

Curriculum Vitae for Dr Inger Mewburn

I started my academic career as an architecture lecturer in 2001, following a decade in architecture practice with leading design firms. I completed a Masters of Architecture (Research by Project) in 2005. I started working as a research educator in 2006, at the same time as I started my PhD. I graduated in 2009 with a Doctor of Philosophy (Architecture) from the University of Melbourne, winning the John Grice award for best thesis from the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning. I continued to work as a research fellow in the School of Graduate Research at RMIT University until taking up the position of Director of Research Training at ANU in 2013.

I created the famous Thesis Whisperer blog, which has had 4.3 million hits in the last five years and has 60,000 followers on email and social media. The blog is the most popular source of advice and a leading influencer for research supervisors and students in the world because it is grounded in my scholarly practice in higher education research. I am known in my field as an innovative and creative scholar, only publishing in high-impact journals in my field. I am often invited to be part of edited books with prestigious education publishers. I actively seek funding for my research and create research collaborations to benefit ANU and further my research. I have received \$120,000 worth of nationally competitive grants and awards in the last two years. I am a senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy and I am often invited as an expert keynote speaker at conferences and local and international universities. I am an expert commentator in the mainstream media on research culture and education issues.

Research outputs summary: 1 nationally competitive grant, 1 commissioned grant, 6 peer reviewed journal articles, 8 edited book chapters with education publishers, 2 peer reviewed conference proceedings, 3 non reviewed conference presentations, 19 pieces of journalism and commentary.

Qualifications

- “Constructing bodies: gesture, speech and representation at work in Architecture classrooms” (2009) *PhD Thesis*, University of Melbourne. Winner of the best thesis award in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning.
- “Digital architectures and the presence of the virtual” (2005) *Masters Thesis* (M. Arch), RMIT University.
- Post-graduate certificate in Spatial Information Architecture, RMIT University (2001).
- Certificate IV in training and assessment, RMIT University (1999).
- Bachelor of Architecture (with Honours), RMIT University (1997).

Grants and prizes

- Leader: \$80,000 Category C grant from the Department of Industry to investigate the application of machine learning to explore PhD employability and the ‘hidden job market’ for graduates, 2015 (ongoing).
- Leader: \$40,000 Office of Learning and Teaching, Category A seed grant to explore the use of digital badge technology in doctoral pedagogy, 2014.
- Best concise paper, ASCILITE conference, 2014.
- Leader: \$1500 grant from the ANU gender institute to explore PhD student attrition, 2013. A paper from this work was presented at QPR, 2013 and the methodology for measuring research student attrition was then adopted by Edith Cowan University and RMIT University.
- \$5000 John Grice award for best thesis in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne, 2009.
- \$1500 best paper award, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning, University of Melbourne, 2008.
- \$24,000 per annum Melbourne research scholarship, University of Melbourne, 2006-2008.
- Fellow: \$3000 creative research industries CRC award for creative explorations, 2003.

6 most significant research publications and their impact (in reverse chronological order):

Mewburn, I, Freund, K & Rutherford, E 2014, ‘Badge trouble: piloting open badges at the Australian National University’, *Rhetoric and Reality: Critical perspectives on educational technology*, ed. B Hegarty, J McDonald, SK Loke, ASCILITE: Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education, Dunedin New Zealand, pp. 643-648.

- Reporting on the INSIGNIA project, this peer reviewed conference paper explored the application of digital technologies in research pedagogy and was the first to point out the tensions between the technology and the quality assurance processes within universities, in particular the legal issues.

- 'Badge trouble' won best concise paper at the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ASCILITE) conference, Dunedin, 2015. ASCILITE conferences began in 1983.
- Lead author, wrote the theoretical portion of the paper, and collaborated on data collection and analysis with co-authors.
- Subsequently this paper was an invited presentation at Moodlemoot, Melbourne, July 9th, 2015.
- This paper was used to inform a white paper tabled at the ANU Online Education steering committee in 2015 that outlined important considerations for an ANU strategy around digital badges.

Mewburn, I. & Thompson, P 2013, 'Why do academics blog? An analysis of audiences, purposes and challenges', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 38, no. 8, pp. 1105-1119.

- *Studies in Higher Education* has an impact factor of 1.038.
- This paper is now the third most read paper in the journal's history, and has 32 citations in Google Scholar.
- I designed the research method, performed the analysis, and wrote the results section.
- This paper put forward an argument for blogging as a place of serious scholarly conversation between peers, not just as a means of public outreach. It sparked much interest in the higher education community and we were commissioned to write follow up articles in *The Guardian*, London School of Economics *LSE Impact of Social Sciences* blog, and *Euroscience*. Further commentary on the paper was featured in *The Age Third Degree* blog.

Mewburn, I, Osborne, L & Caldwell, G 2014, 'Shut up & Write! Some surprising uses of cafes and crowds in doctoral writing', in Claire Aitchison and Cally Guerin (ed.), [*Writing Groups for Doctoral Education and Beyond: Innovations in practice and theory*](#), Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, Abingdon and New York, pp. 218-232.

- This paper, in a book by leading educational publisher, Routledge, reflects on one of my most significant achievements – the establishment and growth of the '[shut up and write](#)' movement for research students, directed at improving writing productivity.
- Lead author, and did the majority of the writing including the entire theoretical section.
- This paper detailed the growth of a massive global community of practice via the auspices of social media. [ANU now](#) has its own shut up and write community, as do other universities all around the world. See for example: [CSU](#), [UTS](#), [QUT](#), [University of Melbourne](#), [King's college London](#), [University of Edinburgh](#), [Royal Holloway](#).
- A Google search for my name and "shut up and write" receives 2330 hits and there are national [newspaper articles](#) and many blog posts about this movement.
- Leading higher education scholar, Dr Claire Atchinson, has said this chapter is "indicative of her wide influence on innovative practices in doctoral education" (pers comm).

Mewburn, I 2011, 'Troubling talk: assembling the PhD candidate', *Studies in Continuing Education*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 321-332.

- This was the first paper in the research education field to use observational methods and conversational analysis to explore doctoral cohort cultures. The paper explored the phenomenon of whingeing in student cohorts and pointed out that this was much more than a sign of unhappiness, but a key way that communities are built and maintained.
- *Studies in Continuing Education* has an impact factor of 0.58 and this paper has 14 citations in Google scholar.
- Citation analysis shows this has become a paper often quoted in work on research student emotional resilience and community building practices.

Mewburn, I, Tokareva, E, Cuthbert, D et al 2014, "These are issues that should not be raised in black and white": the culture of progress reporting and the doctorate', *Higher Education Research and Development*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 510-522.

- This is one of two papers reporting on a study of HDR progress reporting. This study explored the inconsistencies of the progress reporting system at RMIT University, a problem common to most universities.
- Lead author, led the research project, designed the methods, supervised the analysis, and wrote the paper.
- The progress report is often the most untruthful source we have on actual progress. The papers used qualitative interviewing to uncover how supervisors and students colluded (or fought) to make the progress report serve political purposes.
- *Higher Education Research and Development* has an impact factor of 0.991.

- This paper has subsequently been used in reviews of these processes at three universities: University of Sydney, Edith Cowan University and RMIT University.

Barnacle, R & Mewburn, I 2010, 'Learning networks and the journey of 'becoming doctor'', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 433-444.

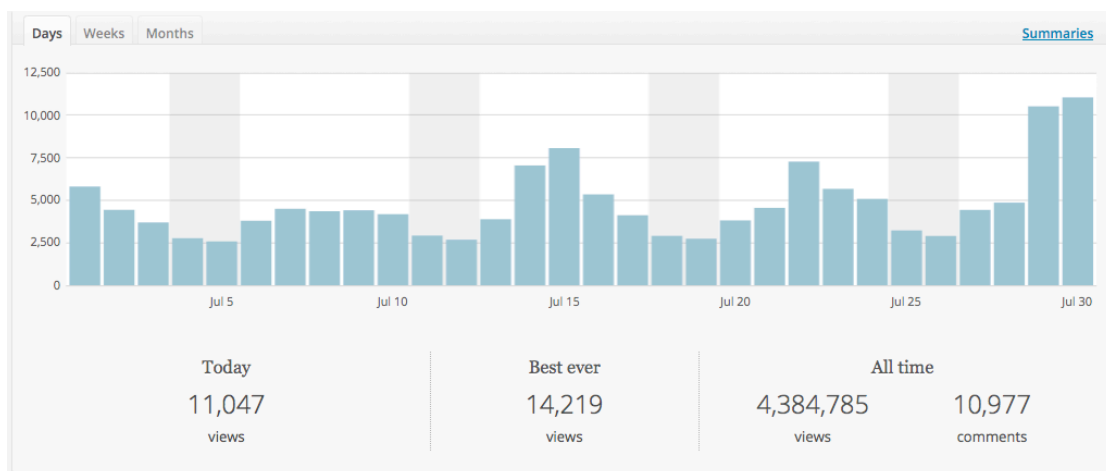
- *Studies in Higher Education* has an impact factor of 1.038.
- The paper has 48 Google scholar citations.
- Designed the research method, performed the analysis, wrote the results section and literature review.
- The paper was the first to draw explicit attention the socio-material practices at work in doctoral pedagogy. It followed on from the work of Alison Lee and looked at how spaces and things might become important to the ability to enact Lee's concepts of doctoral identity. This is now a key paper in further work on materiality in doctoral pedagogy

Two key educational achievements

1. Thesis Whisperer blog

I am the founder and managing editor of the *Thesis Whisperer* blog: a hub in the global community for research students and supervisors and the most popular blog of its type in the world. The blog was established June 2010 when I saw an opportunity to provide RMIT University students with my workshop materials and lectures in an open access forum. I quickly saw the possibility of the blog as a community building tool and established social media channels to build and strengthen its audience.

At time of writing the blog has over 27,000 email subscribers; the accompanying Twitter feed has just over 20,000 followers and the Facebook channel has 11,000 with a global reach. The blog has been viewed over 4.3 million times. There are over 400,000 words of content with more than 10,000 comments:

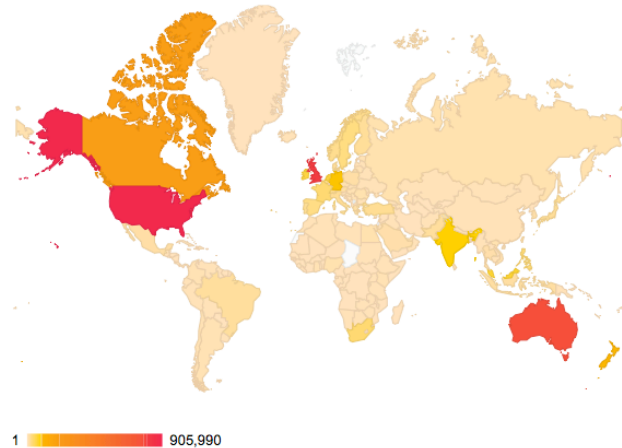


The blog has a truly global reach and has been read by students in most countries:

Top Views by Country for all days ending 2015-07-15 (Summarized)

[7 Days](#) | [30 Days](#) | [Quarter](#) | [Year](#) | [Since February 25, 2012](#)

Country	Views
 United States	905,990
 United Kingdom	800,768
 Australia	782,680
 Canada	216,123
 New Zealand	99,033
 Germany	97,109
 India	91,804
 Malaysia	70,354
 Netherlands	63,850
 Ireland	63,284
 South Africa	42,027
 France	40,261
 Philippines	38,144
 Sweden	32,874
 Singapore	32,236
 Spain	29,949
 Norway	26,188
 Belgium	26,006
 Switzerland	24,763
 Turkey	23,832
 Portugal	22,866



In July 2013 the National Library of Australia indexed the *Thesis Whisperer* on TROVE as being a blog of national and social importance. The blog's global influence is significant. A further 6 pages of student testimonials can be accessed through this [public google document which canvassed followers of the blog to articulate the impact of the blog on their lives](#).

Altmetrics can be difficult: popularity is one thing, but peer esteem is another. Evidence of peer esteem can be seen in the 11,712 links that exist on other websites which lead to the *Thesis Whisperer*. Many these links are from universities and professional organisations, a very small sample of these include:

- [University of Melbourne](#)
- [University of Sydney](#)
- [McGill University, Canada](#)
- [Warwick University, UK](#)
- [The UK doctorate guide, national union of students](#)
- [University of Otago](#)

The following are testimonials offered by peers and colleagues in the researcher development and higher education research community:

"Inger's work is unique in that she continues to make a great deal of it freely and widely available at the same time as she is publishing in conventional media. There is no-one else writing, curating and publishing material on HDR study in English at the breadth and depth that she is."

Dr Dr Mary Helen Ward, University of Sydney

"I use the verb cheat sheets, the book recs, the useful videos and blackline masters, and they are all great and very much appreciated. But I think the most useful and lasting benefit of thesiswhisperer is that sense of community. A confirmation, or realisation, that other people do what I do, and a very real contribution to a growing professional field."

Erika Hawkes, Birmingham University, UK

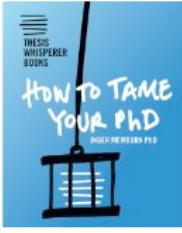
"... the TW blog's impact extends beyond a simple source for advice. Many topics have been the subject of lively and valuable debate among my colleagues and me. When new PhD students asked for guidance, the TW blog invariably topped the list of resources. The evidence-based, expert advice in Inger's posts is complemented by reports 'from the trenches' that round out its invaluable service"

Dr. Christoph Rupprecht, Environmental Futures Research Institute, Griffith University.

"Now as a supervisor I direct all of my students to her book and blog and continually refer them back to posts I found helpful during my own candidature. I now run workshops for new HDR students with my School and have once found her resources (and Inger personally) a tremendous wealth of knowledge and guidance."

Dr Emily Kothe, Deakin University, Melbourne Australia

Further esteem indicators can be found on Amazon.com. In 2013 I compiled a series of blog posts into a book in 2013. '[How to tame your PhD](#)' sells on Amazon and the print on demand service Lulu.com. The book has sold over 3000 copies in digital and print versions. The book is ranked 11th in the Research>education theory section of the education and teaching section and has 48 reviews and the distribution shows it at 4.5 stars:



How To Tame Your PhD (Thesis Whisperer Books Book 1) Sep 20, 2012

by Inger Mewburn

Kindle Edition

\$5.93

Auto-delivered wirelessly

★★★★☆ 48

Kindle Store: See all items

Paperback

\$14.14 ~~\$15.74~~ Prime

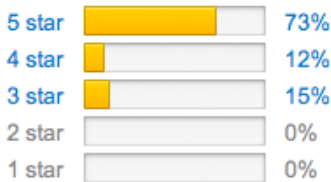
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★★★★☆ 48

4.6 out of 5 stars



Amazon Best Sellers Rank: #74,292 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store)

#11 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Education & Teaching > Teacher Resources > Education Theory > **Research**

#36 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Education & Teaching > Studying & Workbooks > **Study Skills**

#102 in Books > Education & Teaching > Schools & Teaching > Education Theory > **Research**

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful

★★★★★ **A must buy for all on the PhD adventure**

By [Alysia Bennett](#) on January 18, 2013

Format: Kindle Edition | **Verified Purchase**

After receiving a candidature offer I stumbled across Mewburn's blog via Twitter. While the blog is full of so much fantastic content it was easy to become overwhelmed by just how much advice is available there and not knowing where to start. In this ebook, Mewburn has taken the advice first published on the blog, added in some revised content based on the lengthy comment sections that her engaged readers have contributed and then reordered the content to chronologically follow the PhD journey. The strength of the advice and the good humour in her writing helped me to absorb the book in only two sittings. I am now really looking forward to starting my candidature feeling at ease that I know what issues that may come my way and how to deal with them in an effective and relaxed manner. I highly recommend this publication and if you also enjoy it make sure you also check out her blog.

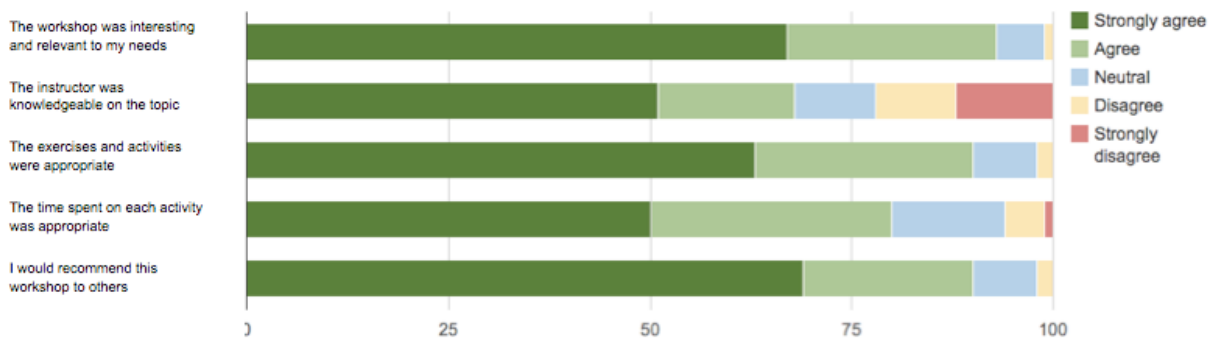
[Comment](#) | Was this review helpful to you?

2. The annual ANU Research Training event and workshop program

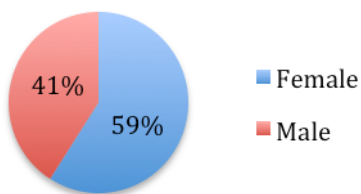
The ANU Research Training program is large and is a substantial management and teaching challenge. Each of the events I convene and/or facilitate each year must:

- 1) Be attractive to HDR students in all disciplines at ANU.
- 2) Accommodate the extreme diversity of the HDR cohort.
- 3) Offer something for students at any stage in their degree – and any level of ability.
- 4) Be interesting, relevant and of a high quality so that students will voluntarily give up their time to attend - and return for more.
- 5) Run the program with a small team of 2 EFT and a student to staff ratio of approximately 1:1350.

The program has been an outstanding success. Attendance has improved by 47% over two years and the conversion rate is up from 48% to 98%. The cohort attendance pattern broadly matches the cohort by disciplinary mix, but is still skewed female by participation. Students report high levels of overall satisfaction with the program, represented in the graph below:



Of the students who had a start time recorded, **91% had enrolled within the last four years**. Of these, over half had enrolled within the last two years. In 2014 we aimed to increase representation from Science and managed a rise of 14% with the Colleges of Science now representing just over half of the attendees. More women than men attend the program, but in 2014 male attendance improved by 10% from the year before:



Interestingly, this gender disparity is mirrored in the persistence and the attendance patterns to the whole ANU cohort. More women complete than men. The most persistent students in our cohort are international female students, who complete at a rate of over 80%, compared with the male local cohort, at under 10%. Of the female cohort who attend, over 70% are female international students. **This shows our program is attracting the best students on campus, not the underperforming ones.**

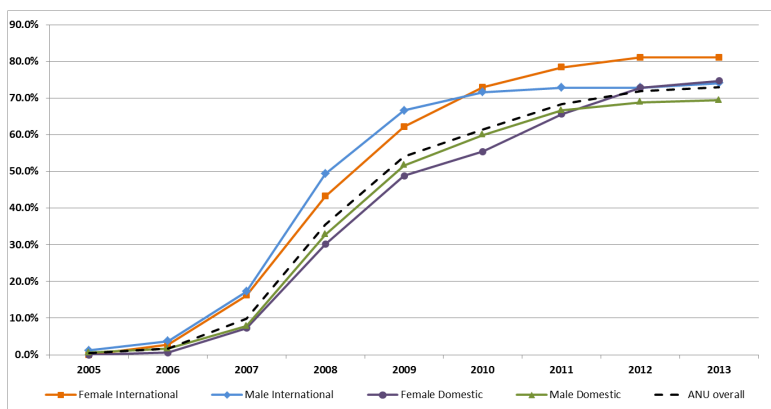


Figure 2: Cumulative completions of the 2006 by gender and origin showing the cohort commencing in 2006 through to 2013. Source: analysis ANU student cohort data from Student 21 database by Nigel Palmer.

Here is a selection of verbatim comments on this program from our annual surveys:

- "Spot-on. More of this sort of thing please."*
- "The session was very helpful to newbies like me"*
- "Great speaker, technology."*
- "Thank you for doing online, I could attend where ever I am"*
- "This was my first online seminar and it was fantastic. I really felt like I was there and participating, and I got to ask lots of questions specific to my needs which was fantastic. Thanks!"*
- "Very interesting workshop. Learned some applicable skills and will apply them and see if they work for me"*
- "Amazing presentation! Very personable presenter. Real life examples, made me a lot less stressed!"*

Appointments and service

- Higher Education Academy, senior fellow, 2014.
- VC's student mentoring program 2014 and 2015.
- Liaison for HDR matters in the Westpac / ANU relationship.
- HDR project management committee, member ANU 2014. This project is a special project lead by the DVC Research to reform the administration of HDR candidature at ANU and will have far reaching impact on how HDRs are enrolled and managed throughout their degree.
- ANU gateway project steering committee, member ANU 2013-2014.

- Consultant on the ANU union court project.
- Data management steering group, member ANU 2013- 2014. My role on this committee was to provide advice on research training for research computing.
- Peer Reviewer for: Higher Education Academy senior fellowships, annual 'New Horizons: digital education survey', Open University press educational imprint, *Higher Education Research and Development* journal, *Australian Educational Researcher* journal, *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice*, and tenure reviewer for Northwestern University in the USA.
- fIRST, steering group member 2012 - 2014.
- High Risk Ethics Committee, member RMIT University 2009 – 2012.

Invited keynotes

- "How to run a successful academic blog". Academic blogging symposium, Warwick University, March 2015.
- "Academic superheroes – what more do universities want?". MPA Excellence series, Monash University, February, 2014.
- Inaugural Law, Education, Business and Arts (LEBA) HDR student conference keynote, Charles Darwin University, September 2013.
- "Analysing PhD employability". Australian Post Graduate Careers developers symposium, University of Sydney, March 2014.
- "Can you be replaced by a machine?". Association for Academic Language and Learning, 'Building higher degree research student writing capacity: whose job is it? University of Sydney, March 2014.
- "Let the plates fall on the floor? Invisible work in university libraries". Caval Reference Group forum, Melbourne University, Melbourne University, November 2013.
- "What do academic employers want?". Post graduate student conference in Law, QUT, June 2013.
- "Will I get a job after my PhD?". Nursing research week, University of Sydney, June 2013.
- "Is a PhD career suicide?", MPA Excellence series, Monash University, 2013.
- "What academic employers want", Cardiff University research education conference, Cardiff University, March 2013.
- "What I learned from Gabriel Tarde about research metrics". Caval Reference Group forum on Open publishing models, Melbourne University, September 2012.
- "Personal learning net(works): an actor network approach to PhD candidature". Personal Learning Environment conference, Deakin University, May 2012.
- "How to manage your PhD (and yourself)", Manchester University GRAD school forum, Manchester University 2012.
- "The spaces of PhD candidature" Special conference on Social Issues in Research Spaces, Herriot Watt University, Edinburgh, April 2012.
- "Personal learning networks in your PhD", IGNITE 12. Creative Industries research student conference, QUT, October 2012.
- Inaugural new student keynote, Nursing research week, University of Sydney, June 2011.
- "What I learned about doing a PhD from romance novels". Education research week, Charles Sturt University, May 2011.

Research supervision

I started supervising when I graduated in 2009. In 2010 I asked to be on the panel of a Denis Smitka, who was struggling with thesis writing. He graduated with a Master's degree (Research by Project) from RMIT University in March 2012, co-supervised by Dr Scott Mayson. I was on the panel for two students at RMIT University when I left to join ANU at the end of 2012. Since joining ANU I have been formally invited to take part in PhD candidatures:

- Jodie-Lee Trembath, ANU School of Culture, CAP (Panel chair), commenced 2015.
- Wendy Suiter, ANU School of Music, CASS (panel member)
- Nguyen Bui, ANU School of Sociology, CASS (panel member)

Of course, over the last 10 years as a scholar, teacher and blogger in research education I have informally mentored hundreds, perhaps thousands of students through their degree. I invited people to comment on my impact through my social media channels and these testimonies can be accessed on this [public google document](#).

Publication list

Journal articles:

(forthcoming) Glenda Amayo Caldwell, Lindy Osborne, Anitra Nottingham & Inger Mewburn (2015) "**Connecting the Space between Design and Research: Explorations in participatory research supervision**", *Education Philosophy and Theory*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2015.1111129>.

Glenda Amayo Caldwell, Lindy Osborne, Inger Mewburn & Philip Crowther (2015) [Guerrillas in the \[Urban\] Midst: Developing and Using Creative Research Methods Guerrilla Research Tactics](#), *Journal of Urban Technology*, 22:3, 21-36, DOI:10.1080/10630732.2015.1040288

Mewburn, I. & Thompson, P. 2013, '[Why do academics blog? An analysis of audiences, purposes and challenges](#)', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 38, no. 8, pp. 1105-1119. (impact factor 1.038)

Mewburn, I., Tokareva, E., Cuthbert, D. et al 2014, '[These are issues that should not be raised in black and white: the culture of progress reporting and the doctorate](#)', *Higher Education Research and Development*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 510-522. (impact factor of 0.991.)

Mewburn, I., Cuthbert, D. & Tokareva, E. 2014, '[Experiencing the progress report: an analysis of gender and administration in doctoral candidature](#)', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 155-171. (impact factor 0.862)

Mewburn, I. 2011, '[Troubling talk: assembling the PhD candidate](#)', *Studies In Continuing Education*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 321-332. (impact factor 0.701)

Mewburn, I. 2011, '[Lost in translation: Reconsidering reflective practice and design studio pedagogy](#)', *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 363-379.

Barnacle, R. and Mewburn, I. 2010, 'Learning networks and the journey of 'becoming doctor'', *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 433-444.

Peer reviewed conference proceedings:

Mewburn, I., Freund, K. & Rutherford, E. 2014, 'Badge trouble: piloting open badges at the Australian National University', [Rhetoric and Reality: Critical perspectives on educational technology](#), ed. B Hegarty, J McDonald, SK Loke, ASCILITE: Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education, Dunedin New Zealand, pp. 643-648.

Maher, A. and Mewburn, I. 2007, 'An economy of knowledge: research, architectural practice and knowledge (in) translation', in *Ethnographic Praxis in Industry Conference Proceedings*, United States, 3 - 6 October 2007, pp. 258-269.

Other conference presentations:

Mewburn, I., Freund, K., Rutherford, E. and Blackmore, K. (2015) [An economy of badges](#), 2nd International conference on Doctoral Education, Oxford University.

Pitt, R. and Mewburn, I. (2013) [Academic superheroes: an analysis of Australian academic job advertisements](#), Quality in Post Graduate Research, Adelaide.

Mewburn, I (2009) Getting Wiki with it, Poster presentation, Quality in Post graduate research, Adelaide.

Book chapters with distinguished academic publishers.

Corbett, J., Macintyre, A. & Mewburn, I. 2014, 'Functional Dystopia: Diversity, Contestability and New Media in the Academy', in Margaret Thornton (ed.), [Through a Glass Darkly: The Social Sciences Look at the Neoliberal University](#), ANU Press, Canberra, pp. 195-208.

Mewburn, I. 2012, 'Creative doctoral work', in Carey Denholm and Terry Evans (ed.), [Doctorates downunder: keys to successful doctoral study in Australia and Aotearoa, New Zealand \(2nd ed\)](#), Australian Council for Educational Research Press, Melbourne Australia, pp. 126-135.

Mewburn, I. 2011, 'Lost in translation: Reconsidering reflective practice and design studio pedagogy', Arts and Humanities in Higher Education, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 363-379.

Mewburn, I., Osborne, L. & Caldwell, G. 2014, 'Shut up & Write! Some surprising uses of cafes and crowds in doctoral writing', in Claire Aitchison and Cally Guerin (ed.), [Writing Groups for Doctoral Education and Beyond: Innovations in practice and theory](#), Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, Abingdon and New York, pp. 218-232.

Mewburn, I. 2012, 'Creative doctoral work', in Carey Denholm and Terry Evans (ed.), [Doctorates downunder: keys to successful doctoral study in Australia and Aotearoa, New Zealand \(2nd ed\)](#), Australian Council for Educational Research Press, Melbourne Australia, pp. 126-135.

Mewburn, I. and Barnacle, R. (2010) 'Razzle Dazzle: making a thesis text in creative practice based research', in Joy Higgs et al (eds) *Researching Practice: a discourse on methodologies*. Rotterdam, Holland: Sense Publishers.

Mewburn, I. 2008, 'Through the looking glass and into the design studio' in Pia Ednie-Brown (ed.) *Plastic Green: designing for environmental transformation*, RMIT Press, Melbourne Australia.

Ednie-Brown, P. and Mewburn, I. 2006 'Vibrating with Difference: Laughter and the intimate distance between us', in Jillian Hamilton (Ed.), *Intimate Transactions: Art, Exhibition and Interaction Within Distributed Network Environments*, ISBN 0-9775978-0-6, ACID Press, Brisbane.

Selected expert commentary

Mewburn, I. and Thomson, P. (12/12/2013) '[Academic blogging is part of a complex online academic attention economy, leading to unprecedented readership](#)'. London School of Economics Impact blog, Retrieved 19/07/2014 from: <http://libguides.gwumc.edu/c.php?g=27779&p=170343>

Mewburn, I. and Thomson, P. (3/12/2013) '[Why do academics blog? It's not for public outreach new research suggests](#)', The Guardian

Mewburn, I. (26/03/2014) '[Why do people quit the PhD?](#)', Thesiswhisperer, Retrieved 19/07/2014 <http://thesiswhisperer.com/2014/03/26/why-do-people-quit-the-phd/>

Mewburn, I (27/09/2012) '[Academics behaving badly: Universities and online reputations](#)', The Conversation, Retrieved 19/07/2015 <http://theconversation.com/academics-behaving-badly-universities-and-online-reputations-9827>

Mewburn, I (14/06/2015) '[What's up with Universities? Wackademia or just grumpy old academics](#)', The Conversation, 14/06/2012. Retrieved 19/07/2015 from <https://theconversation.com/whats-up-with-universities-whackademia-or-just-grumpy-old-academics-7602>

Mewburn, I (11/06/2012). '[On the right side of the digital divide](#)', New Scientist. Retrieved 17/07/2015 <https://www.newscientist.com/blogs/bigwideworld/2012/06/on-the-right-side-of-the-digital-divide.html>

Other Journalism:

Regular column in "The Advocate", published by the NTEU. 2 years, 3 columns a year.

"Build it and they won't come: what is wrong with architect's websites?", *Architectural Review Asia Pacific #126: Architecture and Infrastructure*.

Guest ABC 720 Perth – regular segment: You Study What? Drive – 14/09/2012.

Guest ABC Radio National Drive "Twitterati" segment, 08/06/2012.

Guest RRR "The Architects": Gesture in the Design Studio. 12/07/2010.

Guest RRR "The Architects": The architecture of the rococo, 08/08/2006.

Testimonials:

Luigi Tomba, Associate Director CIW, Associate Dean HDR (College of Asia and the Pacific)

I invited Dr Mewburn to run a HDR writing workshop at the Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) in August 2014. Approximately 13 students (from CIW and other China-related departments) attended this series of six workshops and I received very positive feedback. In addition to teaching the course, Dr Mewburn mentored Paul Farrelly (a later-year CIW PhD candidate) so he could conduct the workshops in 2015.

Paul just completed facilitating the 2015 edition of the workshop for seven CIW students. Drawing on Dr Mewburn's 2014 curriculum and open-source material she made available on her website, he tailored this year's workshops to address writing concerns for students in Chinese studies. In particular, he added emphasis to the skills required by non-English speaking background students, of whom the majority of our PhD candidates are. Dr Mewburn's template was thorough and flexible, enough to be adapted for this specific learning environment. Paul received positive student feedback from the course.

Dr Mewburn's workshop in 2014 established the foundation for CIW doctoral candidates to develop sustainable and productive academic writing habits. It is important that such resources are available for HDR students at ANU. With her course setting the foundation for the 2015 workshop (and future editions), I am confident that in coming years CIW doctoral candidates will continue to develop robust research skills in a supportive environment for academic writing.

Dr Mary-Helen Ward, Online education developer, University of Sydney

I have known Inger Mewburn for five years. We have met many times at conferences, seminars and workshops, as we have have a mutual passion for the theory, policy and practice of research training in Australia. Our particular shared interest is in how and what students learn in the process of their Higher Degree by Research (HDR), including skills in research and writing but going beyond those to the individual development of researcher and academic identity in the process of doing a PhD.

Inger's work has focused on student support and self-help. She recognises the way that access to information and knowledge have changed irrevocably, and thus much of her work is freely available on the internet; her writing and her curations of the writings of others over five years at the Thesiswhisperer blog have become an invaluable source of support and information of HDR students – yesterday I talked to HDR students at a small university and every one of them was aware of the Thesiswhisperer site. The writing on the site takes a uniquely Australian tone, to suit the way the degree is funded and practiced in Australia, but its advice applies to students undertaking Higher Degrees by Research in many other countries. There are also links there to many other useful resources for HDR students.

On Twitter and Facebook she disseminates interesting and useful links, and for a while she hosted a live chat session on Twitter for Australians and New Zealanders, based on successful models in other time zones. She continues to travel to universities in many different countries to offer face-to-face workshops and seminars to both HDR students and to staff involved with HDR supervision and support.

As well as Thesiswhisperer and her twitter stream, Inger has published a book for students, *How To Tame Your PhD*, in which she distills strategies for fitting a PhD into a busy modern life in a productive and fulfilling way. Her advice is always practical and apparently simple, but is built on a deep understanding of the many contradictions inherent in HDR study.

Inger also works with academic staff to encourage critical thinking about supervision skills, and I have seen her present to staff who support students with study skills in a way that both acknowledged their work and challenged the paradigms on which it is based in the age of infinite information and rapidly-evolving software for writing and editing.

Her publications explore often-neglected areas of PhD policy and practice, including the useful notion of 'Troubles talk' for HDR candidates and a critical look at the usefulness of annual reviews for HDR students, as well as the development of writing skills in a mobile world and the uses of social media in academic work. The MOOC she is developing will enable her critical perspective on HDR development to be more widely known.

Inger's work is unique in that she continues to make a great deal of it freely and widely available at the same time as she is publishing in conventional media. There is no-one else writing, curating and publishing material on HDR study in English at the breadth and depth that she is.

Dr Claire Aitchinson, scholar of research education, Adjunct senior lecturer, University of Western Sydney

Along with many researchers in higher education scholarship and doctoral education, I find Inger's work stimulating and valuable – for my researcher training and research activities. There are two particular strengths to Inger's work: her exploration of the everyday in doctoral candidature and her boundary pushing work on social media in academia. For

example, her solo authored paper *Troubling Talk: Assembling the PhD Candidate* (2011) is noteworthy for its scholarly rendition of the familiar – student grumbling. The beauty of Inger’s approach is her use of methodology and analysis to elevate the everyday as an empirically observable and meaningful activity. Her work has been picked up by other scholars of emotion and subjectivity including in traditional high-ranking publication formats (eg E. Petersen; Aitchison & Mowbray) and by bloggers (eg DoctoralWritingSIG). Her analysis of student experiences of institutional managerial practices similarly shows a deft hand at exploring embedded practices in the sector in ways that provision insiders like myself, with facts to guide our work with students and staff. In my own area, perhaps Inger’s greatest impact is her work on the evolving practices of alternative ways that research is publicized and published. For example, colleagues and I have referred to her coauthored paper *Why do academics blog? An analysis of audiences, purposes and challenges* in our own publications, our blogs for supervisors, and our daily practices with students and research supervisors across numerous universities. That particular paper and her chapter in my recent co-edited book *Writing groups for doctoral education and beyond* are indicative of her wide influence on innovative practices in doctoral education.

Dr Tseen Khoo, Research Fellow, Latrobe university research education development unit

Dr Inger Mewburn has a peerless reputation as an active and innovative graduate student community builder, and has led the online growth of researcher education and development internationally. Most of the graduate education units and students in my network consider The Thesis Whisperer blog an essential resource, one that acts as a portal to engaging with a worldwide cohort of PhD students and supervisors.

Inger has established The Thesis Whisperer blog as both a resource and conversation leader. Her publications on academic blogging, and researcher community-building, capture the actively changing face of scholarly practice. Through these achievements, she demonstrates not only the ways that digital platforms can operate in higher degree pedagogy and peer-to-peer support, but also her ability to transform traditional modes of academic practice. It is a crucial development that PhD students can empower themselves with the information and collegial conversations taking place online. These can – and often do – translate then to face-to-face actions and enacting positive change.

As well, Inger mentored my colleague Jonathan O’Donnell and I in creating and establishing The Research Whisperer (RW) project. She advised on practical, expert strategies that saw RW through from inception and development, to its continuing maturation. Her deep understanding of the digital space, and its practices and communities, helped us form a strong foundation for our work. Her consequent, consistent support since we began RW in 2011 has made a marked difference in the embrace of our initiative among graduate researchers.

With Inger, we also established and fostered the growing scholarly community writing practice of ‘shut up and write’. Starting in 2011 with a single session at RMIT University on Friday mornings (which is still active), the practice has since grown across Australia and internationally. Inger has been at the forefront of this movement, and advocated and advised others on creating and running their own sessions.

There is no online undertaking for doctoral students that approaches the scope and reach of The Thesis Whisperer. Inger’s influence on the digital sphere of doctoral education and development is unmatched, and her continued professional generosity is actively fostering a generation of quality, open intellectual endeavours.

Dr Lizzie Towl, Research Developer, University of Victoria, Wellington, NZ

I first made contact with Inger because of thesiswhisperer.com. I had learned through the blog about “Shut Up and Write” and I wanted to know how to go about establishing sessions here at Victoria University of Wellington. From memory, a discussion about “Shut Up and Write” led to a discussion about a potential NZ tour, delivering workshops as she went. I’m not sure whether I first heard of Thesis Boot Camp through thesiswhisperer.com or through Inger’s twitter account. Either way, VUW Thesis Bootcamp is well underway here, and tremendously popular. Inger came to help us run the first one at the end of last year; we’ll have run another two bootcamps by the end of this year. [Thesiswhisperer.com](http://thesiswhisperer.com) is an excellent general resource for those of us who run workshops for students, too. I dip in and out of Inger’s material, particularly during my workshops on editing and research skills, and I always recommend it to PhD students as a general point of call for information. The blackline masters are a great resource, too. Just today I sent the link for the literature review matrix to a colleague who was floundering in the reading for her MBA project. I wouldn’t have met Inger without thesiswhisperer.com, and so I would be short an excellent colleague and font of wisdom. My experience and the experiences of my students would have been so much poorer if I didn’t have access to Inger’s experience, materials and resources.

Erika Hawkes, Research Developer, University of Birmingham

Thesiswhisperer has been hugely useful to me as a researcher developer. I value the recommendations and tips of course,

but more than that, I value the contribution the blog, its managing editor, and its contributors make to the field of researcher development itself. It's been instrumental in my own professional development and my own conception of myself as a researcher developer. When I started my role with the University of Birmingham, I was new to the whole concept of researcher development. It's still getting established as a discipline in its own right in the UK- it's far less recognised and supported than it seems to be in Australia. Back then, in 2008, it was even less so. I was (and still am) the only person in my institution who did this full time. I had no peer group, no community of practice the same way that someone, say, focusing on undergraduate teaching would have. I had no real idea if what I was doing was right- I could only go with what postgrads asked for, and hope to do my best. I don't know how I managed to find your blog- probably one of my internet hunts trying to work out if I was doing researcher development right. It helped me to see that other people were doing what I did! Not only in Australia, but, through the comments and guest posts, in the UK too. It connected me to a community of professional practice that was hard to find in other ways, and, through the research you and co-authors published, made me better able to think about it as a legitimate area of research as well. I don't think I'd have published the (small) amount I have had. I had the example from your blog that it was something you could do. It gave me that sense of a peer network that I was lacking, and reassured me that I was doing ok. I use the verb cheat sheets, the book recs, the useful videos and blackline masters, and they are all great and very much appreciated. But I think the most useful and lasting benefit of ThesisWhisperer is that sense of community. A confirmation, or realisation, that other people do what I do, and a very real contribution to a growing professional field.

Dr Susan Carter, Research developer, University of Auckland

I really would like to thank you for your generosity in getting Claire Aitchison, Cally Guerin and I started in our Wordpress academic blog, DoctoralWriting SIG. Initially, the three of us were novice and nervous about posting on-line. I was particularly a technophobe, and took over the blog site while on sabbatical leave, so detached from institutional IT support and often with slow and difficult wifi connectivity. You were gracious in your support, saying, 'play round and don't worry--if you break something, I can fix it.' The three of us cautiously got the site up, were surprised by the interest in it, developed our skills collaboratively with your support and advice, and now have the digital world as a part of our academic lives that we find deeply fulfilling. I'm still timid, but at least aware that the digital world is an exciting place, outside of neoliberalism's reaches, somewhere where we can express ourselves within a community of colleagues and followers in a way that does feel significant. Being an author and editor of the DoctoralWriting SIG is one of the things I clock up as a part of my life that has made it worth living. So thanks!

Dr Narelle Lemon, Senior Lecturer in Education, Latrobe University

Throughout the 5 years I have known Inger she has displayed a level of professionalism that is guided by integrity and innovation. This way of being has been a significant influence on me professionally and personally. She has a passion and energy that is both positive and forward thinking, displaying critical thinking skills for setting boundaries and approaching productivity. In her role as mentor, Inger's problem solving skills, entrepreneurial thinking and communication skills have been of considerable impact to me. She has demonstrated to me repeatedly how as a woman in academia it is possible to be empathetic and flexible, and enact strong interpersonal skills while being a risk taker. As a leader in academia, Inger's digital scholarship skills have been especially valuable in relation to her publications, teaching, and growth of her Thesis Whisper profile with the higher degree research community. Specifically, her use of social networking through blogging and Twitter has been influential for my career. This action highlights her ability to create a sense of community that is based on reciprocity and while modeling how this engagement and participation be replicated by others. This has influenced my engagement in the professional online space for both my research and learning and teaching in teacher education and the museum sectors. Of note has been the mentoring and modeling in the act of influencing a wide range of groups while empowering others to be innovative, share, and cooperate. Inger's approach to forward planning and attention to detail has been a considerable guidance in my learning and applying this approach. It is Inger who taught me that no matter where you are physically located, the face-to-face relationships developed can continue to grow in online communities.

Dr. Jason Downs, Lecturer in Business Strategy, RMIT University

I first met Inger when I was in the early stages of my PhD candidature – her workshop was recommended to me through the HDR coordinator at my school. I was in a difficult position in that I was full-time academic staff undertaking a PhD in my own school. Relationships that I had with staff members were complex and at times delicate. I went along hoping to get some clear perspectives about how to tackle my thesis – an outsider's viewpoint, if you will – as the advice I was getting from within the school came loaded with 'baggage'.

Inger listened to my issues and helped me to begin to understand the messy, entangled and politically fraught situation that I was in. She provided me with a way to think about my concurrent roles as student, colleague, writer. Her advice and support proved to be invaluable over the next few years as she played a range of roles – supporter, critical friend, intellectual touchstone, collaborator and guide as my thesis journey unfolded. It was Inger who introduced me to the power of Twitter and the strong PhD community thereon; it was Inger who introduced me to the #shutupandwrite sessions (a way for me to

be with other writers who were not members of my school) it was Inger who helped me to make connections within the wider university community, introducing me to people she thought I could benefit from their advice and wisdom. My PhD journey wasn't particularly fraught with extreme challenges of the kinds one sometimes hears, but it was delicate and it required a deft touch to navigate. Inger provided the kind of supervision mentoring role that was unavailable within my school.

Inger shared with me was how to understand the role of emotions in a PhD and how to build emotional resilience in the face of the inevitable challenges that such work provides. She helped me to recognise the value of resilience within the shifting landscape of academia and how resilience can manifest itself in multiple ways. Inger helped me to understand the invisible power structures within academia and how to think about the work that I was doing and how to position my work and myself in such a way as to take advantage of the shifting requirements. Through these discussions (and cups of tea!) she was gently preparing me for my work post-Ph.D. Her far-sightedness, clear thinking and generosity in spirit and advice have helped shape my current career. I valued her advice and guidance while I was a student, and I continue to value her counsel as a colleague, mentor and friend. I commend Dr. Mewburn for your consideration in this new role and wholeheartedly endorse her selection. She is a shining light of integrity, brilliance, foresight, compassion and humanity. Academia needs more people like this in important positions to help shape our community.

Dr Scott Mayson, lecturer in design, RMIT University

I have known Inger Mewburn since 2009 as a colleague at RMIT University where I have supervised and participated in a range of activities with her. As a colleague I have learned much from her leadership, critical insight and supervision knowledge across a broad set of postgraduate research methods. Inger's mentoring and leadership is demonstrated in her supervisory activities as she and I co supervised a practice based research masters candidate in the School of Architecture and Design. We took on a candidate who had endured a poor supervisory relationship where the candidate was at risk of not completing their research candidacy. In our supervisory role Inger's approach was critical in providing guidance and analytical insight to the candidate. This was particularly important as the entire thesis required restructuring on all fronts within a timely completion timeline. The candidate struggled under great duress during this time, however, Inger's perseverance and expertise in research supervision training enabled the candidate to comprehend the task ahead and commit the time and effort required to undertake a major revisions and restructure the research thesis. I mention this because I consider myself an experienced supervisor of PhD and Masters candidates, nevertheless, participating in a supervisory role with Inger has given me stronger insights into being a more reflective in my supervisory efforts.

Further to this, I regularly refer to Ingers knowledge in research supervision for insight in to methods, issues and solutions during supervision, Inger's advice is always thoughtful as well as pragmatic, this is something that I value with the highest regard.

Jodie Lee-Trembath, Current PhD student

Inger is an exceptional supervisor, as you would expect given her vast experience of mentoring research students. I am so fortunate to have had her chair my PhD panel this year, and have no doubt that her influence and mentoring has made the difference between a good start to my candidature and the excellent experience I've actually had to date. Even prior to the start of my study, Inger provided a great deal of support. Throughout the process of applying for a PhD at ANU I was also completing my major project for my Masters and attempting to submit this at a major international conference – a daunting process at such an early stage of my research career! Despite not yet having any formal relationship to me, Inger mentored me through the writing and application processes, and after I was accepted into the conference, guided me through revisions, preparation of my presentation and tips for networking and making the most of the conference experience. Her guidance made an enormous difference, helping me make the most strategic use of my first conference opportunity and guiding me through the process of turning that conference paper into first a journal article and then a book chapter. Now that she is my panel chair, Inger is an incredible support for both my emotional and intellectual needs as a PhD student. We meet weekly and she is amazingly generous with her time, spending solid blocks of time thrashing out difficult concepts with me, and reading my work and offering incisive and insightful improvements. Inger encourages a strategic approach to my PhD experience that keeps my eye on the immediate prize – a successful and timely completion – while also encouraging me to enhance my research profile and skills in ways that will hopefully give me an edge in the academic job market. As part of this strategic approach, Inger frequently has me assessing my current skills and knowledge base, and uses this to provide the basis for the next stage of my growth as a PhD student. Within the first week, she had established the areas of my PhD that I was already well-versed in, and which areas I would need to read further and more widely on. She then provided not just a list of books and papers to start reading, but in many cases, the books and papers themselves. She regularly checks in with me about my reading, and engages me in stimulating discussions about how the texts interact and may subsequently affect my topic. I walk away from every meeting absolutely itching to get back to my desk, so inspired and motivated by the connections we have collectively drawn. It is, intellectually, every PhD student's dream. In addition to this, Inger goes out of her way to ensure that I am functioning well from a holistic perspective. She actively engages with me, in a highly professional capacity, as a person as well as a PhD candidate. Through a number of personal difficulties during the early stages of my candidature, having a supervisor who was approachable and showed interest in my wellbeing allowed me to be

up front when I was having difficulty staying focused, and this made all the difference to my progress at that time, keeping me moving forward when otherwise I may have faltered. I am immensely grateful for the way she handled this, and feel that it established a relationship that will be highly beneficial in bringing my PhD to completion. Inger goes out of her way to introduce me to people within and outside the university community that may help me, either in terms of clarifying my ideas around concepts, theories, or methodological approaches, or by providing me access to networks that may enhance my future career. She has helped me to engage with my department and hers in multiple ways that a) have ensured that I feel supported in the research community and b) have encouraged me to also become a support mechanism for others as they make their way into the PhD journey. We often discuss the notion of the cycle of kindness in academia, and she has helped me to become a part of this cycle so that I truly feel like an active member of the ANU HDR community. On the whole, I could not have asked for a better panel chair, and am incredibly grateful that Inger has been so generous in sharing her wealth of knowledge and experience with me. I have many fellow PhD students who have not been as fortunate in their choices of supervisor. It has given me great pleasure to be able to write this recommendation letter, as I cannot recommend Inger as a supervisor highly enough.

Wendy Suiter, current PhD student

I met Dr Mewburn at a workshop she ran on staying motivated to completion. This was a big topic for me as I have had to bear the brunt of two complete changes in supervisory teams due to closure of the Music Department at University of Wollongong and then restructuring of the School of Music at ANU. This was my first instance of Dr Mewburn's apparent psychic powers as we walked out the door and she asked me if I was about to drop out. Having tried unsuccessfully to get my latest supervisor to take note of the difficulties I was having with his very hands off supervisory approach and my increasing despair, this was an amazing insight to come out of the blue, and very supportive. Even though it has been a long and arduous task to stuff my elephant into a glass, Dr Mewburn has stayed the course with me, guiding me in writing a persuasive argument, and suggesting how to deal with expert reader's critical feedback. Without Dr Mewburn's morale boosting insights into the academic system, how to resolve problems in the research, and her knowledge of resources and modes of writing, I would not be at the stage of considering submission in the near future. Inger's assistance with completing my thesis has been of immeasurable value. Not only has she been a cheerleader for my work and my morale, but has also had creative insight into what I am trying to achieve with my research. Despite not being a music scholar, Inger is one of the few people who truly thinks about and understands enough and is creative enough to be able to engage with my ideas and give me a good discussion about what I am trying to do with my interdisciplinary and creative approach to music analysis. She appreciates the value of my work, provides my battered ego with much needed nourishment which helps me persevere, and has come armed with an amazing battery of tools to help me over various hurdles in writing a persuasive argument. At one of her writing bootcamps I observed her interactions with other students who have also been struggling with writing the thesis text. I continue to think that Dr Mewburn is psychic, as I saw the way that she zeroes in on the key problem faced by a student, apparently not only myself. Since we are 'rational' academics, I read her insights as a matter of deep experience in 'reading people' as well as having an intimate knowledge of all the ways that things go wrong with research and 'writing up' and the cumulative effects as life intervenes in our candidature. Inger knows her stuff.