

# Do Australian universities over sell job prospects?



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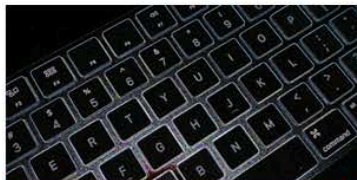




## Dr. Trevor Cullen's research on health journalism



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[www.trevorcullen.id.au](http://www.trevorcullen.id.au)

# UG Tertiary education – 3 Tiers

Provide a broad educational base

Develop entrepreneurial /research/thinking skills

Teach basic industry skills



# Background to the talk

“An element of fraud in journalism education – it’s implausible that all journalism students will have a career in journalism - Universities need to be a lot more honest. We have a duty to be candid.”

—

Journalism Professor at the University of Kent, UK (2009)

# Selling Students Short

Universities are turning out students who often are unable to find relevant work and lacking in some of the most basic professional requirements

**Selling Students Short - by Richard Hil (2015)**



# Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)

The revised AQF requires that undergraduate are designed such that graduates can demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills

**assure** graduate outcomes

**improve** work integrated learning

**enhance** graduate employability







# New Work Order report (2015)

- 40% of existing jobs will disappear – in the next 10-15 years
- Young people expected to have an average of 17 different occupations over the course of their life time

# Unpredictable future job market?

“It is clear that we cannot see the shapes of the professions of the future.”

“This raises questions about capabilities to be built by our graduates.”

“Degrees are for life .....not just a single job.”

- Prof. Margaret Gardner - Vice Chancellor of Monash University •

# Tertiary Courses in Australia

Think about your own discipline

Do we promise too much  
in our publicity?

Do we need to review  
and rewrite  
what we promote?



# The Survey - 2009 & 2016

Viewed the **online description** of **tertiary undergraduate journalism**  
programs in Australia

**Key question:**

How strongly did their promotional material **link journalism study**  
**with a career** as a journalist

# The links

Link between studying journalism and becoming a journalist

**Strong**  
**Medium**  
**weak**

# Strong link

- Our Journalism degree **will train you to work** as a journalist and writer in mainstream media
- As a Journalism graduate, **you can follow a career** in the media industry or as a freelance writer or producer.
- You **will be able to work** in Australia and overseas in all fields of journalism.



# Medium link

The journalism degree gives you the skills and on-the-ground experience you need to succeed in modern journalism.

By the time you graduate, you'll have the confidence and skills to put your knowledge to work. Future careers can be found in news organisations, television, radio, publishing and more.

Talk about opportunities students can follow



# Weak Link

- The major/degree sharpens your career focus
- Studying journalism means you get the right balance of practical and theoretical subjects and you get to design your own degree.
- The course offers practical knowledge and theoretical understanding of journalism

**Information is vague and uncommitted**





# Journalism at ECU

- This major introduces students to the world of online and digital journalism. It focuses on building knowledge, developing research and analytical skills and acquiring practical skills for an ever-changing media landscape.
- Covers working in audio, video and online environments, and the legal and ethical frameworks of Journalism.

# Surveys - 2009 & 2016

**2009**

**27 universities**

Job prospects

Strong link 14

**Medium 6**

Weak 7

**2016**

**30 universities**

Job prospects

Strong link 7

**Medium 17**

Weak 6

## Other Sources of information

- High School career days
- Annual Open Day
- Newspaper or TV advertising
- Social Media
- Word and mouth
- Reputation



# Other Reasons



- Promotional material is here to stay.
- Universities will entice students regardless of career prospects.
- Educators talk about realistic job expectations

# What does this mean for students?



# Traditional linear pathways?????

Once upon a time

Study Medicine – Doctor

Study Accounting – Accountant

Study Journalism - Journalist

Study Engineering – Engineer

Finish Law – become a lawyer

# What can we do ?

**Employment**

**Employability**

Focus on defined  
job prospects

- Skills
- Life long learning
- Remain relevant to  
the workplace

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# Employment

Fully ready ?

Job ready ?

Start ready?





# Redesign Courses

## Journalism

- Less mainstream jobs
- Less professional placements
- Continual job cuts
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## Content Creators

- Writing
- Speaking
- Digital
- Publish across platforms
- Social media
- Entrepreneurial –
- Start ups
- Samsung journalism

# We're hiring!

Corporate Communications Advisor

Audio Operator

Digital Journalist

Data Journalist

Digital Lead, Sport

Frontend Developer \*(Immediate start)

Shooter/Editor, The Feed

Story Producer, The Feed

[jobs.sbs.com.au](http://jobs.sbs.com.au)

# Rethink work and careers

Digital disrupted workforce

Universities have to /encourage provide  
more cross -disciplinary skills

Digital and social media skills

# Graduates of the future

Broad intellectual and critical thinking skills

Problem solvers

Team players

entrepreneurs





Communicating, social media, networking skills

# Two Take home questions



**Does your university promise too much?**

**Do we need rethink what we teach?**

**TRUST ME**  
 **I'M A**   
**LECTURER**

**Don't Make  
Me Use My  
Teacher Voice!**