

PROFESSOR JENNIFER SUMSION

Citation for the conferral of Emeritus Professor

Professor Sumsion has made a sustained and distinguished contribution to the early childhood education academy and profession both nationally and internationally as well as the culture and performance of educational research at Charles Sturt University.

The esteem in which Professor Sumsion is held for her contribution to the field of education is not only evidenced by her many documented achievements, but also by the many national and international invitations to serve as an international expert and reviewer on national research councils in Australia and overseas including being asked to review proposals and manuscripts for the world's leading publishers in her field and serving on the board of national and international peer-reviewed education research journals. She has been an invited keynote speaker in New Zealand, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and Canada. Her contribution to the field stems from her sustained work in the area of early childhood education workforce capacity and sustainability through its focus on professional preparation, and ongoing learning and development; professional identities, cultures and work contexts; and intended and unintended effects of policy settings in relation to quality, curriculum and accountability.

Importantly, for the profession of early childhood in Australia, Professor Sumsion's research outputs have made significant contributions to informing the Council of Australian Government's national early childhood reform agenda. In 2008 and 2009 Professor Sumsion led the development, trial and validation of the first national early childhood curriculum, *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Such is her capability as a leader and her expertise in liaising with a broad range of stakeholders, senior bureaucrats, academics, and early childhood educators from around Australia participated in the 'co-production' of the Early Years Learning Framework.

The impact of this work should not be underestimated. The Framework is Australia's first national education curriculum framework and is mandated for use in all early childhood services - preschools, long day care and family day care – that is in more than 7200 early childhood services. It is the centre-point of current National Quality Standards for early childhood services, and a key feature of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's on-going evaluation of early childhood services across all the states and territories. The Early Years Learning Framework has received widespread endorsement by academics and educators working in the field of early childhood education in Australia and around the world.

Within Charles Sturt University, as the Foundation Professor of Early Childhood Education, Professor Sumsion has successfully cultivated a rigorous, collaborative, high quality research culture, most particularly in the discipline of early childhood education and more generally in the wider domain of the University and its regions. Thanks to her leadership, Charles Sturt University is recognised nationally and internationally for its record of ground-breaking research in early years' education.

One of Professor Sumsion's early achievements was to consolidate early childhood research across Charles Sturt University's campuses through the establishment of the Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education research grouping "*Investigating Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care*". Professor Sumsion's leadership of this group helped sustain and develop the research productivity of existing researchers and, by building collaborative teams that actively mentored early and mid-career academics, expanded the number of research active early childhood academics at the University.

Professor Sumsion's commitment to research capacity building and generational renewal has been pivotal to her aims and achievements throughout her career at Charles Sturt University. This was particularly evident in her role in preparing the successful application for the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research funded *Excellence in Research in Early Years Education* Collaborative Research Network (2011 to 2015), and as co-director of the Network with colleagues from Queensland University of Technology and Monash University.

The Network's ambitious targets for collaborative research and publication outputs were all met on time and within budget. The highly productive academic and industry collaborations generated by the Network are now an ongoing part of the fabric of early childhood research at Charles Sturt University.

Professor Sumsion's outstanding reputation as a researcher is evident in her success in leading significant externally funded studies, which has attracted more than \$3.3m in research funding. She has been a Chief Investigator on six Australian Research Council Discovery and Linkage Grants, four as lead Chief Investigator. She has undertaken research for the Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood and the South Australian Government Department of Education and Children's Services, and for key stakeholder organisations in early childhood, including Goodstart Early Learning, the Professional Support Coordinator's Alliance, Victorian Children's Protection Society, and the Scanlon Foundation.

Instrumental in Professor Sumsion's approach to research, has been her commitment to building strong, effective and ongoing collaborations with industry partners and across institutions, and to providing mentorship for emerging researchers, including staff, doctoral students and post-doctoral fellows. This work has made a significant contribution to one of two Charles Sturt University rankings of four (above world standard) in Education: Curriculum and Pedagogy in the most recent Excellence in Research for Australia round in 2015.

The University has enormous respect for Professor Sumsion's distinguished contribution to the early childhood education profession both nationally and internationally as well as the culture and performance of educational research at Charles Sturt University. She has been an outstanding role model as an academic leader and is worthy of the title of Emeritus Professor.

Dated this Thirty First Day of August Two Thousand and Eighteen