

Being professional about doctorates for professionals: an international perspective

Terry Evans
Deakin University, Australia

Summary

This presentation draws on my experiences in Australia of managing and supervising candidates in both professional doctorate and PhD programs in professional areas, and my research with colleagues on doctorates. It will be argued that being professional about doctorates for professional people involves understanding the available evidence about doctoral candidates and graduates (that is, evidence-based decision-making) and understanding what is happening, particularly in professionally-related fields of study. It will also be argued that the contemporary circumstances in national and global societies and economies make for a potentially fruitful time for doctoral education, especially in professionally-related fields. The presentation will show trend data from Australia on doctoral candidates and graduates and explore these in relation to particular disciplinary fields. The consequences of Australian governments' doctoral education policy and funding changes on doctorates in general, and on professional doctorates, in particular will be explored. The presentation will conclude with some ideas about the needs for professional approaches to doctoral education for professional people, and how these might have implications for doctoral education more generally.