

Arts Student Advisory Council Meeting 2: Thursday 3 September 2026

Minutes: Nina King

Chaired by: Prof Beth Driscoll, Cori Rushdi, Billy Chen

Senior leadership in attendance: Jennifer Balint (Dean), Veronique Duche (SOLL), Mathilde Lochert (ASO), Craig Smith (AI), Sean Chaideroon (SCC), Delia Lin (DAD Graduate Coursework), CQ Quinan (DAD Course Innovation), Alexandra Dane (DAD UG), Dave McDonald (SSPS).

ASAC Members in attendance: Leon Nguyen van Tri, Saoirse Kern O'Neill, Eva Matthews, Andy Zhang, Jane Green, Sonnet Pandit, Kripnoor Sachar, Rongrong Jian, Yanjun Liu, Oliver Sheales, Yuliia Manetska, Dzaki Albiruni, Siddhi Bhasin.

Topic 1: Secure & Open Assessment

Overview from Beth

- 2 years ago, the University was invited to think about the role of assessment amidst the rise of AI. The regulatory body asked Australian universities how they were going to adapt.
- University of Melbourne developed principles & a plan: by 2028, 50% of assessment in each subject will be secure. A secure assessment is an observed assessment, for example an exam, performance, or an interactive oral discussion. Wanted a diverse array of assessment types, not just exams. From next year, more secure assessment types might appear in courses. Most common new assessment in Art subjects for 2027 is in-class assessment such as quizzes, next most common is an interactive oral, and there are some exams being introduced.

What kind of secure assessment works well for students? What should secure assessment look like in the Faculty of Arts?

- Student – If an assessment was a video that was submitted, would that count?
- Beth – No, because it needs to be observed, so pre-recorded things would not count as secure.
- Student – Will there be preparation from the tutors? Will they teach students how to do an oral exam?
- Beth – Arts ran a pilot with 22 subjects, and from that pilot they have resources that they are sharing with all subject teachers. Academic skills also has a page with advice on how to prepare. Next year will be new for a lot of people so Arts is thinking about how they can best prepare students for those.
- Student – Good to have in-class participation, but if you have chat GPT write you an answer then go in and present it, how is that any different?
- Beth – Idea is that it is interactive, answering questions, students will have to show their thinking.
- Student – Heard from classmates that interactive quizzes in classes have actually helped them learn quite a lot because they can't use ways to get around it.
- Student – Is the faculty doing anything to bypass contract cheating like having an earpiece.

- Beth – Central exams team is always working on clear guardrails and instructions.
- Student – Success criterias – how would a student be able to perform well under a certain secure assessment, like an oral. A lot of students find previous year examples as a very useful and high-quality way to understand how to do things well. Will there be standardised success criteria about how to perform well?
- Beth - Pilot has indicated areas that will be standard across different subjects and types of orals. Main way it's being addressed is by having lots of opportunities in class, so that students have the chance to practice live. FBE is putting together example videos of how to do oral exams.
- Student – If questions are standardised, couldn't students guess the questions by getting ChatGPT to guess what they might be.
- Beth - Students will need to justify and elaborate on their own ideas.
- Student - How will you make sure you're assessing learning skills and not fluency?
- Beth - Rubric for the oral will be provided to the students ahead of time and they can prepare, rubric will not include fluency or presentation skills unless that's a subject intended learning outcome.
- Student - How can you account for students who have AAPs, disabilities etc and they have adjustments; how can they avoid being outed for example if they get a different option for the assessment, if they're the only student that doesn't present for example. If you put me on the spot, no matter how well I know it, my mind will go blank. Other people might be really good at memorising stuff and this gives them an advantage. Is there room for leeway to the 50% rule.
- Beth – A lot of thought has gone into having a range of assessments available for students based on preference or AAPs. Different people encounter different challenges with different ways of learning. These changes will actually increase the diversity in types of assessment. This is the moment to think about inclusivity in our assessment design. There is an inclusive assessment design guide for interactive oral assessments.
- Student – Some subjects like Japanese are limited to online orals due to staffing and room availability. How will the faculty respond to the impact of limited staff resources on assessment.
- Student – Will assessments be in class, or outside of tutorial time?
- Beth - Could be in class as part of the teaching schedule, or could be separate during exam week.
- Student – It is hopeful to think that students will actually be interactive in an interactive oral – students often just don't talk during class. I study politics and you'd think students would be talkative but most of the time I show up to class and it's dead silent. Something to consider when preparing students for doing these assessments.
- Billy – Is the scope of tutorials widening? If interactive orals are introduced to tutorials, will this increase the amount of time given to tutorials?
- Beth – This will be down to clever curriculum design from the tutor and teaching staff.

Topic 2: Assessment Skills

How do you feel about developing AI literacy? What support do you need for different types of assessment? What kind of skills do we want to be learning?

- Cori - Principle of the Arts is in human creativity, so how do we come to terms with that alongside the use of AI?
- Student – Previous meeting I was less familiar with AI, and liked that there was limits on AI in my classes. I recently started an internship and was asked to use AI, and was totally unprepared. AI is actually important in the jobs world. It is about learning to use AI properly, for example how to write a prompt.
- Student – Given permission to use AI for research purposes, but had to train myself in how to actually write a prompt correctly. If AI is used for research purposes then that would be okay, and it would be applicable to the job market. I feel like I have developed these skills but not in classes.
- Cori – So AI is helping to research, but when used for generative purposes that's when alarm bells ring.
- Student – Doubt that everyone has a clear-cut opinion on AI. I am taking a class called # cyber start – basically building a website in html and coding – AI is very prominent in this sector. Uni has built a stigma around AI, especially in the arts, but the reality is that AI is used in a very practical sense in the job market outside of the uni. It would be very difficult for students to jump from 'AI is terrible' to actually being able to implement it in a professional sense. Transparency the biggest takeaway – how do we set up systems or a rubric where students can use AI and be transparent about it, and students don't feel like they are going to be kicked out for it.
- Billy – Have seen AI used in professional settings to assist when responding to emails. It can act as a second set of eyes to ensure the response is appropriate. Sometimes the stigma may not be warranted when there's actually good uses.
- Student – You need to keep all the drafts of your work that you have saved so that you can prove that you haven't used AI, not something encountered before. Now they have to give an AI declaration about everything.
- Student – Background in accounting and professional services, thinks AI is great and we should be allowed to use it as long as we are transparent about how we are using it. At the end of the day we are here to gain theoretical knowledge. Theory needs to remain central to what we are doing.
- Student – Now understands how to pick up on mistakes in AI etc. It's about learning how to do an effective AI declaration. Making it clear that we're at uni for a reason – developing research skills, how to write an essay. Thinking of AI as a tool, not what we're learning.
- Student – Accountability, and transparency the key pillars.
- Cori – How do we get there? How do we make people feel more positive and confident to declare?

- Student – Takes around 1 month to learn AI. You also have to train the AI to understand you and what you're doing.
- Student – A month seems like a reasonable amount of time for training. If we're learning how to do research without AI, is that so bad? Technology changes so fast, so is there even any point in teaching students how to use AI when it could change so much within the next year? Does it even matter that much if we don't use AI?
- Student – Some students aren't sure whether they are allowed to use certain tools. Is there a clear policy on whether a declaration impacts marks, and therefore could tutors outline this at the start of the semester? Students are actually very scared about AI scores and sometimes even change their academic writing just to lower the scores.
- Student - Students even stop using dashes when writing because dashes are a clear sign of using AI. Very big difference between millennials and gen Z – millennials remember learning how to use google but gen z have used tech from the moment they were born. To use AI properly you need to have really good critical thinking skills. I use GPT a lot and it is really useful. Generation gap perhaps.
- Student – A bit shocked that AI rules are so strict after coming back to uni from the working world. Sometimes confusing that they are so strict on using AI. In Indonesia there are lots of students using AI checking, students pay to use AI checks there.
- Student – Students are really scared to declare because of the serious consequences – could the punishment be more like for the first warning, you have to do AI training. Can we do training modules on using AI.
- Student – Often use AI as a tool to learn how to ask questions, or a tool to understand why your answer is wrong. AI as a tool to make you think.
- Cori – Can't get any clear answers on this because the topic is so nuanced. Everyone should have the opportunity to learn more about AI if they want to. Honesty and transparency, and the idea of being comfortable with using AI, are our key takeaways. Friendly tone from teaching staff around encouraging AI declarations helped a lot with students' comfort in completing them.

Topic 3: Culture and Career Thinking

How can we better support students to develop work-related skills, and to have confidence in their skills as an Arts student? How can we bring about a culture of knowledge-sharing in the Faculty of Arts that encourages students to network and learn from each other? How can we get Arts students to be more aware and engaged with what is already being offered? How would students like to engage with clubs at a Faculty level? How would clubs like to connect with the Faculty?

- Student – Students in the language club are frustrated about how difficult it is to engage with the faculty. Students feel like they are being treated worse than clubs aligned with other faculties like FBE. Even if it's not financial support, more collaboration between the schools or faculty, seeing it as a partnership.

- Student – Students want more exposure. There's a running joke among students in course that they're going to be unemployed, so more exposure to students who have been in their positions and now have careers would be helpful and reassuring.
- Student – Recently did a mentor program, had a mentor from the domestic violence sector and got internship through her. Mentor helped with transferable skills for the workplace. Forces you into an environment where you have to meet every week and have accountability. Want connection with Arts Alumni.
- Student – is it possible to maximise electives so that you can develop broader skills? Also in terms of exposure, real cases where students can meet and have exposure to real circumstances within their curriculum is really good. This gives opportunity to network with employers as well.
- Student – Doing a compulsory subject where they have an opportunity to be integrated into the sector. Big difference between doing a project internship like the big issue and doing an actual integrated internship. If you just do an internship that's a project like any classroom project, you don't learn as many useful skills as in my current internship.
- Student – Also did the big issue internship, felt like it was fun but didn't learn any new skills. Didn't know how to transfer those skills outside of that. Idea of student mentoring within the faculty is really appealing. Had subjects where I don't even meet lecturers, just tutors. If I want to do honours, how would I then network enough to know who to ask to be my supervisor? Idea of structured mentoring, small mentoring groups within subject area. Non-subject related mentor makes no sense to me, if I want a mentor I want one from my subject area so that I can actually network and get useful skills.
- Alex Dane – This is actually a change that has been made. Students can now preference a discipline for their Academic Mentor.
- Student - More opportunities to learn about workplace in different countries. Many Chinese students are planning to return home after uni, and if internships and career prep focus on the Australian job market, this is just not relevant to many students.
- Student – Students from diverse backgrounds can't always find the right mentor for them.
- Cori – FoA could provide more support for clubs, for example with room bookings, website promotion and marketing. Working with real-life clients in our region is really helpful. Alumni mentoring, career mentoring, academic mentoring are all important to improve locally, and we need more networking events or just spaces for networking. Last semester we talked about cultural inclusion – if students have any more comments on this please reach out to me [Cori].

Topic 4: Teaching Spaces

What makes a good teaching space? What UniMelb rooms work well?

- Student – When desks are in rows, it discourages students from speaking up. The Babel rooms and similar rooms can get really stuffy. Hygiene – it's quite easy to get sick, can

tables and chairs get cleaned more often even just with wipes or something being more readily available.

- Student – Class in biosciences basement building, it's so stuffy in there and not accessible. Lack of windows makes you sleepy. Always has fonder memories learning in Arts West because the spaces are so nice. Redmond Barry can get really bad with the stairs and the lifts – often makes students late because it's such a nightmare.
- Student – Agrees about Redmond Barry. The air filter in that building makes a big noise which is really distracting and also you just can't hear students who are talking across the classroom because of the noise.
- Student – Never know what classes are going to be like. Arts West is one of the best, and the Spot. Is it possible to keep the course's classes close to each other? Getting between classes means they sometimes don't even have time to eat
- Student – Isn't it actually good for students to have to get up and about and get their steps in? Love the Alan Gilbert building but the lifts are really grotty. Baillieu library – the bathrooms are always disgusting and this impacts study spaces.
- Student – Some toilets have more amenities available than others. Two girls came up to me and asked me where they could get water. Where can you actually get filtered water? Especially with summer coming up. The outside water taps taste really bad.
- Billy – If people are asking other random students how to find water, then it's a sign we need more or at least more signposting.
- Student – In many classrooms the tables are long but when they are asked to do teamwork it's really hard to work all on one computer. Would prefer to have whiteboards or working paper available to students.
- Student – Foundation courses the lecture theatres are so big, then interest in the lecture drops because there's less interaction and actual physical distance makes it hard to connect. Can't actively engage in a subject when in a lecture theatre.
- Billy – Basics like open windows, good ventilation, basic hygiene and cleaning are really important. Group discussions are better facilitated when long horizontal rows are avoided. Whiteboards are really useful in teaching spaces.

Topic 5: Quick wins (from Beth)

- Beth sent another reminder to all teaching staff about the 5 minute buffer between classes
- Academic Mentoring – Alex Dane has recruited more psychology mentors, 7 for semester 2. You can email Alex (alexandra.dane@unimelb.edu.au) if you want to request a specific discipline mentor.
- Export course content with one click – it is possible to download a zip file of all course content.
- Tech and exams - For all digital on-campus exams, students are expected to bring their own laptops (this can't be a tablet/iPad etc). All desks are powered, so they should bring their chargers as well. There are spare laptops at each exam venue if a student experiences any tech issues, they can just raise their hand and a spare will be provided to them, there are

also tech staff on site to help resolve any issues. Okta verification is switched off, so students won't need to Okta verify to log in, but they will need to remember their passwords (password managers can't be used). Students should bring their phones with them as a back up verification device, but they need to be switched off before they enter the exam room. All other tech, like smart watches and smart glasses must be switched off and placed under their desks.

- Baillieu door is closed because of the 'flow' of the building and some security rules – Beth is going to look into this more.
- Smoking rules – Smoking, vaping and tobacco consumption prohibited in all University controlled spaces, including outdoors, unless they are designated as smoking areas. Call security in the moment: 8344 6666.

Take Aways from the Dean (Jennifer Balint)

- Struck by what a professional space this is and how the chairs have created this. Impressed by the deep commitment that every student in this room brings to their own learning, and that of all students, including future students. Has enjoyed learning what has worked for students.
- Secure Assessment - What's really critical is that students understand what it is, and that students are set up and really prepared for it. We are doing it for you, and we want it to support your learning.
- Assessment skills – What is our role as a faculty to support you for your futures. Most of you are here to prepare you for your next step. Making sure you've got clarity from your teaching staff. Making sure there is variation.
- Culture and Career Thinking - Hearing strongly that it has worked to have real life case studies. Need to do more locally to ensure that there are more mentoring opportunities available. How do we integrate this as a faculty? How do we create this spiderweb of connection so that our students are aware of opportunities?
- Teaching Spaces - Very aware of the poor state of many of our buildings and the investment that is needed. It's our commitment to make sure that students feel good learning in the spaces we have. Really appreciate practical examples like hygiene and water.