

Starting Young: Early Years Languages Learning in Australia

The Faculty of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, and Education (HASSE) at the University of New England, is offering two exciting PhD projects in early years' languages learning. We are looking for motivated individuals with a passion for languages and education to join our research group. The two candidates will have the opportunity to be mentored by a project team comprised of experienced researchers whose expertise combines languages policy, curriculum, teaching and learning, and teacher preparation experience.

The candidates' research will complement the Australian Research Council Discovery Project "Starting Young: An analysis of policy, practice, and potential for increasing early years languages learning in Australia" that Chief Investigators Anne-Marie Morgan, John Hajek, Joseph Lo Bianco and Elizabeth Ellis commenced in early 2019.

The project aims to investigate early years languages programs in Australian pre-schools and schools through exploration and analysis of: successful programs in the three key states of NSW, Queensland and Victoria; policy, curricula and resources for languages teaching and learning; key stakeholder perspectives; and student progress in new primary language teaching degrees. The project expects to generate new knowledge of linked best practice program types, pedagogies, and teacher requirements, to provide new data and ongoing research opportunities leading to Australia educating more linguistically and culturally competent young Australians who are able to effectively engage in a plurilingual, globalised world.

Outcomes of the project, including program and pedagogy recommendations for early years languages programs, have the potential to transform languages teaching and learning in Australia, building on a quality early years platform that informs primary and secondary program approaches. Potential benefits include a positive impact on national education and international engagement priorities, through preparing young Australians for success in globalised political, cultural and economic contexts equipped with languages capabilities and intercultural understanding.

The PhD scholarships provide a tax free stipend of \$27,596 per year (2019 rate) for three years. They are available to domestic (Australian, New Zealand or Australian permanent residency) candidates. The project will be based in the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, and Education at UNE in Armidale, NSW, and involve collaboration with project team members at the School of Languages and Linguistics and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at The University of Melbourne. Each of these centres has a reputation for outstanding research and commitment to research excellence. There will also be opportunities and additional funding for some Conference attendance and fieldwork activities as part of the project work.

Two PhD projects are available:

1. This PhD project will research language program types used in Australia referenced against world practice. The candidate would explore language learning practices and program types including Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), bilingual programs, immersion programs, additional language learning, community language learning, first language maintenance and other language learning programs and formats in multiple sites around the world, and in more detail in Australia

OR

undertake an embedded PhD project, following language teacher education students through the lived experience of becoming a primary school languages teacher. This is part of the ARC project which will use **critical pathway analysis and evaluation of language teacher education students' experiences and skill development** using the theoretical frame of hermeneutic-phenomenological lived experience, action and reflection. Students at UNE will

be followed through their final year at university, in their professional experience placements, and into employment in schools. The analysis and evaluation will be contextualised with additional data based on the school's history of languages programs and teaching, and the students' backgrounds.

2. This PhD project involves, as part of the ARC project, embedded participatory action or design-based ethnographic/phenomenological research in relation to the introduction of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language program into a school and community, as a first study of its kind in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs using the Australian Curriculum. Ideally the latter student will be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background or have links to an Aboriginal community in Australia. UNE's Oorala Aboriginal Centre will support supervision of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander PhD student
- The applicants must be proficient in spoken and written English, have a current driver's licence and a current Working With Children Check. They should display a capacity to work both independently and as part of a team. The successful candidate will be required to do field work in relation to their project and the team's project. The candidates' desirable attributes or qualifications will include eligibility for doctoral research as per [UNE entry requirements](#) with undergraduate or postgraduate research experience in a languages, cultural or community studies, linguistics or languages education (which may include English or English as an Additional Language) field.

Enquiries

For further enquiries about the above projects, please contact:

- Professor Anne-Marie Morgan (amorga23@une.edu.au) Phone: +61 2 6773 3869; Mobile: 0402978069

Applications

Applications close on **Friday, 28th June 2019**. Candidates should to be prepared to start as soon as possible after the selection process has been finalised.

How to apply

Applicants must submit a candidature application if they wish to apply for a scholarship. For more information on submitting a candidature application please see our web page on how to [apply/enrol for candidature](#).

To apply for the scholarship please review the relevant application guidelines and complete the application form:

- [Domestic Students Scholarship Application Guidelines](#)
- [Domestic Students Scholarship Application Forms](#)

Scholarship and candidature applications can be submitted through AskUNE.

The research proposal should set out under separate headings intended aims, background, approach and possible methodology for their study, as well as expected outcomes of the envisaged project with reference to key recent scholarly literature or field practice experience (e.g. community or first language practices).

Applicants must request their referees to submit their written reports directly to the University using the [Referee's Report Form](#).

Please see the [Scholarship Terms and Conditions](#) for more information.