generalist Bachelor of Arts program

Year completed: 2018

Expertise key words: curriculum, innovation, professional learning

What did you achieve?: Between September 2016 and October 2018, a program of fellowship activities aimed to re-imagine the place of HASS disciplines in the contemporary higher education context. Activities included facilitating curriculum-based consultation meetings or workshops at 18 universities directly leading to curriculum changes in 13 Australian and two international BA programs; engaging with bodies such as Australian Academy of the Humanities, Council for the Humanities, Arts and Social Science, Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities and Australian Council of Deans of Science; hosting think tank sessions bring together students, senior executive, teachers and alumni across Australia to consider the value proposition of the BA; coordinating an international conference – the first ever to focus on BA curricula, teaching and outcomes; and developing a web-based repository (http://www.hassfutures.org) to host resources developed across the program.

These activities provided opportunities to consider BA curricula on a “whole-of-program” basis, rather than the traditional focus on disciplines and design at a unit of study level. The outcomes provide an opportunity to describe the BA curriculum as one that develops disciplinary knowledge but also vital life and work skills, innovative and creative mindsets and experiences that encourage individuation, independence and leadership. The think tanks and the BA conference enabled cross-discipline discussions, leading to sharing of practices by participants and to discussions regarding the benefits and strengths afforded by, and particular to, a BA degree program.

What does the sector need now?: We need to establish whether there are distinctive features in Australian BA programs in comparison to international BA programs and in comparison to other, more focused programs.