



## When a qualification is not enough

Nita Temmerman a former university pro vice-chancellor (academic) and executive dean of the faculty of education at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, published an article on 8 march 2019, titled **When a degree just isn't enough, also offer upskilling.** (Temmerman, 2019)

In the article the author says that in today's highly competitive and technology driven world, life-long learning has become a necessity that requires either reskilling or upskilling. These days, a degree is not enough and does not guarantee a job, as employers have a very large pool of qualified candidates to choose from. Employers expect new recruits to have, not only the theoretical knowledge and understanding but also the ability to apply the knowledge and 'hit the road running'. The interview process can be an arduous one, often resulting in multiple interviews, on-the-spot activities and psychometric testing to evaluate a candidate's creativity and critical thinking.

So how do tertiary institutions ensure that students can contribute effectively to the work place?

Temmerman (2019) suggests a few of options. The first, would be to supplement a degree with a technical qualification from the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector, where graduates enrol for a VET course in order to gain vocationally specific training. The second, would be for universities to supplement their offerings with complementary skills-based certificates. These programmes could be run prior to or during the course of the degree. Combining a degree with a certificate would provide a competitive advantage, as the candidate would be able to offer the employer with not only the knowledge and understanding but also the skill.

The distinction between vocational qualifications and skills-based certificates are not clearly articulated by Temmerman and would need more clarification as in some

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environments the two may overlap. However what seems to be clear is the fact that the author suggests additional educational competence for existing graduate alumni.

The proposed combination of theoretical, applied knowledge and skills are not new concepts at Da Vinci. Da Vinci offers programmes that adhere to academic standards (theory) whilst at the same time empower students to contribute to their communities, society and the economy at large (applied knowledge and skill). This approach is underpinned by a combination of both Mode 2 (Gibbons, 1994) and Mode 3 (Carayannis and Campbell, 1994) teaching and learning methodologies towards the generation and distribution of knowledge. Such approaches should encourage critical thinking as students, and citizens alike, are required to probe multiple possibilities in solving problems.

The longstanding relationships that The Institute has with organisations amongst others, the Financial Services sector, Mining sector, Information, Communication and Technology sector, Aviation sector, Transport sector, Chemical sector, and Energy Generation sector, is evidence that the above approach towards education development is viable and relevant to society at large. In such context it becomes mutually beneficial to both the organisation and the student to embark on a journey of lifelong learning resulting in the co-creation of new workplace realities in support of sustainable business performance.

## Bibliography

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