

PROFESSOR TONI DOWNES

Citation for the Conferral of the Title of Emeritus Professor

Professor Downes commenced at Charles Sturt University in January 2006 in the role of Executive Dean, Faculty of Education. In 2015 she was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Academic). She retired from the University in July 2018.

Across her career in education, Professor Downes taught and researched for over 25 years in universities. She has developed and taught programs in curriculum, teaching, learning and educational leadership, with a particular focus on the effective use of digital technologies. Prior to this she was an educational consultant, project leader and classroom teacher in the government and non-government school sectors.

The focus of Professor Downes' research and professional engagement has been on improving educational outcomes through the effective use of digital technologies. Her scholarly work has included numerous research and professional projects; over 70 publications; many professional presentations and workshops; and over \$1 million in research grants and consultancies. This work explored:

- How young people used digital technologies in their homes and how their use fundamentally changed the ways they engaged in play and learning;
- How schools could harness the affordance of the technologies to improve learning; and
- How to improve teachers understanding and use of technologies in their classrooms to improve teaching and learning.

This work was picked up by federal and state governments in various initiatives between 1985 and 2010. During this time, Professor Downes also worked in AusAid projects in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines with a particular focus on how to use hand-held digital devices in Mathematics and Science Education. Professor Downes has been a keynote or distinguished speaker at international conferences in New Zealand, the United States, England, Switzerland, Hungary, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Hong Kong, Wales, China, Finland, and Norway.

During her time at Charles Sturt she made an outstanding and exemplary contribution to the University and the wider higher education sector as well.

Professor Downes' major achievements as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education include:

- The introduction of dual sector qualifications for Charles Sturt University graduates to improve employment prospects, particularly in small and mid-size regional and rural communities;
- The establishment of a Centre for Indigenous Studies and the appointment of the foundational Chair in Indigenous Studies; and
- The achievement of world ranking or above in the 2012 and 2015 Excellence in Research for Australia results in three of the four Education sub-disciplines. These results placed the education discipline in the top ten in Australia and in the top two at the University during this period.

As President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education she brokered a successful \$8.3 Million national project to improve Australian teacher education graduates' understanding and use of technologies in classrooms and also negotiated a partnership with Indigenous leaders to improve the engagement and success of Indigenous teacher education students through the \$8.4 million More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Teachers Initiative project.

In her three years as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Downes led the delivery of key outcomes of the 2015 to 2016 University Strategy including the introduction of new disciplines in Law and Engineering, growth in course profile and load at Port Macquarie and the development and early implementation of the Charles Sturt Online Learning Model.

The University has enormous respect for Professor Downes' contributions to school and university education and as an outstanding role model is deserving of the title of Emeritus Professor.

Dated this Tenth Day of December Two Thousand and Nineteen