

Professor Peter Anstey to lead ACU's Western Civilisation program

Australian Catholic University has announced the appointment of Professor Peter Anstey as Director of ACU's renowned Western Civilisation Program.

Professor Anstey joins ACU from the University of Sydney where he was a Professor of Philosophy for more than decade. He was previously inaugural Professor of Early Modern Philosophy at the University of Otago.

He specialises in the Philosophy of the 17th and 18th centuries with a focus on the thought of John Locke, Francis Bacon, and the French Philosophes of the Enlightenment. While a philosopher at heart, Professor Anstey works and collaborates across a range of disciplines, such as history, literature, history of medicine, botany, and digital humanities.

Professor Anstey said he was honoured by the appointment and looking forward to working with the Ramsay Centre and new colleagues and students at ACU.

"I am thrilled to join ACU. It is tremendous to work in an institution that is investing in the humanities, and which places a premium of the culture and core texts of the Western tradition," he said.

"The Catholic identity of ACU with its emphasis on dialogue and open-mindedness makes it an ideal environment for teaching, researching, and debating the nature, status and richness of the Western tradition and its engagement with other important cultural and intellectual traditions throughout human history."

Professor Anstey is the author of many books and articles including *John Locke and Natural Philosophy* (Oxford, 2011), *Experimental Philosophy and the Origins of Empiricism* (with Alberto Vanzo, Cambridge, 2023) and is editor of the *Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2013).

Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education and Arts Professor Mary Ryan said she was delighted to welcome Professor Anstey to lead the next chapter of the Western Civilisation Program.

"Professor Anstey's rich experience and expertise will be invaluable as the program matures and expands."

Since its launch in 2021, ACU's Western Civilisation Program has more than doubled in size, with students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation), the new Master of Liberal Arts, Bachelor of Laws, and the vertical double degree with a Master of Teaching (Secondary).

ACU is one of just three universities in Australia to offer the unique Western Civilisation Program, supported by the Ramsay Centre.

The Ramsay Centre and ACU entered a partnership in 2020 worth approximately \$50 million over eight years. The partnership enables ACU to offer at least 150 undergraduate scholarships and hire world-class educators.

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