The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning

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http://artmuseum.flinders.edu.au/academic-programs/
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- Adelaide College of the Arts, TAFE South Australia: Joshua Searson, Pei Shu Wu, Peter Johnson.
List of acronyms used

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<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGSA</td>
<td>Art Gallery of South Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALTC</td>
<td>Australian Learning and Teaching Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIISTRE</td>
<td>Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FU</td>
<td>The Flinders University of South Australia</td>
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<td>FUAM</td>
<td>Flinders University Art Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFOUT</td>
<td>Flinders Foundations of University Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPEL</td>
<td>Impact Management Planning and Evaluation Ladder</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRU</td>
<td>Innovative Research Universities</td>
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<td>HIST</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Museums Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>OBL</td>
<td>Object-based learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>OISE</td>
<td>Office of Indigenous Strategy and Engagement, FU</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLT</td>
<td>Office of Learning and Teaching predecessor body to the Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLO</td>
<td>Threshold Learning Outcome</td>
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<td>VISA</td>
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<td>UAMA</td>
<td>University Art Museums Australia</td>
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<td>UCL</td>
<td>University College London</td>
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<td>UoM</td>
<td>The University of Melbourne</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>In OBL ‘object’ is used to denote material culture such as a specimen, artefact or artwork, but the term can also apply to other things such as manuscripts, rare books or archives (Chatterjee, Hannan &amp; Thomson, 2015 p. 1). Here ‘object’ refers principally to a work of art.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>In 2017 ‘Schools’ and ‘Faculties’ at The Flinders University of South Australia were replaced with a ‘College’ structure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Called ‘topics’ at The Flinders University of South Australia and used here interchangeably with ‘subject’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Fellows</td>
<td>Refers to the project team members responsible for delivery of a subject/topic.</td>
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Executive summary

We live in an era of disruptive change in which the pace of technological innovation is remarkable. Unprecedented access to information is redefining the ways we live, learn and work. As a university, we must rise to the challenge of preparing our graduates for success in a future that will be every bit as dynamic and unpredictable as it is exciting.


Project context

This project was conceived as a response to the challenge faced by higher education providers in preparing students for employment success in a rapidly changing world. It was informed by a substantial body of scholarly literature indicating that graduate employability is a significant and ongoing concern for the sector: that despite the efforts of tertiary institutions to help students develop the skills, knowledge and attributes for securing and sustaining work in the short and longer term, there are many graduates emerging from their studies who are not adequately prepared for this task.

The project was aligned with the OLT employability skills program priority and led by Flinders University Art Museum (FUAM) as a seed initiative. It was motivated and shaped by emerging knowledge around the pedagogical power of ‘object-based learning’ (OBL), and its application in tertiary-level contexts to improve the capacity of students to see, think and communicate effectively.

The project observed that Australian universities are custodians of rich and vast cultural and scientific collections, historically established as educational tools but now largely under-utilised by academic staff. By bringing these holdings back into the pedagogical frame, through initiatives driven by OBL, the project also sought to address longstanding recommendations of the Australian Vice Chancellors’ Committee to ‘maximise’ the use of university collections in academia, harnessing their potential in the design and delivery of educational experiences (Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee, University Museums Review Committee, 1996).

Project aims

The project aimed to explore OBL as an adaptive and transferable skills-based strategy to assist educators in preparing graduates for employment success. In addition, it sought to lift the profile of university collections as teaching tools, give confidence to educators to work with cultural material with which they may not be familiar, and promote university museums as dynamic sites of transdisciplinary learning.

Project approach

The project was a collaborative initiative carried out by university museum professionals in partnership with academics from three discrete disciplines, namely Medicine, History and Visual Arts. It adopted a two-stage method involving activities to: (i) investigate OBL as a strategy for enhancing employability through survey and case-study research with students, tertiary-level educators and other stakeholders; (ii) showcase OBL with stakeholders in the higher education and museum sectors; and (iii) establish an online OBL portal to share case-studies, tools and
resources among educators, and facilitate new and ongoing engagements with university collections.

**Project outputs**

Key project outputs include:

- three case studies illustrating the cross disciplinary value of OBL for employability
- survey data from 125 students; student reflections recorded in blog format
- observation data from four classes by colleagues external to the project
- ready-made resources to assist educators in the design and delivery of OBL
- a web portal to facilitate engagement, describe processes and disseminate findings
- six conference presentations and a publication.

**Project impact**

The project raised awareness, knowledge and skills in OBL as mode of teaching for employability. It led to OBL being more deeply embedded in the pedagogical culture at The Flinders University of South Australia (FU) and saw the adoption of ideas and practices at participating institutions. The project established and grew a Community of Practice (CoP), strengthened partnerships nationally and internationally and greatly enhanced FUAM’s relationship with its academic community locally, paving the way for ongoing pedagogical engagement. The project contributed to existing knowledge about the value of OBL in higher education contexts and amplified the role university museums can play as dynamic sites of transdisciplinary learning.

**Key findings**

Findings indicated OBL was an effective and adaptive strategy for engaging tertiary-level students with employability skills. As evidenced by the data, it provided a platform for students to encounter, exercise and reflect on their skills and opportunities to develop and advance them. Furthermore, findings showed OBL stimulated new ways of thinking and looking at the world. Most powerfully, data from the medical cohort reflected the value of art museum collections as reflective triggers for medical learners; and data from history revealed the value of Aboriginal art in bringing students into meaningful dialogue with perspectives, knowledges and experiences of Australia’s First Nations Peoples.
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Chapter 1: Project context

How universities prepare their students for a rapidly changing world of work is a pressing, significant and ongoing concern for government, industry and the higher education sector. This is evidenced by a vast and expanding body of literature on the topic emerging from Australia and overseas in recent years, including extensive research to better understand the requirements of employers, as well as efforts undertaken to articulate, teach and assess these things. Despite this work, it is argued, there remains much to be done in building the competencies of graduates for employment success in the 21st century and assuring them of their capabilities (Oliver, 2011; Jackson, 2014), and for embedding and resourcing strategies within and across institutions to achieve these outcomes (Bennett, Richardson, & MacKinnon, 2016). This project explored the role of the university museum in addressing this challenge with a particular focus on object-based learning (OBL) as a mode of education that can foster the pursuit of higher knowledge while also supporting employability skills development.

Graduate employability

Graduate employability is an evolving construct understood in its broadest sense as the ‘realisation of an individual’s career opportunities and aspirations’ (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development [CIPD], 2016, p. 2). In the context of this project, graduate employability was understood more specifically to mean the requisite skills, knowledge and personal attributes to secure and to sustain meaningful employment over time, which may involve transitions between roles within an organisation or obtaining new employment by moving between organisations and/or generating one’s own work.

Viewed from this perspective—as an ‘ongoing project’ (Hager & Holland, 2007 p. 1) in which individuals must ‘proactively navigate the world of work and self - manage the career building process’ (Bridgestock, 2007, p. 1)—employability is linked to the lifelong development of engaged, resilient and self-reflexive individuals, prepared for competitive labour markets, and equipped to safeguard their well-being across the course of their working lives.

Employability skills

Employability skills encompass professional, technical and generic skill sets which underpin successful participation in work and career progression. In the university context, generic skills—also known as soft, non-technical and transferable skills—can be referred to as ‘graduate attributes’ although, as some higher education researchers have pointed out, skills and attributes are not the same thing (Green, Hammer & Star, 2009). For the sake of clarity, this project drew on the Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (DIISRTE & DEEWR, 2013), a schema developed by the Australian Government with the input of employers, unions, business and industry groups, and a significant number of other stakeholders to assist educators and job seekers in better understanding the nature of ‘must have’ skills for employment success.
The Core Skills Framework splits these skills into three discrete categories:

1. **Navigating the world of work** (managing career and work life, and working with roles, rights and protocols)
2. **Interacting with others** (communicating, connecting and collaborating and recognising and utilising diverse perspectives)
3. **Getting the work done** (planning and organising, making decisions, identifying and solving problems, creating and innovating, working in a digital world).

Professional and technical skills required for particular occupations—for example, in teaching, medicine, law and engineering—are determined by the professional bodies that represent them and expressed in accreditation standards and competencies. In addition, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Academic Standards Project (2010–2011) mapped ‘threshold learning outcomes’ (TLOs) across eight disciplinary groups, providing greater clarity around entry-level requirements for professional roles. An initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) undertaken by nominated Discipline Scholars in close consultation with their disciplinary communities, TLOs identified minimum-level discipline knowledge, discipline-specific skills and professional capabilities including values and professional attitudes. TLOs and The Core Skills Framework with attendant ‘performance features’ provided the project team with a shared language for describing employability skills, articulating their meanings and for better appreciating how they might be demonstrated.

**Employability skills and object-based learning**

OBL is an emerging approach to pedagogy in higher education in which material culture is actively integrated into teaching/learning as a stimulus for inquiry and catalyst of knowledge production. As illustrated in Figure 1, objects embody multiple meanings and ideas to trigger and engage processes of cognition. Grounded in experiential learning theory and informed by understandings about the construction of knowledge, OBL offers a dynamic, student-centred and multisensorial approach to education that is accommodating of different learning styles (Chatterjee, Hannan & Thomson, 2015).

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*Figure 1. Learning from objects*

(Source: https://digthatpic.wikispaces.com/Learning+with+pictures)
Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution Share-Alike 3.0 License
While teaching with objects in universities is not a new phenomenon, growing numbers of tertiary-level educators are turning to OBL as a strategy for enriching learning experiences. This has occurred particularly at institutions housing significant cultural collections, including in the United States through initiatives supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation (Goethals & Fabing, 2007) and more recently in the United Kingdom, notably at Oxford University (Vitelli, 2014) and University College London (UCL) (Chatterjee, 2011). In Australia, OBL is being championed by The University of Melbourne (UoM) where it has been recently endorsed as part of a university-wide agenda to deepen experiential engagement with knowledge (The University of Melbourne, 2015). This builds on the hugely successful academic programs established by Project Advisor Heather Gaunt in her role as Curator (Academic Programs) at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, UoM.

In these institutions, collaborations between university museum professionals and academics have opened up opportunities for innovative and inspiring curriculum renewal with established and emerging projects across and between disciplines suggesting the positive impact of OBL on the capacity of students to ‘see, think and talk’. Case studies have shown, for example, the disciplinary benefits of OBL in supporting the acquisition and dissemination of new understandings, and facilitating student learning of challenging and complex ideas, including so-called ‘threshold concepts’ and ‘troublesome knowledge’ (Duhs, 2010; Morgan, 2017). As observed by Hardie (2015, p. 37), the pedagogical value of OBL to disciplinary studies can also be seen in the ways in which new learnings resulting from engagement with objects are ‘anchored, transferred, synthesised and utilized in wider curriculum activities’.

The value of OBL to generic and technical skills development has also been documented. Notably, with respect to the development of observation skills and visual literacy (Alvord & Friedlander, 2012; Borromeo, Gaunt & Chiavaroli, 2014); the promotion of self-awareness, self-reflection and empathy (Karkabi & Cohen Castel, 2007; Gaufberg & Williams, 2011); and improvement of lateral, critical and creative thinking skills (Burchenal & Grohe, 2007). As a pedagogical method that is typically interactive, the power of OBL to advance communication, collaboration and teamwork has also been noted (Hannan, Chatterjee & Duhs, 2013).

In signalling promising possibilities for OBL as a strategy for addressing the employability agenda, these findings were a significant driver of the current research. However, observation of OBL in action, that demonstrated the power of OBL to energise teaching and enthuse and engage students in learning, was a chief motivating factor as well.

**Flinders University Art Museum**

Initiated by FUAM, objects used in the project were drawn from the museum’s collections housed on the university’s main campus at Bedford Park in Adelaide’s southern suburbs. Spanning the 15th to the 21st centuries, these holdings comprise some 8,000 works representing western and non-western practices, and various art historical traditions.

Strengths of the FUAM collections include 15th to 20th century prints by Australian and European artists; national and international conceptual work from the 1970s, known as the Post Object and Documentation collection; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art from mission days to the new millennium. Within these categories there are strongholds that offer specific insight and depth; for example, the early Papunya Boards, political prints and posters of late 20th century Australia, and botanical engravings struck from the original copper plates of Ferdinand Bauer (1760–1826). There are also smaller collections of paintings and drawings by Australian artists; Indigenous collections from Papua New Guinea, North America and Africa; and a body of Japanese
Ukiyo-e woodblock prints. As observed by one of the nation’s leading art historians Ian McLean (2003, p. 8), the key currents of FUAM’s holdings represent ‘three of the most important aspects of contemporary Australian art and life: The Aboriginal, the European and the post-war US cultures’.

While established to teach Art History at FU, the FUAM collections have broad pedagogical application. They represent portals into western and non-western cultures across time and place providing a mirror on the complex and contested nature of the world. They speak to myriad themes and issues, embody diverse materials and methods and signify different measures of value and meaning.

For this research, as seen in Figure 2, the FUAM collection of Aboriginal Australian art was of particular interest. This collection encoded and embodied perspectives, knowledges and experiences of Australia’s First Nations Peoples. The project team was interested to examine the extent to which OBL might help address calls in Australia’s higher education sector for the development of ‘Indigenous cultural competency’ (Universities Australia, 2011), including recommendations for non-Indigenous students to better understand issues confronting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives to be valued in academic teaching practices (Behrendt, Larkin, Griew & Kelly, 2012).

Figure 2. HIST students engaging with works from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collection, FUAM
Chapter 2: Project approach & data collection

Objective
The project aimed to explore OBL as a skills-based strategy to support academics in preparing students for employment success. In addition, it sought to lift the profile of university collections as teaching tools, give confidence to educators to work with cultural material with which they may not be familiar, and promote university museums as dynamic sites of transdisciplinary learning.

Approach
The project was a collaborative initiative spearheaded by FUAM and carried out by the Museum’s Director (and Project Co-leader) in partnership with academics—called Teaching Fellows in the context of the project—from the Flinders’ Schools of Medicine, History and International Relations; and Humanities and Creative Arts. An OBL expert from The University of Melbourne was engaged as Project Advisor and a wider Reference Group including representatives from the Flinders University Office of Indigenous Strategy and Engagement; Faculty of Education, Humanities and Law; Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching; and Careers and Employer Liaison Centre was established. A dedicated Project Manager appointed to the team was responsible for communications, administration and hands-on support to facilitate collections access required for delivery of each of the classes.

Academics involved had had prior contact with FUAM and, in some instances, had previously drawn on the collections for teaching purposes. They had varying degrees of knowledge about art. There were three subjects enlisted in the project, one from each of the schools noted above:

i. **MMED8302/8303 Psychiatry: Clinical Performance (MMED)**
    School of Medicine, led by Professor Michael Baigent
    Year 3, postgraduate program

ii. **HIST2015 History: Maps and Dreams—Indigenous–Settler Relations in Australian History (HIST)**
    School of History and International Relations, led by Dr Catherine Kevin
    Year 2/3, undergraduate program

iii. **VISA3005 Visual Arts: Mining the Museum (VISA)**
    School of Humanities and Creative Arts, led by Vicki Reynolds and Fiona Sherwin
    Year 3, undergraduate program.

The project was undertaken in two phases over a period of 12 months with an initial planning and preparation period conducted during semester one of 2016 followed by implementation in semester two of the same year. Ethics clearance was obtained before surveys and focus groups commenced.
Phase One: Planning and Preparation

Phase One involved identification of focus skills ahead of the design, review and development of associated learning activities and assessment tools, a process informed by *Employability: A Good Practice Guide* (Edith Cowan University, 2013).

Seven skill areas were identified for the study. These comprised six skills that were consistent across the subjects and one of which was unique to each, namely:

1. communicating effectively
2. working independently
3. cooperating and collaborating
4. acting ethically
5. recognising and utilising diverse perspectives (‘connecting across boundaries’)
6. gathering information through close observation and either
7. self-reflection (MMED), narrative building (HIST), or critical reflection (VISA).

Skill descriptors were determined by team members in discussion with reference to the *Core Skills Framework* and in consultation with an education specialist with expertise in graduate skills development and measurement of student achievement. For clarity, skills 5–7, which were seen as having distinctive applications to each of the disciplines, were mapped into respective ‘threshold learning outcomes’ (TLOs) as formulated by the ALTC Academic Standards Project and shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Focus skill descriptors for psychiatry, history and visual art

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILL DESCRIPTOR</th>
<th>THRESHOLD LEARNING OUTCOME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PSYCHIATRY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecting across boundaries</td>
<td>Have knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting human relationships; the psychological, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of patients and their families; and the interaction between humans and their social and physical environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Have developed the ability to perform an accurate physical and mental state examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
<td>Reflect on current skills, knowledge and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HISTORY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting across boundaries</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of Indigenous conceptual approaches to understanding the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Close and active looking, encountering the unknown, analysing historical ‘texts’ in the widest sense of the word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative building</td>
<td>Construct an evidence-based narrative in oral and written form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VISUAL ART</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting across boundaries</td>
<td>Recognise and reflect on social, cultural and ethical issues, and apply local and international perspectives to Visual Arts practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>[Close and active looking] Describe and interpret ideas in creative works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>Develop, research and evaluate ideas, concepts and processes through creative, critical and reflective thinking practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project team members then undertook the design, review and development of their subjects, deploying OBL strategies to embed explicit opportunities for development of identified skills (refer Appendices B, C & D). Teaching Fellows in HIST and VISA subjects invited feedback on new initiatives from teaching peers at their respective institutions during this phase. In MMED the project drew on Gaufberg and Williams’ (2011) previous work with medical students in the art museum designed to promote individual reflection, foster empathy and increase appreciation for the psychosocial context of patient experience.

In HIST, planning and preparation was augmented by a Flinders University ‘Teaching and Learning Innovation Grant’ which enabled the subject to be redeveloped from the ground up. During this period the Teaching Fellow spent regular days at FUAM to workshop and develop ideas, select works and refine logistics. Aiming to develop generic and discipline-specific skills without compromising subject-specific learning meant rethinking the thematic structure of the subject, reviewing time allocations for different teaching and learning activities, and designing new assessment techniques for the course.

**Phase Two: Implementation**

Phase Two saw the roll-out of each of the subjects and collection and analysis of data.

Logistics were a critical part of the implementation phase, namely in ensuring that objects had been retrieved from the FUAM collection stores and appropriate spaces were set up for optimal engagement with the artworks. As FUAM is not a dedicated teaching space, careful planning was necessary to ensure that workstations were in place for students, that objects were not at risk, and that day-to-day operations undertaken by FUAM staff beyond teaching and learning were not compromised as a result of project activity.

In preparing project participants for work in the museum, Teaching Fellows were provided with an induction to FUAM’s workplace practices and students were reminded of appropriate behaviours for working in the space.

For its duration, the project involved monthly team meetings between immediate project participants and the Project Advisor. During Phase One, these meetings helped generate and evaluate ideas around teaching activities that were ultimately taken into FUAM. Meetings during Phase Two provided an opportunity to troubleshoot any issues arising in the subjects, to feedback on what was working well and what might be expanded and/or improved on in the future.

In addition, Reference Group meetings held in May and October enabled project participants to report into a wider circle of interest, to solicit expertise and advice from within the group and incorporate contributions from different disciplinary perspectives. As an iterative research method, comments and other input from these meetings were seen as critical first steps to evolving OBL as a skills-based strategy for addressing employability beyond the life of the project.

**Data collection**

Primary methods of data collection included:

- student surveys, before and after OBL delivery (Appendix E)
- classroom observations
- a focus group discussion (Appendix F)
- student blogs.
Reflections about the project made by Teaching Fellows during regular face-to-face meetings were also documented as part of the research.

**Pre- and post- surveys**

Pre- and post- surveys collected data from the perceptions of participating students. These tools were modelled on a semi-structured questionnaire designed by University College London (UCL) (Sharp, Thomson, Chatterjee & Hannan, 2015) to explore the value of OBL within and between higher education disciplines as reported by students. In the current project, closed and open-ended questions were nuanced to target student understandings and command of the focus skills.

The pre-survey posed three questions. On a Likert scale (*minimal–excellent*), students were asked to rate their *understanding* (Q1) and *command* (Q2) of the seven target skills, and they were asked about their *expectations* for the subject (Q3).

The post-survey posed seven questions. The first two replicated (Q1) and (Q2) above, (Q3) asked about any other skills that students felt they had developed in the course of the subject, (Q4) asked students to describe how objects used in the subject had impacted on understanding of Indigenous Australia and/or other cultures, and on a scale (*strongly disagree*–*strongly agree*) (Q5) asked students to respond to the following statements:

- Object-based learning is an effective way of understanding what graduate skills/qualities are.
- Object-based learning is an effective way of improving graduate skills/qualities.
- The object(s) I worked with challenged me to think in new ways.
- The object(s) I worked with was/were a catalyst for developing an understanding of the Topic.
- I would recommend object-based learning to others.

Additionally, the post-survey asked (Q6) whether the experience of the subject matched expectations, and (Q7) invited any other comments.

Student participation in the project was optional. A project outline was available to them online via the Finders Learning Management System and was also provided by the Project Manager who emailed all students directly in an initial recruitment drive. Academics also invited students verbally in the lead-up to project implementation. Participation and agreement with respect to data collection (de-identified) was granted by each student in writing. The Project Manager administered the 10-minute pre- and 15-minute post-surveys face-to-face with students in June and November, respectively. Academics were not present at this time. The post-survey was completed by MMED students at the end of their one-off session, and HIST and VISA students toward the end of their subject. Table 2 indicates the number who opted not to complete the post-survey, including three students in MMED and five in VISA, which was accounted for in the data analysis below.
### Table 2. Survey participation rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRE-SURVEY</th>
<th>POST-SURVEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMED</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISA</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Observation

Teaching Fellows closely monitored their classes, sharing observations in monthly project team meetings including on class dynamics and the level and nature of student engagement. These observations were recorded during monthly team meetings and collated thematically at the end of the project. Observations of class activity were also made by a Reference Group member who observed one OBL session in each discipline.

### Focus groups with students

The Project Manager conducted a focus group interview with seven VISA students at the end of semester two after formal teaching had concluded. The interview explored student perceptions of OBL with attention paid to skills and strategies they felt they had learned in the subject that they would take into their practice as graduates. Despite attempts, it was not possible to run a focus group with MMED students as they were preoccupied with imminent milestone exams, or with HIST students who were also concerned about assessment.

### Student blogs

History students were required to write three blogs during the semester, reflecting on their experiences in the subject. Instructions were explicit, asking students to think about the role of objects in their learning of subject matter and development of skills.

*Keep a journal of your encounters with objects, to encourage you to reflect on the ways in which your skills in narrative building, team-work and communication, and your cross-cultural and historical understanding have developed during the process.*

Blogs were not a requirement of MMED or VISA subjects.
Data analysis

Survey data were collated by a Research Assistant external to the project team. To look for initial patterns in the student responses, quantitative data were summarised and graphed. Statistical methods were then applied to Likert scale data on Q1 and Q2 to explore apparent differences in the findings. Qualitative data from the post-survey were analysed for themes. Thematic analysis was also undertaken with observation, focus group and blog data. Themes were generated by individual team members and then reviewed and discussed collectively. A word cloud (Figure 3) produced with the HIST data provided an initial snapshot of student responses regarding the perceived impact of objects on learning.

To explore and quantify the differences between the pre- and post-survey responses to Q1 and Q2, each survey item response was assigned a value based on where it fell in the Likert scale categories. A value of 1 was assigned to the lowest category (minimal) and a value of 5 to the highest category (excellent). The Likert scale survey responses were then analysed using the Mann–Whitney U Test to explore the difference in the pre- and post-survey responses for each cohort. This test generates a mean rank for the pre- and post-survey responses for each survey item, and then compares the differences between the mean rank to determine statistical significance between the two sets of responses. This test was selected over a chi-square due to its robustness against unbalanced sample sizes, as was the case in the MMED and VISA cohorts in this research. Pre- and post-responses were considered significantly different to one another if the p-value fell below 0.05. Analyses were performed in IBM Statistics SPSS v23. Missing data were excluded on a case-wise basis. For summary findings of statistical methods refer Appendix G.
Chapter 3: Outputs and findings

Outputs
Outputs of the project included:
- three OBL case studies.
- survey data from 125 students and summary findings.
- observation data and student focus group feedback.
- a ‘working’ toolkit of OBL resources currently comprising:
  - OBL factsheet
  - Notes for educators wishing to work with FUAM
  - Questionnaire to guide new OBL projects
  - Guidelines for referencing visual objects in academic work
  - OBL workshop template
- a website, in development, housing the toolkit, case studies and link to project report http://artmuseum.flinders.edu.au/academic-programs/
- six conference presentations (Appendix I).

Key project findings
Survey data, observations of OBL in action and student reflections yielded from the focus group and blogs provided insights on the value of OBL as a pedagogical strategy to support, enhance and advance employability skills in students. These included student perspectives on their ‘understanding’ and ‘command’ of skills for success in the workplace as a result of OBL intervention, as well as insights on how such skills are engaged and experienced across disciplines and how they might be applied in the workplace.

Skill understanding
Pre-survey data collected on Q1 indicated that students across the disciplines were generally very confident in their understanding of the target skills, including knowing what the skill constructs entail and how they find expression. In most cases, more than 75 per cent of the sample across all subjects reported a ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ understanding of the meaning and nature of the skills in pre-survey data, with exceptions in MMED on two skills—’connect across boundaries’ and ‘self-reflection’—and in HIST on three skills ‘connect across boundaries’, ‘observation’ and ‘narrative building’. Post-survey data on these same measures (refer Table 3), which showed an increase in the proportion of students reporting ‘good’ or ‘excellent’, suggested improved understandings in these domains in both the MMED and HIST cohorts. In the VISA cohort, an apparent drop was noted in the relative percentage of students reporting ‘good’ to ‘excellent’ understanding on two skills—‘communicate effectively’ and ‘work independently’—raising the possibility that OBL had revealed to some students their shortcomings in how they had originally understood the constructs.

Statistical analysis used to explore these findings further showed there was no statistically significant difference in the mean ranks for the MMED or VISA cohorts. For HIST, however, there were statistically significant differences between the pre- and post- survey response sets for the skills ‘working independently’ and ‘valuing ethical behaviour’ ($U = 950.5$, p-value = 0.043; and $U = 918.5$, p-value = 0.023, respectively). There were also highly statistically significant differences between the pre- and post- score for ‘connecting across boundaries’, ‘narrative building’, and ‘observation’ ($U = 620$, p-value > 0.000; $U = 534.5$, p-value > 0.000; and $U = 631.5$, p-value > 0.000, respectively).
Table 3. Percentage of discipline cohort self-assessing understanding of skills as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ pre- and post-survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>MMED</th>
<th>HIST</th>
<th>VISA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRE SURVEY</td>
<td>POST SURVEY</td>
<td>PRE SURVEY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively</td>
<td>N = 58</td>
<td>N = 55</td>
<td>N = 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work independently</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate and collaborate</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act ethically</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect across boundaries</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative building</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Number of respondents

Skill command

On the ‘command’ measure investigated in Q2, perceived skill proficiency in pre-survey data varied across the cohorts (refer Table 4). Comparing these findings with responses to Q1 above revealed a strong correlation between students’ reported understanding and command of the skills in question. In the same table, comparison of pre- and post- survey data presents a mixed picture of the proportion of students reporting ‘good’ to ‘excellent’: for MMED there were apparent percentage gains in five of the seven skills, for HIST in six of the seven skills and for VISA there were apparent gains in two skills and decline in five.

Statistical analysis of these results showed there were no statistically significant differences in the mean ranks for the VISA cohort. In MMED there was a statistically significant difference between the mean rank scores for ‘self-reflection’ (U = 1214, p-value = 0.017) indicating that there was an increase in the selection of categories at the higher end of the Likert scale (i.e. excellent) in the post-survey responses. In HIST there was a highly significant statistical difference between the mean rank scores for ‘connecting across boundaries’, ‘narrative building’, and ‘observation’ (U = 796.5, p-value = 0.001; U = 659.0, p-value = > 0.000; and U = 766.5, p-value = 0.001, respectively). In HIST ‘valuing ethical behaviour’ and ‘collaborating’ was also revealed to have statistically significant mean rank scores between the pre- and post- survey responses (U = 901.5, p-value = 0.015; and U = 962, p-value = 0.048, respectively). These findings indicate the positive impact of OBL on skill development for MMED and HIST students in these domains.
Table 4. Percentage of discipline cohort self-assessing command of skills as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ pre and post survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>MMED PRE SURVEY</th>
<th>MMED POST SURVEY</th>
<th>HIST PRE SURVEY</th>
<th>HIST POST SURVEY</th>
<th>VISA PRE SURVEY</th>
<th>VISA POST SURVEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate effectively</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work independently</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperate and collaborate</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act ethically</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect across boundaries</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative building</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical reflection</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = Number of respondents

Engaging and experiencing skills

The impact of OBL on skill command as captured in the Likert scales in Q1 and Q2 was reflected in the frequency and nature of student responses to open-ended questions in the post-surveys, in focus group data and in the blogs written for HIST. In addition, these data provided valuable reflections on the ways in which skills were engaged and exercised through OBL interventions and on how skills were articulated and experienced by participants in the study.

The MMED cohort

The art museum tour undertaken by MMED students as a one-off, small group 90-minute session, invited a reflective exploration of randomly selected works from the FUAM collection, including paintings by Indigenous artists. Participants overwhelmingly reported the value of the exercise in enabling them to better appreciate the importance of ‘self-reflection’ to their personal and professional lives—in understanding the biases of their own perspectives and of others’ points of view. One student reported an ‘improved appreciation of different ways of thinking’, another wrote that the session ‘opened my eyes to different ways of seeing’.

MMED students also widely observed how the art museum tour ‘helped develop empathy and rapport’, enabled them to experience the imperative of ‘listening in building connections with others’, and to recognise the risks of judging people on ‘face value’. Indeed, MMED Teaching Fellow Michael Baigent observed that on hearing alternate views on the same artwork students heightened their awareness of how empathy for others is not derived at an instantaneous or superficial encounter.

On cross-cultural understanding—explicitly explored in post-survey Q4—some MMED students reflected that the art museum tour had provided a lens on Indigenous narratives and perspectives, with one student stating ‘I would have loved to have learned more about this’. Largely, however, MMED students were ambivalent about the impact of the session on this domain.
**The HIST cohort**

HIST students worked closely with a small selection of prints and paintings from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection over the course of a full semester. Assessment in the subject required them to draw on objects in both oral and written tasks. Students in this cohort consistently reported that working with objects opened up new ways of approaching history stating, for example, that it helped reveal methods to ‘seek and interpret multiple perspectives on historical events’ and build confidence in ‘reading art and other material culture as historical evidence’. One student reported that OBL helped in the discovery of ‘new meanings and connections’, another cited the ‘value of objects in constructions of the past’, a third student wrote, ‘the use of objects in this topic has improved my ability to think critically, pose questions and connect ideas.’

In particular, HIST students reported that active and deep engagement with Aboriginal art had helped them better recognise the importance of Indigenous voices in studies of Australian history and more deeply appreciate the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal people and their communities in the 21st century. One student wrote:

> Using objects has demonstrated to me the incongruity between western and indigenous concepts of land, culture and history. It has expanded my appreciation of non-conventional historical sources and compelled me to re-evaluate my concept of colonial impact and how the story of Australian history might be told.

Coupled with the subject readings, engagement with selected works also widely promoted a view of Indigenous culture as vibrant and living, connecting ‘past, present and future’.

Wider insights on the experience of OBL from the perspective of HIST students were gleaned from the student blogs. These reflections indicated that Aboriginal artworks facilitated conversations around ideas about knowledge and power, about cultural roles and knowledge transmission in Indigenous communities, and the risks associated with sharing knowledge in colonial contexts. For a number of students, one of whom described herself as ‘a visual learner’, the impact of encountering visual depiction was described as ‘more powerful’ than the experience of reading a written account.

In the blogs students also explored the idea of historical evidence. They raised questions during the OBL sessions about the status of artistic representations of events in the absence of other evidence, as well as the reasons why Indigenous people may or may not choose to speak of, or in other ways represent painful aspects of their histories. This built on more general discussions about changing historical research practices with the expanding interest of historians in subjects that cannot be comprehensively explored in the official archive. One student described an encounter like this:

> During a seminar we had the opportunity to make contact with Queenie McKenzie’s artwork entitled ‘Osmond Creek’. This piece allowed me, and the rest of the class, to have a revelation regarding how we interpret sources and how to find their intended meanings. … Looking at this source you don’t know exactly what the art piece is telling you, but the same could be said for sources like journal articles, or primary sources like letters and journal
entries. How are these sources different? When they could be riddled with bias, Western influence, persuasion, lies or even be manipulated accounts based purely on opinions. When I thought about it this way it was as if a light bulb went off in my head.

HIST students also reflected on their place in the Australian nation, keen to explore and interrogate their relationships to dominant family and national narratives, Indigenous knowledges and cultural institutions such as the South Australian Museum.

Collectively, non-Indigenous Australians are guilty of genocide and land theft. But what does it mean if my own ancestors were active participants in that abhorrence? What does that mean for me as a person who wants to right the wrongs of the past? Can I be an active participant or am I more suited to the sideline? Overall, this painting made me contemplate some very real questions and issues surrounding my own identity and the history of this nation, and how they are both intrinsically intertwined.

This kind of uncomfortable self-reflection and consideration of responsibility suggests a significant shift in the relationship between knowing aspects of settler-colonial history and experiencing an encounter with an Indigenous artist’s rendering of that history. The presence of the object prompted a deeper questioning of the connections between the past and the present for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The VISA cohort

In the comments shared by VISA students the value of OBL to the development of ‘critical’, ‘lateral’ and ‘analytical’ thinking skills was emphasised most. One student stated, for example, ‘OBL was great for the development of my research skills … access to the FUAM collection resulted in greater confidence in using collections generally in research.’

VISA students also widely reported that OBL had expanded their knowledge of Indigenous art practices and meanings, and revealed the cultural, social and economic significance of art production for Aboriginal people and their communities. One student wrote that OBL had led to a ‘deeper understanding of practices and materials employed by Aboriginal artists and heightened awareness of the role art plays in connecting Aboriginal people to their land’. Another student reflected ‘OBL showed me just how important art is to a whole community and how it can change lives’.

Across the cohorts

As indicated in data collected on Q5 (refer Table 5), more than 85 per cent of all students ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that OBL interventions had challenged them to think differently. This was echoed in the qualitative data with students stating, for example, that their engagements with the FUAM collections through a range of structured activities encouraged them to ‘look at things closely’ and ‘from different angles’, and to ‘think outside the box’. Close to 70 per cent of the total cohort ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that their experiences of OBL provided a means of reflecting on skills and putting them into action, and that they would recommend OBL to others for this purpose. In the qualitative data, students across the cohorts consistently reflected that OBL had been a positive experience, stating that it was ‘fun’, ‘great’ and, as one MMED student put it, ‘interesting and unconventional in a good way’.
Students were less convinced that OBL activities had helped them in ‘identifying’ graduate skills, in discovering or recognising what they are. The project team observed that this underscored the very important point that students are not necessarily cognisant of the kinds of skills that will be required of them in future roles at work. As noted by Teaching Fellow Michael Baigent in the case of MMED:

*Awareness of the importance of the skills/qualities covered in this project, many of which are quite abstract concepts to the student at this stage, only becomes apparent to our students once they are working in the situation. As students, they don’t know what they don’t know.*

**Table 5. Percentage of students of total disciplinary cohort that ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ on the value of OBL graduate skills.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-survey Q5</th>
<th>MMED N = 55</th>
<th>HIST N = 48</th>
<th>VISA N = 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBL is an effective way of identifying what graduate skills/qualities are</strong></td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBL is an effective way of exercising graduate skills/qualities</strong></td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The object(s) I worked with challenged me to think in new ways</strong></td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OBL challenged me to reflect on my skills</strong></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I would recommend OBL to others</strong></td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = Number of respondents*

**Extrapolating to the world of work**

Students provided rich reflections on how their experiences of OBL advanced workplace skills, making clear links between skills exercised in the subjects and imagined future roles. MMED students reported that OBL had helped them better recognise the importance of communication and self-reflection in building rapport with colleagues and patients and better appreciate that colleagues and patients will inevitably see and experience things differently from themselves. For one student, OBL triggered thinking about the integration of Indigenous knowledges in medical training, hospitals and therapies. Students also reported that OBL had helped ‘build confidence for presenting in a professional manner’, it had made them ‘think on the spot’ and got them ‘out of the comfort zone’.

Many HIST students were undertaking the subject as part of an education degree and on a career path toward teaching. Alternative professions also ‘often chosen by history graduates’ include law, journalism, librarianship, politics and public policy, among other things (ALTC – History –, 2010 p. 9) HIST students wrote about the value of OBL to the development of workplace skills applicable to any of these contexts including listening and speaking, cooperation and collaboration, ‘deep’ thinking and critical analysis. Students also cited OBL as a mode of instruction they would use themselves as teachers, to enthuse and engage students with processes of learning. One student wrote:

*I feel learning in this way is a strategy I can take into the classroom when I teach history. Having a connection with the objects allows for a much more*
involved sense of learning that ‘traditional’ instruction does not. It also allows for a more expressive and creative medium of study, focusing more on our interpretation and understanding of something rather than meaningless dates and factual knowledge to be highlighted on a page.

VISA students reflected that OBL had equipped them with insights and skills they would use as professional artists. They reported that it had helped them appreciate historical objects as research tools for the development of their own practice and given them hands-on experience of the professional behaviours and protocols for working with museum collections. Students reflected that OBL had helped them in ‘developing exhibition strategies for presenting their works’, in ‘understanding the importance of relationships between works when displayed’, and in ‘developing skills to communicate ideas to audiences both visually and in text’. One student stated:

*Our profession is centred around objects. We are object makers, therefore it is vital, critical to our learning as students, artists, critics, makers to have access to such objects. It is fundamental part of our learning development and growth as students, artists and academics.*

**Summary findings**

Findings indicated OBL was an effective and adaptive strategy for engaging tertiary-level students with employability skills. As evidenced by the data, it provided a platform for students to encounter, exercise and reflect on their skills and opportunities to develop and advance them. Furthermore, findings showed OBL stimulated new ways of thinking and looking at the world. Most powerfully, MMED data reflected the value of art museum collections as reflective triggers for medical learners; and HIST data revealed the value of Aboriginal art in bringing students into meaningful dialogue with perspectives, knowledges and experiences of Australia’s First Nations Peoples.

**How the project used and advanced existing knowledge**

This project addressed the employability skills program priority as identified by the former OLT. As repeatedly observed, most recently by Hicks (2017), despite the efforts of universities to prepare their students for the wider world of work, graduates are failing to meet the expectations of employers. In exploring OBL as a strategy for engaging, exercising and developing graduate skills, this project has made a contribution to resources, provided inspiration for curriculum renewal and has brought a fresh angle to scholarship on the topic.

Literature on graduate attributes points to practical concerns affecting the uptake of the employability agenda by teaching staff (Green, Hammer & Star, 2009; Jackson, 2014). In both instances the confidence and capacity of academics to engage with unfamiliar methods and outcomes within the increasingly pressured environment of higher education are cited as particularly problematic. This project explicitly provided experience and support for academics in creating teaching programs that utilise OBL, and continues to contribute to the confidence and capacity of academics to deliver OBL through online resources and CoP.

As Scott (2016) and others have shown, most value is derived from an activity when it is linked to assessment. Others have argued that to advance workplace skills in students, it is vital to embed employability more explicitly in statements of assessment methods, course handbooks,
workbooks and other curriculum material (e.g. Bennett, Richardson & MacKinnon, 2016). Through its design and delivery, this project supported academics in making these assessment connections and more explicitly communicating skills-based ambitions for their subjects.

To date much of the literature on museum-based education has focused on primary and secondary learners and lifelong learning by the wider public, with ‘relatively fewer texts focussing on the tertiary perspective’ (Chatterjee, Hannan & Thomson, 2015, p. 1). By explicitly exploring the nexus of OBL and graduate skills, the project has added weight to claims about the positive impact of OBL in higher education contexts.

Findings from the MMED cohort replicated the earlier work of Gaufberg and Williams (2011), substantiating conclusions that art promotes meaningful reflection among groups of medical learners and that art museum tours are readily adaptable to different themes and issues that will inevitably confront students in their future lives as doctors.

Findings from the HIST cohort—that engagement with Aboriginal art meaningfully expanded students’ understandings of Indigenous perspectives, knowledges and experiences—builds on observations at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, UoM, where, as part of the museum’s academic program, undergraduates encountered an exhibition of works by Aboriginal artists from the Kimberley. As noted by Gaunt (2016, para 30), ‘What students might assume as homogenous experience of Aboriginality and “sameness” in life stories, was turned on its head when they explored the diverse life experiences of the 13 artists in the exhibition, and the different ways they expressed their life narratives and culture through paintings and interviews’.

**Disciplinary and interdisciplinary linkages that emerged**

Interdisciplinary collaboration and reflective practice developed via monthly project team meetings and email exchange. Team members showed great flexibility and openness to opportunities and synergies, taking risks beyond their discipline. Suggestions for guest lecturers, temporary exhibitions, articles, videos and other resources were regularly made for use in each other’s subjects.

Convening joint Reference Group/team meetings following both workshops in May and October contributed to interdisciplinary and strategic engagement in the project. It also provided a useful forum to discuss Indigenous content, including ways in which to amplify the artist’s voice. The pedagogy of ‘encountering the unknown’ was also discussed, including strategies of ‘unpacking’ and taking responsibility to ‘repack’ difficult issues, including by offering resources for support. Noting that developing sensitivity is an employability skill, the term ‘resilient sensitivity’ was coined during these interdisciplinary discussions.

The project generated more engagement with other Indigenous staff at FU, including an Indigenous PhD student and lecturer in Indigenous Health, who commented that the project was working in line with the Cultural Safety Policy for Flinders NT.

The project team greatly benefitted from the voluntary input of Research Higher Degree students at FU, many of whom aspire to become academics. Two of them used OBL to promote cross-disciplinary perspectives for their innovative teaching activity as part of Flinders Academic Internship Program, with 20 PhD students training to become academics. Ongoing teaching using OBL in FU’s Alice Springs-based Centre for Remote Health is planned.
As a result of the project, team members were invited to join bids for two interdisciplinary internal grants, one for Reinventing Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Science and Engineering and another for an Innovation Partnership Seed initiative led by Drama. Although these were not funded, writing the grants built further links and knowledge of OBL across additional disciplines beyond the original scope of the project.

Factors critical to the success of the project approach
A number of factors were critical to the success of the project, including primarily the appointment of a Project Manager as the existing FUAM team could not absorb additional workload. Ten monthly project team meetings were invaluable in promoting communication and exchange, including ongoing project feedback and review. Notably, team members prioritised monthly meetings in very busy schedules, including participating by Skype or teleconference. Project Adviser Heather Gaunt attended two workshops at FU and four team members made separate visits hosted by her at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, UoM, which stimulated quantum leaps in members’ thinking and approaches to their subjects. Workshops with visiting speakers helped promote the project and also focused energy, providing windows to meet with leaders in the Faculty of Science and Engineering and senior FU management. Collaboration between FUAM and academic staff was essential, including the input of FUAM Collections staff who provided necessary support for accessing the collections and logistical assistance in retrieving and returning the works to the collection stores. Widespread support from other colleagues, as well as School and Faculty leadership, was important to building momentum for OBL more broadly.

Factors that impeded project success
The project team underestimated the challenge of the research required to explore the impact of OBL on more than one focus skill across multiple disciplines. The team also underestimated the level of resourcing required to deliver the website as originally envisioned. With heavy workloads faced by Teaching Fellows, challenges to delivering OBL also emerged. In some instances, for example, they would have benefitted from research time to gain a depth of knowledge of the objects that was not always afforded due to other academic and administrative demands. Timing was subject to external constraints for the MMED and VISA subjects, which impacted on FUAM forward planning. As objects often take at least 15 minutes to retrieve, 15 minutes to return to collection stores, and double that if two people are required to move the work, the need for careful forward planning was highlighted. MMED students had limited time in one-off 90-minute sessions. This provoked further thought about how to stage OBL throughout the course to enshrine employability skills in a progressive manner.

Insights for implementation in a variety of institutions or locations
In Australia, more than half the nation’s universities hold cultural and scientific collections. Key recommendations of Cinderella collections: university museums and collections (1996, p. 5)—The Report of the DCA/AV-CC University Museums Project Committee—called for better utilisation of these resources in teaching, learning and research. More than two decades later, the possibilities for cultural and scientific collections in academia are still largely untapped (Simpson, 2014). This project provides practical insights for their use in higher education contexts from the perspective of a small university art museum, including some thoughts on sustainability. These reflections add to Cain’s (2010) recommendations regarding the promotion of OBL at universities from the point of view of a university tutor.
Managing expectations

OBL is a collaborative enterprise: academic staff interested in this approach need time to plan and prepare for lessons, while the museum must have dedicated staff to facilitate the partnership. Critically, both parties need a very clear understanding of pedagogical goals and of what each of the parties can deliver. Although curators and/or collection managers may support classes, OBL is not an opportunity to handball teaching responsibilities to the museum. Communication is key.

Planning and preparation are time-consuming, but once set up classes can be easily replicated. Museum staff may be able to assist with the selection of objects but this should not be assumed. Educators should also be aware that not all objects are comprehensively documented and may require additional research. Museum staff will need to advise availability and suitability of selected works for teaching/handling and confirm capacity to retrieve/return them from collection stores, which may not be onsite.

Flexible learning spaces

OBL in a gallery or a dedicated study room? Both can work well, however, capacity to accommodate classes alongside other demands on the museum is critical and infrastructure, including seating and aids to display works, may also be required. Room to move around the space to observe objects from different angles is helpful, as is flexibility to configure spaces in different ways to accommodate different kinds of tasks and class sizes.

Scheduling and documentation

An annual calendar spreadsheet (which the project adapted from the UoM) to inform planning and track object use and statistics was invaluable and can form a database of all subjects drawing on OBL approaches. Projects should be documented to share methods and findings with the wider CoP.

Mechanisms for sustainability

For a small university museum, managing the demands of OBL alongside other scheduled work is onerous. Embedding OBL more deeply into the pedagogical culture of the university though OBL workshops and a toolkit enabling ‘self-service’ are two ways of addressing this.

OBL workshops build confidence in academic staff by familiarising participants with the collections, modelling and generating inter-disciplinary activities and demonstrating that deep knowledge of the objects themselves is not a prerequisite for success. Workshops illuminate contexts and possibilities for teaching, enable discussion of practicalities and logistics, and provide experience in object handling.

A simple ‘toolkit’ can further help educators in adopting OBL as a teaching mode. Such a kit would ideally include a planning template to clarify session/subject aims and outcomes, and proposed assessment methods; information regarding collections’ access and clear guidelines to searching collection catalogues/databases to make an initial selection from the collections; guidelines for safe working with objects; instructions on booking an OBL session; and information about what to expect on the day, what to do if last-minute changes are required and who to contact if necessary.
Chapter 4: Project impact, dissemination, evaluation

**Impact**
The project made a significant impact in a relatively short timeframe and despite its modest scale. It broadened the repertoire available to educators to embed employability skills using an innovative pedagogical approach and contributed to the growing literature on OBL in higher education. Every indication is that work enabled by the OLT seed funding will continue to grow exponentially, including through the OLT project database, which is used extensively as a reference and resource for the higher education teaching and learning community in Australia (Hicks, 2017, p. 6). The scope and nature of project impact is summarised below. Also refer to the project impact plan or IMPEL (Appendix J).

**Resource development and curriculum renewal**
The project provided resources and effected curriculum renewal in each of the three subjects, creating more explicit connections between curriculum and professional settings than previously. As outlined in Chapter 2:

- **HIST**—*Maps and Dreams: Indigenous Settler relations in Australian History*—used Indigenous holdings from the FUAM collection as a springboard to a new approach, and selected works to inform course structure. This resulted in the strengthening of Indigenous content as well as an overhaul of themes, teaching and learning activities, assessment and recommended reading and other resources such as video.
- **MMED**—*Clinical Performance 3A/3B (Psychiatry)*—expanded from OBL delivery with one tutorial group in previous years to all 11 groups for semester two 2016, and five other staff were trained and involved in teaching at FUAM.
- **VISA**—*Mining the Museum* (Creative Arts)—was refreshed through greater Indigenous content and new assessment tasks more closely aligned with professional practice needs.

**Benefits for participating students**
Participating students perceived benefits of OBL on skill development (discussed above), with the vast majority reporting they would recommend it to others. In addition, they reported that the format of the classes was interesting and deeply engaging in ways that standard lectures and seminars are not.

**Adoption of ideas and practices at participating institutions**

- At FU new subjects in Education, History, and Women’s Studies have incorporated OBL for the first time in 2017. Expressions of interest in OBL have been received by FUAM from colleagues in Creative Writing, History and Law, and from the Flinders Centre for Science Education in the 21st Century.
- At Adelaide College of the Arts OBL curriculum and pedagogy has been expanded across a number of studio subjects and within Art History, Painting and Printmaking, thereby broadening the circle of interest.
The OBL CoP developed as an Australian first, grown from 32 members in October 2015 to over 220 members currently, including from three countries. The CoP aims to promote interdisciplinary collaboration and exchange.

**Strengthening partnerships**

- The project modelled a unique approach to cross-disciplinary engagement with positive outcomes for ongoing collaboration between project participants.
- Linkages between FUAM and its immediate academic community continue to expand with opportunities for four new OBL collaborations identified to date;
- Through the project FUAM has strengthened connections with tertiary institutions more broadly, including internationally.

**Valuing the university museum**

- Drawing on 170 objects from the FUAM collection, the project showcased the university museum as a site of transdisciplinary teaching and learning and made the possibilities of art in higher education much more visible.
- Findings from the research have contributed to the literature of OBL and growing recognition of university museums as significant platforms for teaching and learning in the 21st century.

**Dissemination**

Various dissemination strategies (Appendices H–K) were adopted, the most successful of which were the workshops that offered participants a ‘hands-on’ OBL experience. These introduced the concept of OBL, modelled OBL activities and then required participants to work in pairs/groups to develop a student task around an object they had not previously encountered. Workshops generated deep participant engagement and immediate and palpable excitement. They demonstrated to educators that it was not necessary to have detailed knowledge of the objects themselves to develop meaningful and effective learning activities for their students to enhance employability skills.

The success of the OBL workshops at FU has seen them integrated into the Flinders Foundations of University Teaching (FFOUT) Programs, which are mandatory for newly appointed academic staff as a means of promoting experiential teaching practice. As a result, OBL will have ongoing and widespread exposure and, with ongoing resourcing, is set to become strongly embedded at the institution as a way of teaching.

Other forms of dissemination to date include conference papers and media with further work to promote findings from the project to follow. At the time of writing this report Project Co-leaders had received an invitation to share research with IRU Innovation Case Study Collection https://iru.knack.com/national-innovation-case-study-collection/#home/ and to contribute to an edited volume on learning through collections, which has already received an expression of interest from academic publisher, Routledge.
Project evaluation

As a seed initiative The Power of Things did not require a formal evaluation, however, activities and outcomes were tracked and assessed by the project team in monthly meetings. At its conclusion, measures used to evaluate the success or otherwise of the initiative included reflections on the extent to which the project had met its stated aims, was managed and perceived by others. In this regard, Project Advisor Heather Gaunt—Australia’s leading OBL practitioner possessing five years’ experience with over 8,000 students at UoM and direct experience from and knowledge of OBL developments worldwide—provided useful points of reference for benchmarking the initiative against OBL activities elsewhere.

Project success was reflected in curriculum renewal afforded by the project, positive student responses to OBL interventions and new interdisciplinary links that were built, including with more Indigenous educators. Teaching Fellows reported that the project had extended their skills and confidence in the use of OBL to better embed employability in their teaching practice. These positive outcomes were enabled by high-level project administration, including management of a tight budget. In creating the foundation for ongoing collaboration between FUAM and the Teaching Fellows, and in providing model for other academic staff to engage with the university museum, the project was also considered a success.

Feedback from colleagues external to the project was received via workshops and presentations, including during the 2016 Teaching and Learning Week at FU and the Open Classroom session. Comments from these engagements were overwhelmingly positive with OBL seen as ‘unique’ in its capacity to bring ‘depth’ and ‘richness’ to learning and to ‘meaningfully promote both skills and knowledge acquisition’. Workshops and other engagements led to a stronger relationship with the Flinders Centre for Innovation in Learning and Teaching (CILT) being forged. This included with several members of the Education Design Team who will be able to draw on OBL as another methodology in their repertoire when working with educators more broadly across FU.

Evidence about the impact of the project and value to the sector

The IMPEL (Appendix J) maps current and anticipated changes and effects of the project in the short and medium term. For the period to date, this information is captured in Table 6 drawing on Hicks’ schema (2017, p. 71).

The value of the project to the sector has been reflected most strongly in the level and scope of interest it has generated, including internationally, as seen in the recent invitation to share project outcomes in the United Kingdom at UCL and subsequent invitation from UCL colleagues to contribute to a forthcoming book exploring perspectives of OBL on health and wellbeing. The project has also been of great interest to the membership of University Art Museums Australia (UAMA) with Project Co-leader Fiona Salmon to continue to provide national leadership in the area as current Chair of this group, and through affiliations with Museums Australia (MA), and International Council of Museums, Committee for University Museums and Collections.

Project value to the sector has also been demonstrated by the uptake of OBL by academics in new subjects in History and Visual Arts at FU and TAFE/Adelaide College of the Arts respectively. Additionally, Teaching Fellow Michael Baigent has reported significant interest in the ‘Personal Response Tour’ among psychiatry colleagues locally and nationally, including at the University of Adelaide where they are considering its introduction. A retired psychiatrist, who is also a tour guide at the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA), has attended one of the more recent MMED
sessions at FUAM with a view to better understanding the value of the self-reflective exercise and promoting it to AGSA as a program for medical students at neighbouring tertiary institutions.

As stated by Bennett, Richardson and Mackinnon (2016, p. 9), ‘impediments to the development of employability must be overcome if graduates are to commence their careers with maximum momentum’. As indicated in this project, OBL represents one intervention at the curriculum level for addressing this need. Simultaneously, the project has revealed to participants the value of working collectively and across disciplines in developing a shared approach to the employability challenge, specifically in how to hone a skills-based strategy for different aims and objectives. Educators who are committed to employability development, but who need assistance to engage students and others, can confidently look to OBL for inspiration.

Table 6. Evidence of impact

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Area of impact</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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| 1. addressing significant national educational issues | • addressed graduate employability  
• addressed Indigenous cultural competence |
| 2. informing policy development and practice | • presentations and representations to key policy stakeholders at Flinders University  
• integration of OBL into subjects  
• informed resources to support renewed practice in universities  
• contributed to deeper understanding of employability |
| 3. promoting and supporting change | • sector-wide engagement, including professional organisations and university groups and CoP (220 members in 3 countries)  
• uptake by participating institutions  
• media coverage and social media  
• supported change through developing resources to embed employability development in curriculum |
| 4. exploring, developing and implementing innovation | • explored and developed OBL interventions that were discipline-specific while modelling a pedagogical approach that is transferable to other disciplines and that invites transdisciplinary engagements |
| 5. developing leadership capabilities | • 12 invited presentations outside home institution to national and international discipline specific conferences and general university learning forums  
• FU Teaching and Learning Innovation Grant (2015) awarded for OBL  
• Teaching Fellows committed OBL champions |

Based on Hicks (2017)

**Future directions**

FUAM is committed to further exploration of OBL as a transferable skills-based strategy to address employability within and beyond FU. This will involve new engagements with academic staff, ongoing efforts to embed OBL interventions more deeply at the university and further development of resources to support the work of educators wanting to adopt the approach. Capacity to deliver these activities will need to be secured.

Mechanisms to encourage and equip educators to engage with the collections independently, as discussed in the body of this report, will alleviate some of the associated pressures on museum staff and help establish a sustainable model for OBL in the future. The upcoming launch of the FUAM online collections catalogue will give students and staff digital access to the FUAM collections for the first time, enabling them to search museum holdings and make preliminary selections for teaching and learning from electronic devices anywhere in the world.
Dissemination of project findings will continue via TAFE SA, UoM and UAMA, as well as through project team and reference group networks. Exchange of OBL expertise with UoM, Oxford University and UCL, all of whom adopted OBL in advance of FUAM, will continue.

Given the pressing need for predominantly non-Indigenous academics to bring Indigenous voices from the margins of teaching into the centre, thereby helping to address recommendations regarding ‘Indigenous cultural competency’ (Universities Australia, 2011), ongoing work with FUAM’s Indigenous collections, Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators will be a priority.

There are also tantalising possibilities for FUAM in the area of innovation. According to the Australian Government’s *Developing Innovation Skills Guide* (2009, p. 7) multiple skills and capabilities are required in this newly emphasised domain, including, for example, dealing with ambiguity, problem-solving, cross-disciplinary and lateral thinking, risk-taking and improvising. Future research on the value of OBL in the advancement of these skills in higher education students strikes the project team as worthwhile.
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Appendix A

Certification by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent)
I certify that all parts of the final report for this OLT grant/fellowship (remove as appropriate) provide an accurate representation of the implementation, impact and findings of the project, and that the report is of publishable quality.

Date: 27/02/2018

Professor Andrew Parkin
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
The Flinders University of South Australia
Appendix B

Case Study: Maps and Dreams: Indigenous Settler relations in Australian History

FU Topic Code HIST2015

Australian History, Year 2, undergraduate
Dr Catherine Kevin, Senior Lecturer, School of History and International Studies
Flinders University
Students enrolled: 57

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

HIST2015 Maps and Dreams has been taught at second and third level at Flinders for over a decade. Since it began, this subject has been organised around the different forms of encounter and interaction that have marked relationships between Indigenous and settler Australians since 1788. In 2016 Teaching Fellow Catherine Kevin convened and taught the topic for the first time as part of the ‘Power of Things’ project, working closely with Flinders University Art Museum (FUAM) staff to integrate the Aboriginal art collection into the curriculum. The themes of the seminars during which students worked directly with FUAM objects were: Indigenous knowledges; mapping landscapes; remembering colonial violence and Indigenous resistance; Stolen Generations; hauntings - the past in the present, Aboriginal deaths in custody.

Students attended a one hour lecture and a two hour seminar each week that took place in FUAM, or the adjacent teaching space, where students could work with objects from the Indigenous art collection. The lectures were content rich and provided a context the Museum objects students encountered in the seminars. The students were given a guest lecture by Indigenous scholar and artist, and Flinders colleague, Natalie Harkin. Her work includes video installations, poetry and scholarly analysis of her encounter with her grandmother’s records in the South Australian Archives and featured in its various forms in lectures and seminars.

Four seminars were based on discussion of set readings as per the standard History tutorial. In the remaining seven seminars carefully selected artworks were brought into the teaching space and OBL pedagogies were applied. In most instances students were given a context for the works, including information about the artist, their community and their history. Students were asked to respond to the artworks in the context of their topic readings, lectures and the information they had about the artist. In addition to these four seminars, two major items of assessment were developed in response to the objects. Students spent at least some part of three seminars working individually or in their group with the core object that had been assigned to them. In the final two weeks, students took part in 15 minute group presentations based on their core object, which was followed by discussion with the whole seminar group about their object.
The Object Based Learning (OBL) undertaking using the FUAM artworks sought to develop the students’ skills in the following areas: connecting across boundaries; narrative building; and observation.

While these are generic and transferrable skills, they also have direct relevance to historical practice, particularly Indigenous-settler histories.

**APPROACH**

FUAM team members worked closely with the Teaching Fellow to develop curriculum that incorporated the Indigenous art collection and OBL pedagogies. FUAM staff led the process of identifying key works for the topic and workshoped the development of topic structure and OBL methods with the Teaching Fellow. OLT partner Dr Heather Gaunt met with the Teaching Fellow at the Ian Potter Museum in Melbourne, a significant meeting in the curriculum renewal process, particularly for the development of assessment methods. The incorporation of OBL aimed to develop generic graduate attributes and discipline specific skills without compromising subject-specific learning. This involved re-thinking the thematic structure of the topic, time allocations for different teaching and learning activities and designing entirely new and novel assessment techniques.

**Selection of objects**

Working with the FUAM collection database and the FUAM team members’ intimate and extensive knowledge of the collection and scholarship relevant to the art, it was possible for the Teaching Fellow to identify eight works that related directly to the themes of the seminars, and six works for use as core objects in two assessed tasks. For each of these two categories of artwork, the topic required works that offered different levels of accessibility. For the themed seminars, the relationship between the lecture, required reading and art works was deliberately reasonably easy to ascertain. For the assessment tasks we selected works that were more difficult to read.

**Learning activities**

i. Working independently with an unfamiliar, decontextualized core object from the Indigenous collection to practise careful observation during a two hour seminar, drawing the object, recording observations and generating questions about the object.

ii. Independent research identifying a second object from within the Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA) or the South Australian Museum (SAM) to pair with the FUAM core object that had been closely observed. Again, observing, drawing and posing questions of the second object.

iii. Composing a reflective account of why the student chose the second object from AGSA or SAM to pair with their core object.

iv. Engaging with Indigenous artworks during the seminar, making connections between other aspects of the topic and what they saw. This involved looking in silence, asking questions of the work, making observations, listening to each other’s questions and observations, noting new and established perspectives in the work and in their own responses.
v. Collaborating to prepare and deliver a group presentation interpreting the **core object**. This involved sharing initial observations, researching the object, applying knowledge acquired in topic lectures, seminars and focused research to the building of a shared narrative about the **core object** and its relationship to the history of Indigenous-settler relationships.

vi. Using objects as a historical source in response to the major essay question.

**Assessment**

i. Core object assignment 1: Students drew the two objects, wrote ten questions of each and a 1000 word essay explaining the pairing of the objects in the context of the history of Indigenous-settler relations (20%)

ii. Core object assignment 2: Students collaborated in groups of 3-4 on a presentation about their core object (25%)

iii. Written reflection on FLO blog x 3 (10%)

iv. Major essay (35%)

v. Participation in class discussion (10%)

**FINDINGS & REFLECTIONS**

Results from the pre and post survey indicated positive impact of OBL on understanding and command of the following skills: ‘connecting across boundaries’, ‘narrative building’, and ‘observation’ as well as ‘valuing ethical behaviour’ and ‘collaborating’. Topic results supported the students’ self-assessment in these domains. The cohort achieved excellent results across assessment tasks (approximately 50% Distinctions). Only 1/57 of the students did not complete the assessment for the topic. The blogs that were submitted on FLO twice during term one and once at the end of term two, conveyed a number of valuable insights:

**Responses to using OBL in history**

One student expressed a desire to try this approach because she understood herself as a ‘visual learner’.

*For me I am a visual learner, so being able to learn about something by drawing and observing is something that I really enjoy and get the most out of.*

Another student commented that she was pleased to have an opportunity to work with art, and another that she enjoyed using her creative side to critically analyse.

*Drawing the artwork was a challenge, as I know that my drawing abilities are not brilliant and could never do the painting justice. But it did help me to look in greater detail at the artwork to try and assess what the artist is trying to portray and the story they were trying to tell. Although I will be one of the first to say that I cannot draw to save my life, I did enjoy being able to use my creative side to benefit my ability to critically analyse a source.*

*Although some history-centred students were quite thrown off by the combining of art and history, I have thoroughly enjoyed it as it has allowed me to explore two of my greatest passions. It has also given me a greater appreciation of objects as a construct of cross-cultural interaction and art as a critique of the past and present.*
Other students felt uncertain about their ability to work effectively with objects.

*Working with objects: I found this hard in all honesty, I am so used to direct instructions, rubrics, knowing what is expected and producing the content along the provided guidelines and using other opinions to convey an argument. Quite a lot of this subject is, reflection, innovation and creating your assignments with quite a bit of freedom with little written direction. It’s been quite a different experience; I am still not sure how I feel or if this is the best way I can learn with so much freedom but I feel as though I have grown quite a bit with my views on our Indigenous Australians.*

*Encountering the unknown*

I often seek to interrogate students’ ideas about knowledge and power and about cultural roles and knowledge transmission in Indigenous communities, and the risks associated with sharing knowledge in colonial contexts. The art works proved a powerful tool for this conversation – particularly talking about Indigenous art that we struggle to decode, and representations of events that have not been represented elsewhere. After a discussion of an art work depicting a massacre that is not document in other sources one student wrote:

*During a seminar we had the opportunity to make contact with Queenie McKenzie’s artwork entitled ‘Osmond Creek’. This piece allowed me, and the rest of the class, to have a revelation regarding how we interpret sources and how to find their intended meanings.... Although not directly apparent to me that this was a piece about massacres and violence, I did at first notice the striking divide between the different sides on the object.*

Student 6 reflected on her relationship to the feeling of knowing, through the art work, in the context of moving from close observation of the object to researching the object’s context.

*Finding out this kind of ‘factual’ information about the artist and the work was also mildly confronting as it revealed my own discomfort in ambiguity, or in being unable to 'know;' it revealed this cold, categorical desire to process information, which can be relied upon as 'true' because there is some kind of evidence to sustain the assumptions; so while some of the assumptions I made were correct, knowing they were correct appears to me a kind of desire to dominate, a conquering sort of accumulation of power in knowledge, but only knowledge by my own standards, by a way that I can read. This is interesting in this artist's work, as they play with words, and obviously explore different identities and mediums to communicate cultural difference and value.*

*Indigenous art as evidence*

Students explored the idea of historical evidence. Students raised questions during the OBL sessions about the status of artistic representations of events in the absence of other evidence, as well as the reasons why Indigenous people may or may not choose to speak of, or in other ways represent painful aspects of their histories. This built on more general discussions about changing historical research practices with the expanding interest of historians in subjects that cannot be comprehensively explored in the official archive.
The power of the encounter

The Artist of this particular piece Lucy [sic] Morton Kngwarreve, is an Indigenous artist, and this particular painting is entitled "Untitled (Grandfather's story)." …

This painting was confronting to look at. For me, reading about massacres means that I could potentially skim facts I found confronting and not need to reflect on them with much depth. Having one person’s reality painted in front of me meant that I could not ignore it and had to think about what might have happened to those children if the narrative continued.

The nature of historical evidence

I am left considering what is considered an ‘acceptable’ evidence of history? How did pen and paper develop such significance and a sense of innate validity? Furthermore, how can we ignore or second-guess oral recounts of the past? What have we missed in having this mindset? The artwork is one avenue for the unwritten to be represented.

Taking Indigenous representations of the past (and the past in the present) seriously is an important way to recognise resistance to colonialism and to displace some of the power of settler-colonial representations in our understandings of the past and for non-Indigenous students to connect with these perspectives across cultural boundaries.

I will add that I believe that object based learning is a fantastic tool for education. In this particular instance, and in my personal opinion, I think that this is because Aboriginal art physically shows that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are not, and certainly were not, passive victims of colonisation. When presented with a physical example of resistance or storytelling, we students are made aware of the continuing conversation around colonisation.

Finally, I think that object based learning is an excellent education tool as it is incredibly empowering. This way, the Historiography of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is told strictly through their cultural practices and on their terms. That is what I love about this. There is no forced assimilation to European culture through the use of the “accepted” English language or the “accepted” mode of storytelling – the written word.

Rethinking the non-Indigenous self and family in the Australian nation

Students reflected on their place in the Australian nation, keen to explore and interrogate their relationships to dominant family and national narratives, Indigenous knowledges and cultural institutions such as the South Australian Museum.

Collectively, non-Indigenous Australians are guilty of genocide and land theft. But what does it mean if my own ancestors were active participants in that abhorrence? What does that mean for me as a person who wants to right the wrongs of the past? Can I be an active participant or am I more suited to the sideline? Overall, this painting made me contemplate some very real questions and issues surrounding my own identity and the history of this nation, and how they are both intrinsically intertwined.

I thought about how this is a piece of Aboriginal history that is hanging in a colonial institution. This was a problem for me, as I thought about how not only the battle is still
raging, but for the most part, the Europeans were triumphant in many of their efforts in conquering this land. Nevertheless, they have not been completely victorious, and that is where the thoughts about today’s battles came into mind, and the resistance that many Aboriginal peoples have exhibited against colonialism. It is amazing what type of response viewing an object can have on a person.

Desire to transfer pedagogy in the school classroom
A number of students in this topic are enrolled in education degrees and expressed a desire to expand their classroom teaching repertoire to include OBL. In the second and third blogs students described clear plans to apply their OBL skills in the school classroom.

I feel learning in this way is a strategy I can take into the classroom when I teach history. Having a connection with the objects allows for a much more involved sense of learning that ‘traditional’ instruction does not. It also allows for a more expressive and creative medium of study, focusing more on our interpretation and understanding of something rather than meaningless dates and factual knowledge to be highlighted on a page.

Reflecting at the end of the topic
I was quite skeptical with art, or objects, being a major focus in this topic. Throughout my university career words have been the fundamental source for understanding and analysis. In my personal life, I suppose, I have made a strict distinction between art and academia - the former for enjoyment and self-indulgence and the latter for education. To join the two together seemed counterintuitive. In current contemplation this was the mark of an unexposed individual, someone who hadn’t taken the time to seriously consider what art can offer a viewer or audience. Art is expression - and this is how it transfers information; which can be in subtle/overt, dense, or immediate ways. The power of Art is a means for an individual or group to express and empower themselves, to change, share, or understand their own and others’ narratives.

Weeks later, beyond my first encounter with the object I am still reflecting back on this experience. At the time I believed my way of thinking, interpreting and the language I used was respectful, inclusive and considerate. It is only now, that I can see how little I truly understood how history has impacted my thoughts, knowledge and understanding. Now with greater recognition and understanding I can see, that impact, as well as just how much encountering these objects have continued to helped my comprehension.

As a History major I found that I was slightly daunted by the prospect of learning through visual art. However, looking back, I feel that it has been an incredibly enriching experience. I have felt truly connected to the politics of history throughout this topic. I believe that artwork really forces us to feel. Oftentimes it is easy to shut off emotion and read confronting material in other classes. I think that when dealing with artwork we are more inclined to take away a deeper sense of understanding of the issue at hand. OBL connected me to more than facts - it connected me to a culture, and to the worries and passions and outrages of individuals whose minority voices have too often been stifled.
Appendix C

Case Study: Clinical Performance 3A/3B (Psychiatry)

FU Topic Code MMED 8302/8303

Psychiatry, Year 3 postgraduate
Dr Michael Baigent, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry
Flinders University
Students enrolled: 77

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This aggregate subject consists of the four subjects which make up the third year of the graduate entry medical course:

- MMED8302 Clinical Performance 3A
- MMED8303 Clinical Performance 3B
- MMED8304 Health Professions and Society 3A: Socially Responsible Health Practice
- MMED8305 Health Professions and Society 3B: Advanced Professional Practice: Evidence & Engagement

During the Psychiatry rotation, students participate in a personal responses tutorial for professional development, set in FUAM. As well as knowledge, there are many professional skills involved in being a good and happy doctor, for example self-reflection, and an ability to observe and describe. Awareness of responses to patients and empathy is also critical.

Focus skills: ‘connecting across boundaries’; ‘self-reflection’; ‘observation’

APPROACH

The 90 minute ‘personal responses tour’ sessions were conducted with up to 10 students in the Flinders University Art Museum (FUAM). Psychiatrist tutor and students met at the hospital for an introduction that explained the context, intent and rules of the session. Then all walked to FUAM taking 15-20 minutes, helping to establish rapport. MB, experienced in the ‘personal responses tour’ format, trained five other tutors in delivery of the sessions, building engagement, confidence and capacity. The ‘personal response tour’ was first introduced to MB by Elizabeth Gaufberg during a visit to Harvard University in 2012.

Selection of objects

The tutorial took place within an existing exhibition of 140 items of Indigenous art in the campus gallery, supplemented by a selection of 8 Australian and European prints, reflecting a range of cultures, eras, media, styles and content. The sessions at the exhibition were co-delivered by Teaching Fellow (psychiatrist) or colleague (psychiatrist) and FUAM staff member (Project Manager).
Learning activities

The students randomly select a card that has a specific task described (all different) eg ‘Find an image of a person with whom you find it difficult to empathise and think about the barriers’. Students spend 10-15 minutes selecting, observing and contemplating the object before the group comes together again. Then each student in turn, leads discussion relating to his or her object; the task is read out, the object briefly described and the student explains why he or she found this object related to the task. The TF acts as discussant and facilitator, drawing on clinical experience to focus on issues raised from student discussion related to medical practice and professional interactions. The process is important, rather than content. Notably, students participate in the discussion, sharing their own reflections.

Assessment

The tutorials themselves are not assessed. The content is not assessed formally in the course. The tutorials occur within their clinical attachment during their psychiatry rotation. Self-directed learning, and learning in an apprenticeship type setting is assessed at the end of the clinical rotation without consideration of the performance in the tutorial. However, general professionalism, of which empathy and communication are components is a specified domain of their assessment.

FINDINGS & REFLECTIONS

Statistical analysis indicated positive of impact of the OBL intervention on ‘self-reflection’. This was captured in longer response items.

*Great session, inspires me to become involved in responses to artwork in context of patient experiences and perhaps create pieces in editor writing or visual arts in response to patient interactions.*

*This exercise should be provided to other year levels. To self-reflect and learn to better communicate feelings. Almost a part of life skills set.*

The aims of the medical course are necessarily broad. Methods of learning and teaching vary in focus from knowledge to skill acquisition and work place apprenticeships through student placements. Tutorials focussing on art objects took the students to a completely different, if not alien, learning environment beyond the medical prototype. The large majority of the students embraced this (only 2% would not recommend OBL and 22% were undecided). This enthusiasm was even more surprising, given that most of the tutorials were given in the latter half of the year just before the major hurdle examinations during the most stressful year (3rd) of their 4th year postgraduate course. Although one student found this was an issue worth raising; ‘Too close to exams for this tutorial’.

The least rewarding area through the exercise was in using OBL to identify what graduate skills or qualities are, with 60% reporting that they were undecided or that it did not help. On reflection, the personal responses tour tutorial provides limited opportunity for ‘discovery’ of these qualities. Instead, it gives the student practice in exercising graduate skills/qualities (69% agreement) and to think in new ways (87% agreement). At this point in
their professional life, students may have little true vision or understanding of the personal and professional skills required of them when they will function as a doctor at some future date. The OBL exercise does not assist them in discovery of them either. Observations of interactions on wards between doctor and patient, and opportune discussions with experienced practitioners still only disclose an incomplete picture of what might be after graduation. The perceptions of what is required by students in the third year of their course may also broadly already match the realities. This type of OBL is a vehicle for examination, exploration and development of fledgling, evolving professional qualities, but not for discovery of graduate skills.

The domain, ‘connecting across boundaries’ in the medical context of this exercise was open to broad interpretation by the students. For example, to the student it could mean establishing rapport, cross cultural awareness or forming therapeutic relationships. A more useful, specific and relatable term for medical students in the personal responses tour exercise, which is set in a psychiatric term of the clinical years of the medical course, would be ‘empathy’. Scores in ‘connecting across the boundaries’ nevertheless showed that skills improved in this after the tutorial. Tutor (MB) observed that students hearing other student’s alternative or different views of the same object heightened their awareness of how empathy is not derived at an instantaneous superficial encounter.

Pre and post scores for ‘command’ and ‘understanding’ of observation did not vary. This was not surprising given the tasks were oriented towards exploration of empathy and experience. The observation and describing aspects were not embedded in the instructions on the student cards. ‘Begin by describing the key characteristics for you in your object’ would be a simple and worthwhile addition for the future to the current instructions which essentially instruct the student to ‘take the group through a discussion of their object’.

Observation in medicine as a skill is an unrecognised given. Generally, observation is used for a global patient survey, then in a detailed checklist or sets of observations related to different system specific pathology. Psychiatric observation is within an established framework in which descriptors and specific terms are utilised to recreate the patient’s presentation including their appearance, behaviour, speech and cognitive functioning. Suspended, open-minded, non-system based ‘Sherlock Holmes’ like or even interpretative observation is not developed. This personal responses exercise could be adapted to specifically develop this in the student to hone broad, open-minded observational powers and descriptive skills.

Many Aboriginal objects from the collection featured in the exercise. Although not captured in the data, each group chose at least one Aboriginal artwork. Invariably, because of the nature of the personal responses tour, this was very worthwhile as an entrée to cross cultural issues and reflections on empathy.

Socially anxious students find this a difficult task, but no more than one of many similar tasks in the course requiring performance in front of others. Doctors are routinely required to speak or function, particularly in hospitals e.g. at ward rounds, and at meetings, in front of others such as health professionals, patients and families. This anxiety is best dealt with by frequent exposure to it to the point of habituation, and the OBL task is good for this.

The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning
Appendix D

Case Study: Mining the Museum

FU Topic Code VISA3005

Creative Arts, Year 3 undergraduate
Ms Vicki Reynolds, Studio Head Printmaking, Adelaide College of the Arts, TAFE South Australia and Adjunct, School of Education, Flinders University
Ms Fiona Sherwin, Lecturer, Adelaide College of the Arts, TAFE South Australia and Adjunct, School of Education, Flinders University
Students enrolled: 19

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This subject provided students with the opportunity to explore ideas around museums and other collecting institutions to make connections between these types of organisations and their own creative work. A range of cultural and practical issues and theories were discussed, including the representation and interpretation of art works. These ideas were placed in a number of historical contexts. The evolution of museum practice was explored.

Focus skills: ‘connecting across boundaries’; ‘critical-reflection’; and ‘observation’

APPROACH

Curriculum was workshopped and objects selected by VISA Teaching Fellows in discussion with FUAM staff. 11 Indigenous works and 6 non-Indigenous works were selected for three sessions held in the Art Museum. Teaching Fellows delivered content.

Learning activities
i. Reflective journal exercise showing notes and sketches, research and development of personal and technical ideas, including evidence of investigation of other artist’s techniques, processes and concepts.
ii. Creative writing exercise responding to an object.
iii. Mind-mapping exercise to aid conceptual development and production of art works and which engages with ideas around the museum and its practices.
iv. Artists research and artwork interpretation focusing on the cultural contexts of production.
v. Evaluation of ‘Cabinet of Curiosities’ project proposal.
vii. Critical analysis of students’ own work in discussion with their peers using terms and concepts understood from historical and contemporary art practice.
vii. Guided discussion of Patrick Pound’s exhibition ‘Thinking through things’.

Assessment
i. Project one: object story – in class write and present short piece of creative writing
ii. Project two: Mindmap of object (taxonomy)
iii. Project three: proposal for Cabinet of Curiosities
iv. Journal
FINDINGS & REFLECTIONS

Statistical analysis of pre and post survey data with respect to understanding and command of skills indicated that the OBL intervention had no significant impact on the cohort. However extended responses from students in the survey and in the focus group discussion at the conclusion of the topic indicated the relevance and benefits of engaging with objects as perceived by students.

This topic has assisted me in preparing to become a professional artist in many different ways.

It’s interesting to see that to be sitting in a room with these wonderful objects that have actually just come from people like us, and that’s a part of that deconstruction that I think will be a powerful tool in professional practice.

It’s definitely been helpful also...to imagine myself as a practicing professional artist in the future hopefully in a setting where people are engaging with my work without me being beside it and what that will then communicate, being a painting or an object or whatever it is.

So that was another source of delight for me the way that with other professionals who come from a different background that’s something that I’ll remember as well.

I would have definitely benefited if I could have applied some of these skills even to the second half of first year and leading onto second year and then that could have been helpful just in approaching our Studio 8 this year.

Once the objects were taken from the Art Museum space into the class/tutorial room they lost their sense of preciousness, they seemed more accessible.

Introducing the creative writing component in response to an object resulted in consistently high quality work compared with previous years when students have been asked to write an essay following formal art historical conventions. Creative responses demonstrated deep engagement with the object itself and showed the value of material culture in helping to stimulate ideas and make new and novel connections. In class discussions later on in the semester, students reflected that the creative writing exercise – together with the mind-map – had helped them in developing new approaches to their practice by asking them to consciously select and respond to stimuli that were new or foreign to them.

Students also gained valuable knowledge in the extended use of the mind-map and extrapolated on the traditions of taxonomy to inform their art practice. Professional practice of graduating visual arts students (in the last semester of their course) was enhanced. Changes in thinking and practice around working closely with objects, professional behaviors and protocols knowledge was evidenced in classroom discussions and approaches to projects.
Indigenous cultural empathy and understanding appeared to have been enhanced by research into the artists and their works, including artists of Indigenous Australian, African, Inuit backgrounds. This was reflected in the ways in which students spoke about and presented their research to the group including a better appreciation of the contexts of artwork production, materials and the meanings of works.

Although not all the works selected by the students were from the Indigenous collection, all students in the post survey recognised the value of Indigenous works in helping them better understand Aboriginal culture if not through their own research across the projects but through class discussion and the presentations of other students.
Appendix E

Pre topic survey

ART & OTHER OBJECTS IN ACADEMIA
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM STUDENT PRE-TOPIC SURVEY

Flinders University Art Museum is investigating the value of its collections in teaching and learning at Flinders. We are interested in how student experiences with art and other objects in our care can support, enhance and advance the acquisition of new knowledge and generic skill sets. Your responses to the following questions will help us explore these things. Thank you for your participation.

Q1. On the scale below please rate your understanding of the following skill sets which have been identified by Flinders University as important graduate qualities for success in the workplace:

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<th>Skill Set</th>
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<td>valuing ethical behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>connecting across boundaries</td>
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Q2. On the scale below how would you rate your command of these skills?

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<th>Skill Set</th>
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Q3. What are your expectations for this Topic?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
ART & OTHER OBJECTS IN ACADEMIA
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM POST-TOPIC SURVEY

Flinders University Art Museum is investigating the value of its collections in teaching and learning at Flinders. We are interested in how student experiences with art and other objects in our care can support, enhance and advance the acquisition of new knowledge and generic skill sets. Your responses to the following questions will help us explore these things. Thank you for your participation.

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Q2. On the scale below how would you rate your command of these skills?

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</tbody>
</table>

Q3. Please list any other generic skills you have developed in this Topic?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
ART & OTHER OBJECTS IN ACADEMIA
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM POST-TOPIC SURVEY

Q4. Describe how object(s) used in this Topic have impacted on your understanding of Indigenous Australia and/or other cultures?


Q5. On the scale below indicate to what extent you agree or otherwise with the statements:

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<td>The object(s) I worked with challenged me to think in new ways.</td>
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<td>The object(s) I worked with was/were a catalyst for developing an</td>
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<td>understanding of the Topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>As a result of the Topic I feel more confident about engaging with objects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend object-based learning to others.</td>
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Q6. Did your experience of this Topic match your expectations?


Q7. Any other comments?


The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning
Appendix F

Focus group questions

ART & OTHER OBJECTS IN ACADEMIA
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM FOCUS GROUP / SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Flinders University Art Museum is investigating the value of its collections in teaching and learning at Flinders. We are interested in how student experiences with art and other objects in our care can support, enhance and advance the acquisition of new knowledge and generic skill sets. Your responses to the pre and post Topic surveys have provided valuable data in helping us to explore these things. This discussion aims to examine emerging themes and ideas in greater depth.

Guiding questions
1. What were your expectations of this Topic?
2. Did your experience of the Topic match your expectations?
3. Were there any things that surprised you about the delivery of this Topic?
4. Did you have any prior experience of object-based learning?
5. How would you describe the impact object-based learning on your acquisition of new knowledge or understandings of your Topic?
6. How would you describe the impact object-based learning on your acquisition of skills such as Flinders graduate skills (communication; collaboration; independent learning etc.) and/or others?
7. The Flinders University Art Collection has a large holding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work some of which was accessible for your Topic. Can you describe any new understandings which you would attribute to the inclusion of these things?
8. Describe a situation where you might draw on cross-cultural understandings in the workplace?
9. Can you tell me what you liked and what you didn’t like about object-based learning?
10. The University engages students in learning in different ways including for example in listening, reading and problem solving activities. As a method of learning how would you describe the strengths or weaknesses of object-based-learning based on your experience in this Topic?
## Appendix G

Summary statistics MMED

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The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning
## Appendix H

### Summary activity table

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<td>Creative Arts Retreat</td>
<td>Present project information to academics</td>
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<td>SCME 3013 Researching Australian Screen and Media subject</td>
<td>COP member [Julia Erhart] using OBL to work with portraits in discussion of identity</td>
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<td>History Research Seminar</td>
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<td>13 May</td>
<td>Council of Australian University Museums and their Collections, The University of Sydney</td>
<td>Present project information</td>
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<td>Workshop 1 <em>The power of things</em> with Heather Gaunt</td>
<td>workshop showcasing examples from UoM and overseas, team panel discussion, to academic &amp; professional staff from 14 disciplines</td>
<td>FS, HG, CK, MB, VR</td>
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<td>13 Jul</td>
<td>Academic Internship Program for PhD students</td>
<td>Workshop session to model OBL as an innovative teaching activity</td>
<td>JW &amp; 2 PhDs</td>
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<td>Meeting with Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, UoM</td>
<td>Meeting re OBL, including resources for <em>In the Saddle</em> exhibition</td>
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<td>Higher Education Research Group of Adelaide 2016 conference, The University of Adelaide</td>
<td>Presentation with HIST case study to Australian colleagues</td>
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<td>29-30 Sep</td>
<td>University Art Museums Australia, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane</td>
<td>Update on project</td>
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<td>Cultural Collisions Colloquium, UoM</td>
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<td>Meetings with managers and staff in Science &amp; Engineering</td>
<td>Helen Chatterjee re UCL success with OBL across the arts and sciences</td>
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<td>Helen Chatterjee re UCL success with OBL across the arts and sciences</td>
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<td>Meeting including Sally Francis, Arts Coordinator, Arts in Health; Dave Chapple; Christine Putland, Flinders Medical Centre</td>
<td>Helen Chatterjee re UCL success with OBL across the arts and sciences</td>
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<td>The Power of things: Workshop in object-based learning, with Helen Chatterjee</td>
<td>Half-day workshop showcasing examples from UCL, hands on workshop led by team members</td>
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<td>Speak to Me book launch by Helen Chatterjee</td>
<td>Strengths of OBL and the FU collection</td>
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<td>Collaborating with Collecting and Cultural Institutions Workshop, Australasian Consortium of Humanities Research Centres, SA State Library &amp; Flinders University City Gallery</td>
<td>“Negotiating Objects and Archives: Humanities Research in the Material Turn”</td>
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<td>Hands on workshop</td>
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<td>8 Dec</td>
<td>2016 Flinders Teaching and Learning Week</td>
<td>Presentation of project and findings</td>
<td>FS, CK, MB, VR, FSh, JW</td>
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<td>19 Jan 2017</td>
<td>Can you teach empathy?</td>
<td>9:50 minute interview on OBL on ABC Radio Adelaide (audience 25,000)</td>
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<td>1 May</td>
<td>Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatry Conference, Adelaide Convention Centre</td>
<td>“Object-Based Learning: Teaching Psychiatry and Medicine with Art” presentation and workshop</td>
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The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning
Appendix I

Dissemination

Workshops

- 26 May 2016, ‘The Power of Things Workshop I’ with guest speaker Dr Heather Gaunt, UoM
- 13 July 2016, ‘Academic Internship Program for PhD students’, FU
- 20 October 2016, ‘The Power of Things Workshop II’ with guest speaker Professor Helen Chatterjee, UCL
- 2 November 2016, ‘Humanities and Creative Arts School Forum’, FU
- 10 November 2016, ‘Collaborating with Collecting and Cultural Institutions Workshop’, Australasian Consortium of Humanities Research Centres, SA State Library & Flinders University City Gallery
- 22 November 2016, ‘Workshop with Visual Arts staff’, AC Arts
- 16 November 2016, ‘FFOUT Workshop’, FU
- 8 December 2016, ‘Teaching and Learning Week’, FU
- 1 May 2017, ‘Object-Based Learning: Teaching Psychiatry and Medicine with Art’, Flinders University City Gallery
- 27 June 2017, ‘Object-based learning in Higher Education Workshop’, UCL

Conference presentations

- 3-7 July 2017, ‘Teaching Colonial Entanglements: Indigenous Art as a Decolonising Strategy?’ , “Entangled Histories” Australian Historical Association Conference, The University of Newcastle, Australia (CK)
Media and other coverage

- 7 January 2016 Grants support education innovation in languages and art FU blog
- February 2016 Flinders University Inspiring research newsletter, p. 5
- April 2016, ‘Fifty Years of Art at Flinders’ in Encounter, 50th Anniversary edition, Annual magazine for Flinders University Alumni and Friends, p. 19
- 17 May 2016 Putting art into your teaching practice FU blog
- 31 May 2016 Art, teaching and the power of partnerships FU blog
- November 2016, ‘Innovative program guides medical students in the art of empathy’ in Southern Health News, p. 6
- 16 December 2016 Team member Dr Heather Gaunt referenced the project in her essay – “Can looking at art make for better doctors?” The Conversation
- 19 December 2016 FUAM to master the power of objects in higher education and employability FU blog
- 28 January 17 [reposted] Art Museum helps increase employability through object-based learning
- 19 January 17 ‘Can you teach empathy?’ 9:50 minute interview on OBL on ABC Radio Adelaide (audience 25,000)
- August 2017 Encounter, Annual magazine for Flinders University Alumni and Friends, pp. 25-27

Publication

- Speak to Me: conversations with the Flinders University Art Museum Collections a full colour publication, including an essay on OBL and written responses by Flinders staff to 50 objects in the FUAM collection.
## Appendix J

### Impact Management Planning and Evaluation Ladder (IMPEL)

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<td>Significantly more capacity &amp; strategies to address practical barriers to OBL &amp; embed employability.</td>
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<td>Study guides &amp; assessment refreshed &amp; embedded in 3 subjects adapted to OBL goals &amp; focus attributes appropriate to discipline.</td>
<td>OBL embedded in at least 3 more subjects. Team members support colleagues in the process of achieving this. At least 5 more trained in 2016, other co-teaching planned from 2017 Train and facilitate opportunities for medical academics to undertake OBL.</td>
<td>Embedded in up to 6 more subjects. Increased capacity of FUAM to continue to service OBL &amp; employability. Opportunities continue to be pursued.</td>
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<td>Greater reflection &amp; feedback on current practice &amp; stronger inter-disciplinary links.</td>
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<td>New awareness of the unexpected enthusiasm and support for this in the medical teaching setting.</td>
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<td><strong>2. Immediate students</strong></td>
<td>Over 130 students participated in project OBL sessions developing greater appreciation of diverse perspectives &amp; Indigenous cultures. Greater insight into self-reflection</td>
<td>OBL part of Yunggorendi’s annual Indigenous student Orientation Program.</td>
<td>Greater appreciation of Indigenous cultures through integration of OBL in Indigenous Studies Major.</td>
<td>Wider use of Indigenous collections across the University including in Law and Environmental Studies as priority areas. Inclusion of OBL in ‘Teaching Sensitive Material in Topics’ workshop.</td>
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<td>3. Spreading the word</td>
<td>Resources in development.</td>
<td>Contributed to OBL community of practice through presenting at inter/national conference/s.</td>
<td>Published articles in academic journals in relevant disciplines.</td>
<td>Article cited by peers.</td>
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<td>Established network of OBL champions through promotion within Flinders, TAFE SA, UoM &amp; national discipline-specific conferences &amp; Circle of Interest/COP grown to over 220.</td>
<td>Stronger Flinders-TAFE SA partnership. Presentation of MMED facet of program at RANZCP, 1 May 2017, Adelaide.</td>
<td>Contributed to promotion of Flinders-TAFE SA Creative Arts courses.</td>
<td>Sustained high rates of web views, downloads, linking, sharing of project resources.</td>
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<th>4. Narrow opportunistic adoption</th>
<th>More OBL adopters after numerous presentations, including to CILT sessions &amp; Open Classroom Scheme to share through observation &amp; discussion.</th>
<th>Model actively trialled &amp; qualitatively reviewed at UoM. At TAFE SA model used to teach in several more Creative Arts subjects.</th>
<th>Embedded through mandatory Academic Staff Induction Programs &amp; professional development in curriculum etc.</th>
<th>OBL included in new Indigenous Studies Major.</th>
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<td>Increased awareness of &amp; more widespread use of collections in teaching.</td>
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| 5. Narrow systemic adoption | Opportunities being pursued for FUAM to attract extra resources to further embed OBL. | OBL included in Flinders Teaching & Learning Plans. | OBL included in Flinders Teaching & Learning Plans. | OBL included in Flinders Teaching & Learning Plans. |

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<th>6. Broad opportunistic adoption</th>
<th>OBL considered in some curriculum re-design, reviews, accreditation etc. Under consideration for several Honours subjects</th>
<th>Extended networks of scholars, professionals &amp; industry sharing OBL.</th>
<th>OBL model adapted by other courses and institutions.</th>
<th>Extension Grant to expand project impact</th>
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<th>7. Broad systemic adoption</th>
<th>Explore philanthropic funding sources for OBL based on Mellon Foundation model in US</th>
<th>OBL being systemically embraced nationally as indicated by national funding opp.’s and higher level planning e.g. <em>Engagement at Melbourne 2015 – 2020</em> Plan, UoM</th>
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The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning

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Appendix K

Workshop flier May 2016

The Power of Things Workshop
Harnessing art and other objects in interdisciplinary teaching, learning and research at Flinders

Flinders University Art Museum (FUAM) invites you to learn more about the possibilities and potential of object-based learning and to discover ways of working with us to incorporate our collections into your teaching practice.

Guest Speaker: Dr Heather Gaunt
Curator of Academic Programs (Research)
Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne

Dr Heather Gaunt has degrees in Music, Arts, and Art Curatorial Studies, including a PhD in History. In her current role, she collaborates with academics and their students across all disciplines, creating and co-teaching programs that utilize visual art and object-based learning principles to enhance transferable skills in visual observation, flexible and creative thinking, navigating ambiguity, and compassion and reflective practice.

Dr Heather is also a team member for the FUAM project The power of things: Enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning, to promote the use of Flinders University’s art collections in teaching learning and research across multiple disciplines, blending academic and practical learning experiences to improve graduate employment opportunities. The project is in collaboration with SAUTE and The University of Melbourne with support provided by the Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching.

Heather will speak about some of the opportunities she has seen in her work at The University of Melbourne. She will also draw on her observations in the US, Canada and the UK.

Thursday 26 May 2016
Alice Function Centre, Level 2, Student Hub & Plaza, Flinders University

Workshop Program
10:00–10:05 Welcome by Fiona Salmon, Director, Flinders University Art Museum
10:05–11:00 Object-based learning approaches by Dr. Heather Gaunt, Curator of Academic Programs (Research), Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne
11:00–11:15 Break
11:15–12:15 Roundtable with The power of things project Teaching Fellows: Associate Professor Michael Regent (Psychology, Flinders University), Dr. Catherine Kevi (History, Flinders University) and Voci Fiordalis (Humanities and Creative Arts, Flinders University) on the challenges and rewards of object-based learning.

Free event, with limited places
RSVP essential

Image: Third year medical students with Associate Professor Norman Beattie.

The power of things: enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning

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Workshop flier October 2016

Flinders University Art Museum invites you join us for a
WORKSHOP IN OBJECT-BASED LEARNING

Led by Professor Helen Chatterjee MBE
Head of Research and Teaching, Department of Public and Cultural Engagement & Professor of Biology, University College London

Thursday 20 October 2016
9:15am - 12:15pm
Alero Function Centre
Level 2 | Student Hub & Plaza
Flinders University

Workshop Program

Free event, with strictly limited places.
RSVP HERE
armuseum.flinders.edu.au

Helen Chatterjee is an award-winning academic and advocate of object-based-learning in higher education. Her research interests include the value of cultural encounters in health and wellbeing and the role of touch and object handling in health, wellbeing and education. Helen is widely published in this area and has authored three books, including most recently Engaging the Senses: Object-Based Learning in Higher Education (Routledge, 2016). She is co-founder of the National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing and is Principal Investigator on the Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project Museums on Prescriptions which is exploring the role of museums and galleries in social prescribing. In 2015, Helen was awarded an MBE for her services to Higher Education and Culture.

Helen will speak about her work at the University College London and the transformative potential of object-based learning across the arts and sciences. This workshop is the third in a series promoting the use of Flinders University’s art collections in teaching, learning and research across multiple disciplines, blending academic and practical learning experiences to improve graduate employability opportunities.

The power of things: Enhancing employability in higher education through object-based learning. This project is in collaboration with TAFE SA and The University of Melbourne with support provided by the Australian Government Office of Learning and Teaching.