Fellow Profile

**Professor Nicolette Lee**  
La Trobe University

Professor Nicolette Lee is currently Executive Director, Quality and Standards at La Trobe University. She is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and an internationally recognised expert in higher education curriculum and management.

**Fellowship title:** Capstone curriculum across disciplines: Synthesising theory, practice and policy to provide practical tools for curriculum design.

**Year completed:** 2016

**Expertise key words:** Curriculum, quality, capstones

**What did you achieve?:** In the simplest terms, capstones are substantial culminating learning experiences that take place in the final stage of an educational course, offering closure and a focus for the sense of achievement that comes with completion. From a quality assurance point of view, capstones can provide a means of demonstrating course-level learning outcomes and as a transition experience, an opportunity for truly energising learning experiences that catapult students into their post-graduation lives with real evidence of their capabilities and potential.

My fellowship was designed to work closely with teaching and curriculum design staff from across the sector to develop an evidence–based foundation for the design and delivery of capstones, providing professional development, tools, resources and a network of best practice across the disciplines over a period of three years. Working with more than 700 staff across all Australian universities and internationally, we were able to profoundly impact the sector capacity to provide undergraduate and postgraduate students with professionally relevant and positive educational outcomes.

In the period since the fellowship completed, the calls for advice and professional development have continued. Three years on, the website receives 3000 visits a month dominated by Australia and New Zealand, I continue to deliver workshops for staff at all levels of Universities seeking to energise their final year curriculum and better support work–readiness in their graduates. Capstones continue to be designed and redesigned to meet the principles developed through the program, and many of the staff involved in the program have become leaders in their institutions.

**What does the sector need now?:** If we are to continue to advance innovation, quality and the standard of our student outcomes, higher education requires wide–ranging recognition, research and development in the national interest.