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Anderson, Neil, Adam, Raoul, Taylor, Pauline, Madden, Dianna, Melles, Gavin, Kuek, Christopher, [Wright, Natalie](#), & Ewens, Bev  
(2014)

*Design thinking frameworks as transformative cross-disciplinary pedagogy: Final Report.*

Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching, Australia.

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# **Design thinking frameworks as transformative cross-disciplinary pedagogy: Final Report**

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RM 2015002271

**1201**



## Research Description

Generic graduate attributes associated with innovation, creativity and problem solving are considered to be amongst the most important of all targeted attributes (Bradley Review of Higher Education, 2009). While the National Cultural Policy *Creative Australia* (2012) recommends embedding design thinking in education, and design thinking principles and frameworks are considered excellent scaffolds for the development of creative and innovative mindsets, little empirical research has been conducted about the value of design thinking frameworks in achieving these generic graduate attributes at a discipline or subject level in higher education.

This Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) funded seed project aimed to examine the way design thinking strategies are used across disciplines in higher education to scaffold the development of student attributes in the domain of problem solving and creativity, in order to enhance the nation's capacity for innovation.

A critical literature review of existing design thinking models was used as a lens to interpret feedback from over 300 academics attending lecture/seminar/workshop events in Brisbane, Darwin, Melbourne, Perth and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (funded by DFAT), providing clarification on the definition of design thinking and rationale for the diversity of approaches used to scaffold the process. Additionally, 8 case studies from 4 Australian universities, present initial empirical evidence and transferable strategies to support the application of design thinking frameworks for enhanced student learning in higher education.

Professor Neil Anderson from James Cook University led a team of eight people (representing four Australian universities in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia) who wrote the Final Report, which formed the basis for a large OLT grant application endorsed by the OLT in Feb 2014. Anderson was invited to speak on the report to Australian Council of Deans (ICT) Forum at UTS in May, 2014. The report was officially peer reviewed by OLT External Reviewer Professor Judyth Sachs.



# Design thinking frameworks as transformative cross-disciplinary pedagogy: Final Report

## Peer Review

"This is a clearly written and insightful report; it is accessible and well-structured, coherent and logical in terms of how it describes the project and the outcomes derived from it. One of its strengths is that it does not pull any punches, especially around the challenges faced in applying this to various disciplines and contexts".

"As a seeding project the project deliverables were substantial and more than projected in the original proposal. Well done to the teams and their efforts."

"I look forward to the next stage of the project; under any set of criteria this was certainly a successful seeding project."

Official OLT peer review of the Seed Grant Final Report

**Professor Judyth Sachs, OLT External Reviewer**

Special Advisor Higher Education KPMG; Honorary Professor, The University of Nottingham

