



Australia Awards



THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

Guest Lecture

‘Learning in the Age of AI: Why Educational Neuroscience Matters More Than Ever’ By: Associate Professor Minkang Kim & Dr Derek Sankey

Friday, 29 May 2026

02:00pm to 4:00pm (Jakarta time)

Indonesian graduates and scholars of Australian tertiary institutions who are interested in attending this event, please RSVP by Wednesday, 27 May, via this link:

<http://oz.link/rsvpGL29MAY>

**Due to the limited availability of places, early registration is recommended. A link to this event will be shared with you after registration.*

Lecture overview

Over the past 30 years, new insights from neuroscience and dynamic systems theory have converged into what many scholars identify as a recognisable science of learning and human development, with far-reaching implications for education. This emerging field challenges (sometimes uncomfortably) many long-held ideas and opens up exciting new possibilities for how we think about learning and teaching.

Yet, many in educational theory and practice still hold on to twentieth-century theories, even as the ground shifts beneath them. Rapid advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) are adding another layer of change to the education landscape.

This session calls on education researchers and teacher educators to take this new body of knowledge more seriously. It makes the case that all teachers should have a sound understanding of the science of learning and development as part of their professional toolkit. Importantly, this means engaging with evidence-based neuroscience, rather than speculative theory.

But applying the science of learning and development in education doesn’t require reducing human beings to machines. On the contrary, it should be deeply human. Students aren’t mechanical learners; they’re neurobiological, social, and emotional beings. Learning is driven by value and emotion and impacts student wellbeing and their lived experience.

The session presents a view of education as inherently valuable, guided not just by what works, but also by what matters. These ideas draw on sixteen years of educational neuroscience research at The University of Sydney, Australia.

Associate Professor Minkang Kim is co-author with husband Dr. Derek Sankey of *The science of learning and development in education: A research-based approach to educational practice*, published by Cambridge University Press, 2022. A/Prof. Kim specialises in educational neuroscience, human development and the science of learning. Her work examines how insights from neuroscience and Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) can inform educational theory and classroom practice, with a particular focus on the roles of emotion, empathy and values in learning and wellbeing. She uses electroencephalogram (EEG) and Event-Related Potential (ERP) technology to probe the brains’ dynamic and predictive neural processes implicated in learning, emotion and wellbeing of children and young people.

A/Prof. Kim is also lead author of *Maximising learning and teaching in independent schools: Moving ahead with educational neuroscience* (2025) commissioned by the Independent Schools New South Wales (ISNSW), Australia. She has a strong international profile in educational research and teaching. She is Assistant Editor for the book series of the European Association for Research in Learning and Instruction (EARLI), is a member of the EARLI SIG 22 Neuroscience and Education, UNESCO Global Alliance for the Science of Learning.



★ / **Associate Professor Minkang Kim**
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Dr Derek Sankey is now a post-institutional scholar but continues as an active researcher in educational neuroscience and philosophy of education. His academic career in teacher education spanned 40 years, starting at the University of London Institute of Education (now UCL) in the UK, the Hong Kong Institute of Education (now the Education University of Hong Kong), and then as Honorary Associate at The University of Sydney, Australia. He has many publications, including (as co-author) *The science of learning and development in education: A research-based approach to educational practice*, published by Cambridge University Press, 2022.

Dr Sankey's teaching, research and publication sits at the intersection of natural science and the humanities, with a special focus on educational neuroscience, human development and educational philosophy. He is concerned about the prevalence in education of neuromyths and other mistaken ideas about the brain. He advocates that all teachers, everywhere, should possess a sound scientific understanding of how children and young people learn and develop, as a required component of their professional profile. This, he believes, should be grounded in a deeply human and holistic view of education, in which thinking and learning, and value and emotion are deeply interwoven in the brain and active in the processes of thinking and learning.



Dr Derek Sankey

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