

# Sharon Aris

## Nexus Fellow

Faculty: Arts Design and Architecture

School of Social Sciences (SOSS)

**Nexus Projects: Lead Nexus Outreach Guild, member WIL Squad**

Nexus Priorities: Assessment and Feedback, Learning Technologies and Digital Literacy, WIL and Industry Relevant Learning.

As Nexus Fellow I bring deep experience leading teams in curriculum development that is responsive to industry, discipline priorities and student needs. In this I'm informed by sociologies of education and knowledge and my prior experience in journalism and youth advocacy. Across my 3-year Nexus appointment I have enacted three overarching projects: fostering a School **Teaching and Learning EcoSystem**, understanding **the Student Journey** in SOSS and **AI responsiveness** in social sciences.

### Social Sciences Nexus Projects 2025 Overview

(1) Fostering a **SoSS Teaching and Learning Ecosystem**: focus on groupwork and AI in assessment Supporting the elevation of learning and teaching in social science contexts through workshops and developing an online resource repository including easy-to-find best practice teaching and assessment videos, sample assessment briefs and marking rubrics. The 2025 focus was addressing practice gaps teaching groupwork in the social sciences and AI and social science assessments.

#### Skills Applied:

- Resource development including video production and assessment brief & rubric drafting
- Facilitating training sessions in effective groupwork, curriculum design, first-year transition support, pedagogical use of AI

#### (2) Understanding the Student Journey: Social Sciences Alumni Destinations

This supports the School, University and social sciences sector understand how social sciences degrees are used. Drawing on a unique dataset from LinkedIn live, the location, Industry employed and job roles of 500 social sciences, social research and policy and 500 international studies undergraduate alumni was analysed. Results showed alumni were employed professionally across an extensive range of industries and concentrated in policy, analysis and research roles, frequently managing people, projects and policy programs. This is being used to inform WIL curriculum development including revision of Program Learning Outcomes and transition to employment support. Stage 2 of the project, primary research with alumni on skills commences in 2026.

#### Skills Applied:

- Developing specialised methodology for analysis of LinkedIn Live data
- Leadership applying this through backmapping to curriculum
- Leadership training research assistants in data analysis

#### (3) AI Responsiveness in Social Sciences and Policy: AI & public sector policy capability education

Led the Discipline response to AI and social research and public policy education. Co-organised and co-chaired the Australian Political Studies Association (APSA)-partnered workshop *Teaching AI and Digital Literacy in Political Studies*, bringing together educators from nine universities to address AI capability building in policy and politics. This positioned AI as a policy and professional practice issue, foregrounding how AI reshapes public sector decision-making, knowledge production, and

graduate preparedness. Developed and advanced a **policy-relevant AI capability framework** for public sector graduates, articulating ethical, critical, and practical AI competencies and back-mapping these into public policy curricula.

**Skills Applied:**

- Policy-informed curriculum leadership, cross-sector engagement, disciplinary convening, and translation of AI scholarship into educational and professional standards.
- Strategic partnership building, facilitation of interdisciplinary dialogue, critical analysis of AI in governance, and sector-level advocacy for responsible AI education

**Activities, Outputs and Outcomes (per project or role)**

- Learning and Teaching Sharepoint Expansion: new videos on oral assessments including debates, oral poster presentations and diplomacy and community role play simulations; extensive suite of assessment briefs and marking rubrics specialised to AI use; new section on supporting groupwork in SOSS
- 2 Project Reports for the Alumni Project: Social Science Alumni Destinations, International Studies Alumni Destinations
- AI and Government Social Sciences Week Event (public) and 1 day cross-sector workshop

**Evidence of Impact (Implementation)**

<p>School/Faculty involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-convenor ADA First Year Experience Working Group</li> <li>• The Alumni Project method adopted across 3 ADA Schools</li> </ul>	<p>Courses/Programs Involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops with convenors from all degree Programs in SOSS</li> </ul>	<p>Workshops delivered (n= 8)</p> <p>With Social Sciences Educational Development team incl: groupwork, blogging, AI &amp; assessment security, first year student transition</p>	<p>Collaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lauren Kark (engineering) &amp; Danielle Castro de Jong (population health) collaborative paper</li> <li>• Collaboration with Diana Perche (DHOS SoSS AI &amp; public policy)</li> </ul>
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**Evidence of Impact (SoTL)**

Presentations (n= 9)	Publications (n=3)	Blogs (n=1)	Ethics applications (n=3 )
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**Relevant Links/Education (Research/SoTL/Resources) Output List**

**Sharon Aris**, (2025, August 8). "The importance of promoting critical AI engagement to students". UNSW Education & Student Experience blog <https://www.education.unsw.edu.au/news-events/news/importance-promoting-critical-ai-engagement-students>

**Sharon Aris** & Georgia van Toorn (forthcoming) "AI and the corporate university: constructing new imaginaries or reinscribing old stratifications?" AI and the Disruption of the Social, Routledge

**Sharon Aris**, Daniela Castro de Jong, and Lauren Kark (forthcoming, Sept 2026) "Developing a Social Disposition in Biomedical Engineers: Curriculum Innovations for Societal Impact", Perspectives in Biomedical Engineering Education, CRC Press ISBN 9781032858852

**Sharon Aris** & Haidee Hicks (under review) "Teaching Research Methods in Undergraduate Social Sciences courses: a scoping review"

Rita Prestigiacomio, **Sharon Aris**, Ben Phipps & Daniela Castro de Jong (under review) "Doings in Higher Educational Change: Collaborative Autoethnographic Reflections on an Innovative Education Focused Program"



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