

The impact of future-oriented capabilities in professional contexts

Alumni survey

Authors: [removed for peer review]

This survey was designed to explore alumni perspectives on the relationship between future-oriented capabilities developed during university study and graduates' perceptions of their ability to create impact in professional contexts.

Section 1 – Consent and participant information

1. By completing this survey, I confirm that I have read the participant information statement and I agree with the statements on the consent form [LINK to PIS and consent statements].
 Yes, I agree
2. I confirm that I have graduated from the following degree program(s): *[drop down menu with options]*
3. What year did you graduate from this course? *[drop down menu with options]*

Section 2 – Your professional life since graduation

This section collects information on the types of organisation(s), role(s) and activities you have been and are currently engaged in since graduation from [insert course from Section 1 Q2].

4. What industries or professional contexts have you worked in since graduating? Select all that apply. *[Range of options field]*
 - Management – Managers plan, organise, direct, control, coordinate and review the operations of government, commercial, agricultural, industrial, non-profit and other organisations, and departments.
 - Professional – Professionals perform analytical, conceptual and creative tasks through the application of theoretical knowledge and experience in the fields of the arts, media, business, design, engineering, the physical and life sciences, transport, education, health, information and communication technology, the law, social sciences and social welfare.
 - Technician or trade work – Technicians and trades workers perform a variety of skilled tasks, applying broad or in-depth technical, trade or industry specific knowledge, often in support of scientific, engineering, building and manufacturing activities.
 - Community and personal service work – Community and personal service workers assist Health Professionals in the provision of patient care, provide information and support on a range of social welfare matters, and provide other

services in the areas of aged care and childcare, education support, hospitality, defence, policing and emergency services, security, travel and tourism, fitness, sports and personal services.

- Clerical and administrative worker – Clerical and administrative workers provide support to managers, professionals and organisations by organising, storing, manipulating and retrieving information.
- Sales workers - Sales workers sell goods, services and property, and provide sales support in areas such as operating cash registers and displaying and demonstrating goods. Information and communication technologists and technical sales representatives are excluded from this major group.
- Machinery operation and driving work – Machinery operators and drivers operate machines, plant, vehicles and other equipment to perform a range of agricultural, manufacturing and construction functions, move materials, and transport passengers and freight.
- Labouring – Labourers perform a variety of routine and repetitive physical tasks using hand and power tools, and machines either as an individual or as part of a team assisting more skilled workers such as trades workers, and machinery operators and drivers.

5. What roles have you held since graduating? *[open field]*

Section 3 – Most significant impact

6. Since graduation, what has been the most significant impact you were able to create or contribute to in your professional life because of undertaking *[insert course from Section 1 Q2]*? Please describe the nature of the initiative, your involvement in it, and the impact it has had. *[long response]*

Section 4 – Your most rewarding role

Now we'd like you to select one particular role you've had in your working life since graduating. If you have had more than one role, choose the role where you feel you have been able to make the greatest positive difference. This could be your most recent position, the role where you've spent the most time, or the role or an organisation that most closely aligns with your professional values and identity.

7.

- 7A - What is the organisation you were at?
- 7B - What was the role?
- 7C - What were your responsibilities in this role?

8. What was the employment basis for this role?

- As an employee in an organisation
- Freelancer or self-employed
- Volunteer

- Activist or advocate for a cause
- Informal mentor
- Other (please specify) *[open field]*

9. How long have you been or were in this role for?

- 0-6 months
- 6-12 months
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 5+ years

10. Which of the following best describes the sector of this role?

- Not-for-profit
- Government / Public sector
- Private enterprise

11. What is the size of the organisation or professional context where you hold/held this particular role?

- Large enterprise (greater than 200 employees);
- Medium enterprise (between 20 and 199 employees);
- Small enterprise (0-19 employees)

[next page] Given the complex social, organisational and environmental challenges ahead of us, [our university] seeks to develop graduates who can contribute to creating a thriving and sustainable society. This study explores the ways alumni [of this university] are applying their capabilities to achieve positive social, environmental and/or organisational impact in their professional contexts.

12. The following is a list of capabilities you may have developed in your degree that are considered to be essential for future leaders and change-makers. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the [INSERT COURSE] contributed to the development of the following capabilities? *[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]*

- Systems thinking and foresight [CC1]
- Creativity and innovation [CC2]
- Collaboration and integration of diverse perspectives [CC3]
- Agency, change-making and leadership [CC4]
- Ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice [CC5]
- Self-awareness and reflexivity [CC6]
- Practical and technical know-how [CC7]

13. We are interested to know how this particular role allowed you to apply these capabilities. Please indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements. In my role... *[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]*:

- I deal/dealt with complex societal or sustainability challenges [CC1, CC5]

- I have/had an opportunity to address complex organisational problems [CC1, CC4]
- I work/worked with alternative future scenarios and evaluate/evaluated the implications of actions over long-term horizon [CC1]
- I innovate/innovated and/or generate/generated new insights, responses and solutions [CC2]
- I benefit/benefitted from working with and integrating diverse perspectives [CC3]
- I use/used ethical judgement [CC5]
- I make/made decisions that benefit all stakeholders [CC5]
- I take/took action benefiting the environment [CC5]
- I have introduced practices and approaches that are/were being used by others in my professional context [CC4]
- I am/was leading or significantly contributing to innovation and/or projects involving complex challenges [CC4]
- The skills and capabilities from [INSERT DEGREE] are/were recognised in my professional context (evidenced by promotions, awards, invitations to contribute, etc) [CC7]

14. Considering this role, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the following capabilities, are utilised within this role? *[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]*:

- Systems thinking and foresight [CC1]
- Creativity and innovation [CC2]
- Collaboration and integration of diverse perspectives [CC3]
- Agency, change-making and leadership [CC4]
- Ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice [CC5]
- Self-awareness and reflexivity [CC6]
- Practical and technical know-how [CC7]

Section 5 - Capabilities applied in your professional life

In your everyday work and now considering all roles you have had since graduating, you would likely apply several capabilities. In this section, we'd like you to reflect on the future-oriented capabilities you learned through the [insert course] and how these have translated into professional life for you.

- **Systems thinking and foresight**
- **Creativity and innovation**
- **Collaboration and integration of diverse perspectives**
- **Agency, change-making and leadership**
- **Ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice**
- **Self-awareness and reflexivity**
- **Practical and technical know-how**

15. In the context of your professional life, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: *[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]*:

- I can make decisions and take action under uncertainty [CC4]
- I have the skills and tools required to deal with complex challenges [CC7]
- When facing a complex challenge, I usually devise a plan or methodology for approaching it [CC7]
- I analyse the broader context of complex problems before acting [CC1]
- I consider multiple future scenarios and time-horizons when analysing complex situations [CC1]
- I bring together multiple perspectives and stakeholders when examining complex challenges [CC3]
- I work collaboratively in teams and/or engage with diverse stakeholders to develop proposals or solutions [CC3]
- I am empathic and compassionate when working with others [CC3]
- I have strategies for establishing productive collaborations across professional silos and hierarchies [CC3]
- I regularly challenge my colleagues' and clients' assumptions about complex problems [CC6]
- I generate insights that others have not thought of [CC2]
- I come up with new or creative approaches or solutions that synthesise different perspectives and insights [CC2]
- I am able to initiate or influence change [CC4]
- I experiment and test ideas before implementing them [CC4]
- I can change direction of initiatives [CC4]
- I am able to introduce and implement ideas under constraints [CC4]
- I can inspire and/or mobilise others to take action [CC4]
- I know when to act and when to step back to achieve greater longer-term impact overall [CC7]
- I reflect on my own assumptions, biases and worldviews, and I am prepared to change my mind [CC6]
- I reflect on my past decisions to learn from them [CC6]
- I seek feedback and act on it [CC6]
- My choices and decisions are influenced by my values [CC5]
- I consider present and future generations when making decision or taking actions [CC6]
- I consider impacts holistically when making decisions, including consideration of unintended consequences, for example impacts on the natural environment and diverse communities [CC6]

16. Considering the future-oriented capabilities, can you give an example of a situation or initiative where you applied these capabilities to create change or achieve impact.

What were you trying to achieve and how did you approach it? Who else was involved? What was the outcome or impact of your efforts? *[long response]*

17. Considering your professional experience, rank the following capabilities in how effective in enabling you to generate impact, assigning a value of 1 to the most effective capability, and 7 to the least effective capability

- Systems thinking and foresight
- Creativity and innovation
- Collaboration and integration of diverse perspectives
- Agency, change-making and leadership
- Ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practice
- Self-awareness and reflexivity
- Practical and technical know-how

18. What other capabilities, if any, come to mind as being important for your future professional life (whether you have developed them or not)? *[long response]*

19. Please add any further comments or examples you have regarding the influence of [INSERT COURSE] on the development of your capabilities and practices. *[long response]*

Section 6 - Your beliefs and aspirations

This section aims to identify any changes in your values, beliefs and perspective(s) arising from your learning on [INSERT COURSE].

20. Please indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements. Because of my learning in [course], when I make decisions in my professional life, I am more likely to.../[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]:

- consider the impact of my actions on the environment [CC5]
- consider the impact of my actions on society [CC5]
- be more satisfied with my professional life, if I believe that my job is making a positive difference for others [CC6]
- focus on (or choose) meaningful work that makes a difference on societal and/or environmental causes [CC5]
- focus on (or choose) work that provides opportunity for higher than average remuneration, promotion pathways and prestigious titles [CC5 negative]
- seek out roles and opportunities outside my professional context where I can make a positive difference [CC4]

21. Please indicate you level of agreement with the statement ‘Completing [INSERT COURSE] contributed to the development of my values and perspective(s)’ *[Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly disagree; Not applicable]*

22. Please add any further comments or examples regarding the influence of [INSERT COURSE] on your professional and personal life. *[long response]*

23.

- 23A - Recognising all that you have learnt and achieved to date, imagine your dream role in 5 years' time. What is the title of this role?
- 23B - Briefly describe what your dream role might entail, and what capabilities (if different to those mentioned above) it would require. *[long response]*

Section 7 - Demographics

This section aims to collect some information about you to enable more contextualised analysis of the survey responses. These responses will not be linked to you as an individual and will be only considered as part of an aggregated data set.

24. What is your age group?
 - Under 23
 - 23 – 30 years old
 - 31 – 45 years old
 - 46-60 years old
 - Over 61 years old
25. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Non-binary
 - Prefer not to say
26. What is your postcode? *[Short answer]*
27. Do you identify as coming from a culturally and linguistically diverse background?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to say

Section 8 - Further research – optional

28. In the next phase of this research, we would like to explore in more depth the impact of your learning in [our university] courses on your professional life. Please read the Phase 2 Participant information statement *[insert link to Phase 2 PIS and consent form]* and if you are interested in participating in this further research, please respond to the following statements:
[Yes; No]
 - My professional context supports me to work towards social or environmental outcomes, and it could be an interesting case study to explore in this research project
 - I am interested in participating in a focus group or workshop series exploring the impact of capabilities I've learned at [the university] in my professional life

If you ticked ‘Yes’ for any of the above statements, please provide your name and contact details below so the research team can get in touch with you.

29. Your full name

[Free text]

30. Your email address

[Free text]

31. I give permission for researchers to contact me about participation in further research

- Yes
- No

Thank you for completing this survey, we value your contribution!

If you gave us your contact details, the research team will be in touch with you regarding the next steps.