



COMMITTED TO IMPROVING
THE STATE OF QUEENSLAND

SUMMARY REPORT

Queensland Policy Leaders Series

The Future of Education and Training in Queensland

Thursday 8 August 2019

7.30am - 9.00am

Customs House, 399 Queen St

Moderator - Professor Ian Frazer AC, Ambassador and Chair,

Translational Research Institute Foundation

Professor Aidan Byrne, Provost and Senior Vice-President, The University of Queensland

Mary Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Queensland

Myra Geddes, General Manager - Social Impact, Goodstart Early Learning

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie, Vice-Chancellor, University of Southern Queensland

Professor Tim Wess, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), University of the Sunshine Coast

Professor Ross Young, Executive Dean, Faculty of Health,

Queensland University of Technology

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Breakfast Summary

The key theme from the 2019 Queensland Futures Institute *The Future of Education and Training in Queensland* breakfast focused on the changing labour environment faced by the state's current and future workforce. The developments in technology and innovation as well as the shift towards life-long learning is prompting the education sector to adapt in order to enable the workforce to take full advantage of key industries and drive productivity, economic and social development.

The breakfast identified the need for investment in education not only in universities, but also in early learning, the school system and vocational training. Targeting investment towards these areas is key to position Queensland to benefit from the global megatrends changing how people work.

The discussion highlighted that Queensland's education sector is a key area to enhance the state's international relationships and also to address social equality locally and abroad.

Key comments from Panellists

Moderator - Professor Ian Frazer AC, Ambassador and Chair, Translational Research Institute

Foundation

- Introduced the panellists and contextualised the discussion to the dynamic environment faced by the education and training sector over the coming years

Professor Aidan Byrne, Provost and Senior Vice-President, The University of Queensland

- Universities are under pressure to adapt under changing funding models and changing demand to provide high quality education which allows students to fulfil their potential
- The development of the business model of universities should focus on:
 - Achieving equitable distribution of knowledge, education and training amongst all regions of the state
 - Focusing on attrition to ensure students remain successful throughout their education
 - Ensuring successful graduate outcomes, no matter the economic environment
 - Providing a high-quality student experience. This is a drawcard not only for local students but also international students
- While universities have passed the point of gaining economies of scale, they must shift their focus to the development of the knowledge-based economy. Queensland must continue to support education enterprise over the next decade through investment to maintain credibility and an internationally competitive position
- International students provide major economic benefit for Queensland; it is estimated that 3 international students bring \$1mn in benefits to the economy while they're here. There has been a rise in the number of international students as universities have changed their business models due to government funding changes

Mary Campbell, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Queensland

- Vocational training is key to Queensland's social and economic prosperity. Practical and industry-relevant development of skills provides a passport to the 21st century for those undertaking vocational education
- Digital literacy is a key element in vocational training, providing a flexible range of skills which help to navigate disruptive technology within existing industry as well as in new industries
- Building skills and creating opportunities is critical for communities locally but also abroad. The Australia Pacific Training Coalition program has trained over 13,500 people in the South Pacific region and created employment, business and international opportunities for these nations. The vocational education and training sector in Queensland is well-positioned to help such initiatives
- The education system more broadly must be constructed as to allow for children to follow their passions and not be forced down particular career pathways. This encourages exploration and creativity which are important elements in entrepreneurship

Myra Geddes, General Manager - Social Impact, Goodstart Early Learning

- Recent research in the neuroscience of children shows that people develop the skills of learning in the first 5 years of life
- The Queensland Government must ensure that children have access to high-quality early learning for at least 2 years before starting school. This ensures the skills and capabilities especially around complex problem-solving and communication are being taught before entering a school environment



- Currently, 1 in 5 students in Queensland are entering school without having developed basic skills for learning. This puts them at a disadvantage not only in the classroom but also relative to similarly aged peers interstate and also internationally
- Addressing disadvantage from an early age and identifying children's strengths is key to setting a foundation for later learning

Professor Geraldine Mackenzie, Vice-Chancellor, University of Southern Queensland

- The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) maintains a regional focus, especially on human capital and the development of industry. The regions are home to a third of the population and produce two thirds of our exports. As such, it is critical that this focus is maintained
- Toowoomba is a key area for USQ, with a particular focus on agriculture, health, manufacturing and education industries
- The Australian education sector is world-class. For USQ, the largest export market is India, whilst China is the biggest market for other universities. International students who stay in Queensland are invaluable for the community and provide economic and social benefits such as cultural diversity
- In the future, when the students of today may have 10 different careers by the age of 40, micro-credentials will have a significantly larger role in developing transferrable and life-long skills

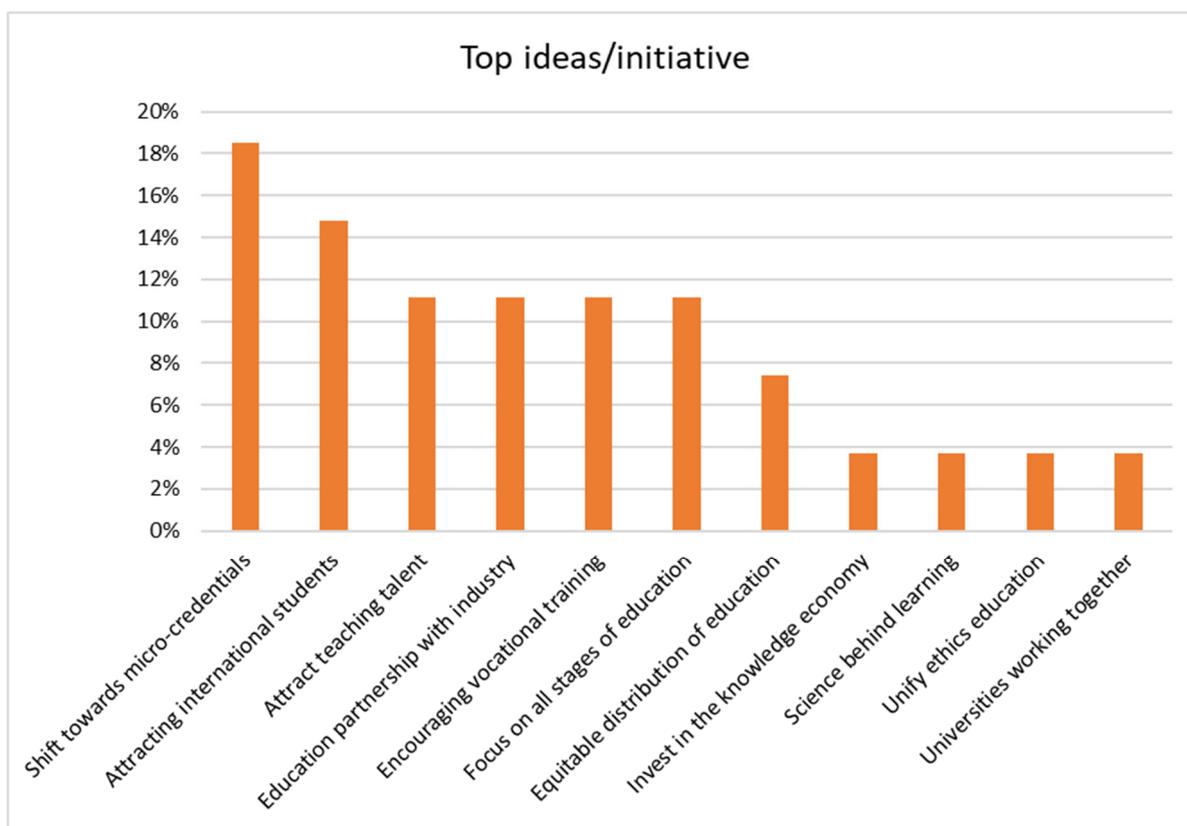
Professor Tim Wess, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), University of the Sunshine Coast

- The University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) maintains three focus areas in its approach to innovation moving forward. They are:
 - Collaboration within the education sector. This includes with Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre, TAFE and between different universities in the state
 - Cocreation. This highlights how USC understands that universities must remain agile and keep up with changing education patterns in the future. This could include working with industry, micro-credentialing and maintaining a focus on life-long learning
 - Communities. This shows USC's emphasis on connecting not only regional communities but also internationally
- Institutions must become agile if they are to provide the skills necessary for the next generation of students who are likely to be life-long learners – this includes not just universities but must start from early learning
- In universities, humanities and social sciences are becoming increasingly relevant due to the increasing role of ethics. While technology develops, it is this human element which will be demanded in response to such developments as automation and self-driving

Professor Ross Young, Executive Dean, Faculty of Health, Queensland University of Technology

- Queensland University of Technology (QUT) heavily focuses on graduate outcomes and has deep industry connections to enable this.
- The economic and social contributions of education are also understood. QUT's Learning Potential fund is Australia's largest needs-based scholarship and focuses on retention rather than GPA.
- QUT also recognises the changing health sector and realises the need to mobilise talent in the community for this
- The shifts in digital technology are placing pressure on degrees and investment to adapt to better align skills with workforce needs. This is especially true when it comes to robotics and automation skills and investment
- Education as a tool for international diplomacy must not be overlooked. The economic benefits it brings to the state also stem from the international connections it creates
- The role of teachers must also be celebrated to ensure it remains an attractive profession. It is also vital to ensure that talented teachers are attracted to key areas such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. The issue of gender equity must also be addressed such that students' education and career development is not skewed by their gender
- It is estimated that 41% of current QUT courses won't be relevant in 20 years due to automation with the most impacted industry being accounting and the least impacted being health services. As such, in an environment with such a high volume of new knowledge and change, it is important to set students up to transition and transfer skills throughout their careers

Summary of Breakfast Comments



Summary of Ideas

- Embrace the shift towards micro-credentials and life-long learning over the traditional education framework. This will emphasise the importance of not only transferrable skills, but also continuous and targeted learning, as the next generation adjust to becoming more agile in their education and careers
- Utilise Queensland's world-class education system to continue to engage and encourage international students, benefiting the economy whilst developing international relationships through soft diplomacy
- Attract high-quality teaching talent throughout all stages of education, particularly for STEM subjects in high school. Increasing demand for highly skilled teachers may also place upwards pressure on salaries, further increasing the attractiveness of the profession
- All stakeholders within the education sector, must not only partner together to provide a holistic education experience, but also with industry to ensure successful graduate outcomes
- Investment should be directed across all sectors of education, from early learning through to universities and vocational training, as we adapt and shift towards a knowledge economy
- Continue working on the 'science behind learning', to further strengthen Queensland's educational offerings
- Use education to achieve positive social impacts and improve the equitable distribution effects – focus on both social and economic benefits

The Queensland Futures Institute acknowledges the support of UQ Business School Commerce Honours student, Jordan Ferrari, for his summary of the Breakfast.



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